Tips for Work-Life Coordinators and Supervisors

Meaningful Conversation Starters

Supervisors should strive to maintain an employee-focused mindset when considering challenges employees may be facing as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Supervisors should work to understand employee needs and offer workplace flexibilities when possible. The following open-ended questions can help guide a conversation that can result in meaningful information:

- **What are you most concerned about?**
  Supervisors can begin the conversation by allowing employees to guide the discussion and focus on topics most important to them.

- **What workplace support do you value most for assisting you as we progress towards resuming a normal work schedule?**
  Supervisors are encouraged to share resources available through EAP to demonstrate the possible program supports and manage expectations.

- **What are your expectations from me and the organization?**
  A clear understanding of what employees need and expect can assist supervisors in holding productive and transparent conversations with staff.

- **How can I help you move forward?**
  Understanding the common goal of assisting staff in phasing back to the office environment with minimal stress allows supervisors to ask what the employee needs and make that transition successful.

- **When should we check-in again?**
  Supervisors can offer regular and continued support as employees learn to manage their responsibilities.

OPM’s Work-Life staff is here to assist. Please reach out to us any time at worklife@opm.gov.

Contact your local HR office to find your agency’s EAP Administrator or search OPM’s Work-Life Contact Tool available at: [opm.gov/CCLContact](http://opm.gov/CCLContact)

Additional information is available at [opm.gov/worklife](http://opm.gov/worklife).