# Empowered by Boundaries: A Simple Strategy to Workplace Well-being

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# Objectives

| | |
|---|---|
| Know | Participants will know what boundaries are |
| Be | Participants will be able to create boundaries |
| Be | Participants will be able to understand the importance of boundaries |
| Know | Participants will know what workplace well-being is and how to create it |

# What are Boundaries

- Boundaries are rules, lines, or limits that an individual sets to govern what is acceptable or unacceptable in their relationships.

- "Boundaries are personal property lines that define who you are and who you are not and influences every area of your life."

- "Boundaries are the expectations and needs that make us feel safe."

- Boundaries are essential to every relationship.

- Boundaries gives you control over your space, time, environment, performance, and your peace.

- Boundaries must be consistent, to be effective.

# Types of Boundaries

- **Emotional Boundaries**: These define your emotional well-being, separating your feeling from those of others, preventing you from taking on someone else's emotions and cares

- **Physical Boundaries**: These protect your personal space, belongings, and physical needs, determining who can touch you when, how.

- **Intellectual Boundaries**: These relate to your thoughts, beliefs and opinions, ensuring that disagreements can be respectful.

- **Sexual Boundaries**: These relate to what you are comfortable with sexual touch, intimacy, and discussion.

- **Material Boundaries**: These relate to your possession and finances, setting limits on what you are willing to share or lend to others.

- **Time Boundaries**: These protect your time and prevent burnout by setting limits on how you spend your time.

# Types of Boundaries

▶ **Self-Care Boundaries:** These are personal boundaries that are put in place to protect you from physical, emotional, or psychological harm. These boundaries are established based on your needs.

▶ **Rest:** Some people require rest throughout the day to stay focused and energized. Some people have a set bed and wake time. This does not give you permission to take a nap when you should be working, but you can take one on your lunch.

▶ **Nutrition:** Some people need to eat at regular intervals to sustain their energy or to manage their medication.

▶ **Hydration:** Getting enough water, you might have to keep a water container at your desk.

▶ **Movement:** Movement is necessary to stay healthy, it varies for everyone. Some go to the gym a couples times a week others need to stretch every 90 minutes.

# Types of Boundaries

- **Hygiene:** There are standards hygiene practices such as bathing, brushing your teeth, combing your hair, and washing your hands. When you find it difficult to perform these things you need to examine what is going on. Something is wrong.

- **Mental break:** When you find you are losing focus or your eyes are fatigued or your neck and shoulder muscles are tight, take a break. Eat a snack, go to the restroom and wash your face, go for a short walk. Take a moment to listen to your favorite song**.**

- **Self-compassion:** Give yourself permission to change your mind, admit when you are wrong or made a mistake. Avoid negative self-talk. Deal with the issues at hand and move on.

- **Spiritual Boundaries:** Distinguish God's will for you and your purpose or your higher power purpose for you

# 3 Steps to Creating Boundaries

I.   **Identify Your Boundaries**:

▪ **Know your needs** what activities leave you feeling drained, stressed, or overwhelmed

▪ **Define Limits**: Design boundaries for:

❖ **Time**: set specifics work time for your day to begin and end. Be sure to take your breaks and vacations.

❖ **Workload**: learn to say no to tasks that overextend you and prioritize your workload with your manager.

❖ **Communication:** Establish your preferred communication methods and the times you will respond to emails

❖ **Behavior:** Set limits on the type of behavior you engage in and allow around you.(Social media and gossip)

# 3 steps to Creating Boundaries

II. **Communicating Your Boundaries**

❖ **Be direct and clear:** State your boundaries explicitly, focus on your needs and the benefits to the team.

❖ **Use "If-Then" agreements:** Frame your request as a conditional agreement, such as "If you provide the information by Tuesday, I'll give you feedback by Friday.

❖ **Use professional tools:** Update your email signature to indicate your working hours or use a digital tool to manage your availability.

III. **Enforce and Respect Your Boundaries**

❖ **Be consistent:** Consistently apply your boundaries, even when it is difficult, to show the importance of the boundary.

❖ **Be prepared for pushback:** Have a plan for how to respond when your boundaries are crossed, such as gently reminding colleagues of your limits.

# 3 Steps to Creating Boundaries

❖ **Be self-aware:** Monitor your physical and emotional cues that indicate a boundary is being violated.

❖ **Respect others' boundaries:** Respect the boundaries of your colleagues and managers to promote a culture of mutual respect.

❖ **Consider a career change:** If your workplace boundaries are constantly being violated, after you have communicated them clearly, it might be time to consider other opportunities.

# The Pros and Cons of Boundaries

## Cons of Boundaries

- Adverse health issues
- Decrease job satisfaction
- Decreased productivity
- Resentment
- Hinders career advancement
- Strain/Stress
- Chaotic work environment
- Leads to burnout

## Pros of Boundaries

- Allows time of proper rest, nutrition, and exercise
- Increase job satisfaction
- Increase productivity
- Promotes clarity
- Promotes effective teamwork and collaboration work
- Reduces Stress
- Promotes a harmonious work environment
- Promotes overall well-being

A PLACE WHERE PEACE ABIDES

# Components of Well-being

| Dimension | Importance | Strategies |
|---|---|---|
| Physical Well-being | Ensuring proper nutrition, exercise, and rest can improve overall health and energy levels. | Incorporating regular physical activity, managing stress, and practicing good sleep hygiene. |
| Emotional Well-being | Cultivating positive emotions, resilience, and self-awareness can enhance mental health. | Engaging in mindfulness practices, seeking emotional support, and developing coping mechanisms. |
| Social Well-being | Maintaining meaningful connections and a sense of belonging can foster a sense of purpose. | Prioritizing quality time with loved ones, volunteering, and participating in community activities. |
| Workplace Well-being | Achieving a healthy work-life balance and job satisfaction can contribute to overall well-being. | Advocating for flexible schedules, taking regular breaks, and seeking opportunities for growth and development. |
| Societal Well-being Buy vitamins and supplements | Feeling a sense of purpose and contributing to something larger than oneself can enhance well-being. | Engaging in civic activities, supporting causes, and being an active member of the community. |

# Workload reflection and discussion tool

**This tool helps explore workload concerns and can be used in a variety of ways:**

- By any employee on their own, to review their current workload and the impact it may be having on their success and well-being.
- By any employee, to prepare for a discussion with their leader about workload or work stress.
- As a collaborative discussion between a supervisor and employee, to develop solutions to workload stress.

## Reflect

Insert your answers after each question.

**What are my current workload stressors or concerns?**

**What specific impact has the workload had on me, my team, my work, my clients:**

## Assess

For each of the factors below, rate the level of negative impact your workload has on you, your team, and your "clients".

(Scale: 0 = no impact, 10 = substantial impact, or N/A = not applicable)

| Potential impact | Extent of current negative impact | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Me | Team | Client(s) |
| Mental health/stress | | | |
| Energy and focus | | | |
| Physical health | | | |
| Attendance | | | |
| Home life | | | |
| Accuracy of the work | | | |
| Quality of the work | | | |
| Meeting deadlines | | | |
| Responsiveness to inquiries/requests | | | |
| Workplace relationships | | | |
| Other: | | | |

**What are the implications of continuing as things are?**

**Have I tried to improve the situation? If so, how?**

**What specific suggestions do I have for ways to improve the situation?**

**What information do I have about why this situation exists?**

**What other information about the situation would be helpful?**

**Who else could help with sorting this out?**

**What resources or supports could be helpful to explore?**
(Learning opportunities, peer training/coaching, work review/redistribution)

## Prepare

**When preparing for a discussion with your leader, use these three key approaches, in this order:**
1. State your concerns objectively.
2. Make suggestions for improvement.
3. Answer your leader's questions and collaborate on next steps.

**Template for a discussion about workload:**

I have a concern with how _____ is impacting my ability to do my job well.

I feel _____ and worry that _____.

I have tried _____.

I believe it would help if _____.

I suggest we _____.

**Ask**: How do you see this situation? (listen closely)

Thanks for making time to review this with me.

*Adapted with permission from Dalhousie University*

# Summary

- Boundaries are essential in the workplace

- Boundaries must be intentional

- Boundaries created but not implemented are of no value

- Boundaries must be reviewed and revised as needed

- Boundaries help you tell others how to treat you

- Boundaries operate on RESPECT

# Resources

- Bella, K.M.J. (2023).Creating boundaries to maintaining a healthy work-life balance. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research in Arts, Science and Technology , 1(3),24-30.*

- Cloud, H., Townsend, J. (1992). *Boundaries: When to say yes and when to say no.*

- *Nedra Glover Tawwab  3 Steps to setting boundaries: TED the way we work series.*

- *Workplace strategies for Mental Health. Workload reflection and discussion tool.*