

# MY student newsletter

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## Three “To-Do’s” with Your New Boss

**M**aking a good impression in a new job and with the boss is everyone's goal. Unfortunately, being a new employee means missteps are going to happen, so focus on gaining an overall view of your job, the work culture, and especially patterns of communication. That's a lot to handle the first week, so set the stage for a positive relationship with your boss using these three quick tips. Observe which workplace issues create unease and concern for your manager—you'll gain empathy for what they face and potentially understand their priorities. Ask your manager the form and frequency of communication they prefer. And show positivity. Managers live for it and feel validated when they experience it from those they supervise.

## Bored with a Great Job?

**W**ith over 30 million newly unemployed in the U.S., imagine having a great job you can't stand. Don't feel guilty. All of us have a need for fulfillment as much as we have a need for food, clothing, and shelter. Without fulfillment, you will cast a wandering eye toward whatever might help you feel more alive. If boredom and feeling unmotivated have lasted for months or years, step one is to get a depression screening to rule out this disease. Boredom and blahs may be a symptom, not the problem. Engaging a career coach, starting new projects, taking a vacation, volunteering in the community—any of these activities could help energize your life. But if nothing is lighting your fire, a medical issue like depression could underlie it all.

Source: [www.academic.oup.com/ajcn](http://www.academic.oup.com/ajcn) [search

## Stress Management for Pandemic Heroes

**I**f you are an essential service employee and working face-to-face with the public during the COVID-19 pandemic or you are in a job placing you at higher risk of contracting COVID-19, you can count yourself among the heroes. (Loved ones who support you and worry about you—they're heroes, too.) It's likely your employer has striven to reduce the risk of your contracting COVID-19, but it's not a 100% worry-free time. You've answered a higher calling so others can live as normally as possible during this time. If worry, anxiety, exhaustion, sleeplessness, family stress, and fear affect you, contact a professional, a support network, or your EAP for help. Tips like getting enough sleep, avoiding alcohol before bedtime, and practicing relaxation exercises are verified ideas for reducing stress and remaining resilient. They work, and you can learn more about them at [heart.org](http://heart.org) [search "stressed essential workers"].

## Work to Avoid Aggressive Driving

**C**elebrate National Safety Month by putting the brakes on aggressive driving. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration research shows that aggressive driving plays a role in 56% of fatal crashes. Aggressive driving is "operation of a motor vehicle that endangers or is likely to endanger persons or property." (Road rage is a criminal form of aggressive driving.) Riding bumpers, using your vehicle to "teach someone a lesson" (like blocking their ability to pass you), zooming around a slow driver, laying on the horn, using hand gestures—these behaviors point to how your driving practices may be influenced by anger. Learn about triggers, behaviors, and prevention at [bit.ly/aggressive-driver](http://bit.ly/aggressive-driver).

## Social Distancing: Loneliness as a Health Concern

**I**t is your responsibility to avoid committing sexual harassment and increase your awareness if you telecommute. On the job, we are surrounded by coworkers, managers, and usually a dynamic workplace. These factors naturally create social and environmental controls that positively influence our civil behavior, manners, and communication. Many of these controls diminish or disappear entirely when we work remotely, although technology tools allow for more contact, along with more options for communication, including texting, chatting, videoconferencing, and telephone—most of it recorded. So, what if you type, text, or voice mail something to your coworker and they reject it, express displeasure with it, or otherwise take offense? The answer is, don't repeat it. Common sexual harassment behaviors include discussing one's sex life, asking a coworker about their sex life, sharing inappropriate photos or background images, making indecent jokes, sending suggestive texts, sending unwanted gifts, and repeatedly asking someone out on a date after they have said no. Most sexual harassment prevention relates to self-awareness, appreciating boundaries, and common courtesies. For example, with regard to communication, do you repeatedly use video chat when a simple text is sufficient? Do you sometimes say or do things at work that you suddenly realize you should not have said or done? Don't hesitate to reach out to the EAP or a professional counselor for confidential assistance with issues associated with communication and on-the-job relationships. You can discover resources, strategies, and new skills to help you enjoy your job more.

## Fried Food and Focus Don't Mix

**S**kip the burger and fries at lunch. You will have a clearer head and better focus in the afternoon. New research shows one meal of fried food high in fat can zap your ability to stay focused on an important task or project shortly after it is consumed. At work, that means choosing fewer fatty and fried foods at lunch in favor of more nutritious choices may help you score that big win or big deal, or deliver a more effective presentation!

## You're Committed, So Show It

**E**mployers know what a committed worker looks like. It's not those who simply perform duties and assignments well. Committed workers bring something extra that helps advance the work unit's mission. 1) They solve problems; they don't just point them out. 2) They show enthusiasm rather than casual acceptance. 3) They are proactive in reporting progress on what they are doing. 4) They demonstrate initiative—they act on perceived needs that fit with their duties before being asked. If you want to show you are a committed worker, walk the talk with these distinguishing work habits.

## Curb Impulse Purchases to Save Money

**I**f the household budget is stretched, cutting costs without added hardship can be difficult. Consider curbing impulse purchases as a path to finding more dollars. You could save over \$5,000 a year by decreasing this behavior. Impulse purchasing is the tendency to engage repeatedly in spontaneous, on-the-spot purchases without consideration of the potential consequences. Sixty-four percent of us do it. The risk of an impulse purchase begins as soon as you enter a store, not when you see the item of interest. Most impulse purchases are groceries, not clothing. Try these tips: 1) Shop with a buddy. 2) Use cash. 3) Gain control and insight from two studies: A) [www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc) [search "eyes wide shopped"] and B) [www.slickdeals.net/corp/impulse-spending.html](http://www.slickdeals.net/corp/impulse-spending.html).