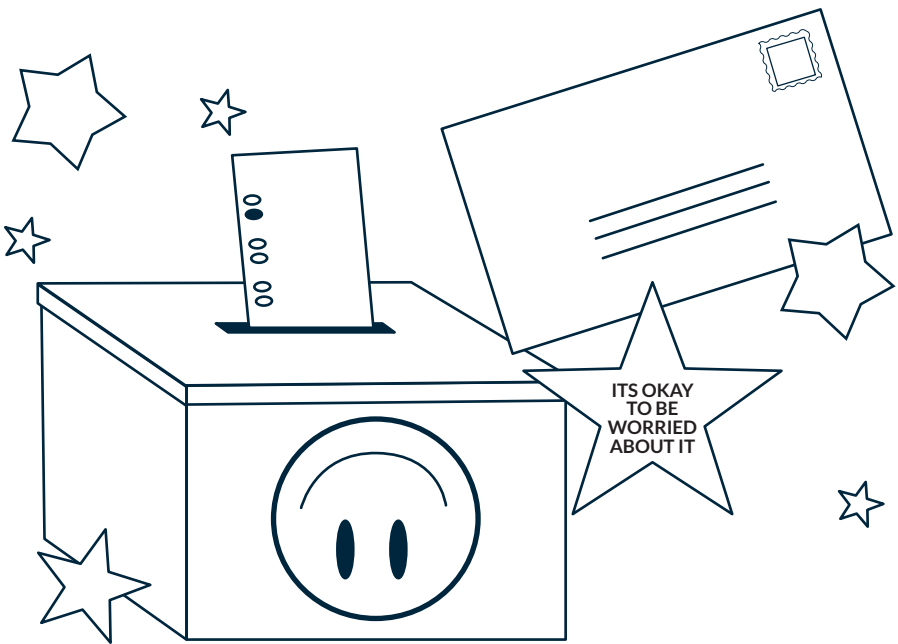


2020

NAVIGATING THE ELECTION WITH THE LEAST STRESS POSSIBLE





36%

of employees avoid talking to or working with colleagues who have opposing political views

64%

of Americans think its “probable” that Russia interfere with our electoral process.



25%

of voters are already convinced that a candidate is “very likely” to cheat in order to win.



47%

of workers said the election impacts their ability to do their job.



FOR LEADERS:

- Proactively acknowledge the heightened energy and emotions that often surround a national election in a neutral communication.
- Model the behavior you desire. In tough times of stress employees carefully watch the words and actions of leaders. Speak briefly, resist interrupting and emphasize common ground.
- Share updates on company's plans. The outcome of the election **will** impact a variety of workplace policies or benefits. Communicate details of what will and will not change in the future. And make sure you check with your legal counsel before enacting any new policies.
- Promote your company mission and values. After all, political stances are an aspect of diversity, so this is a good opportunity to remind staff of the organization's commitment to inclusion.



Consider creating a crisis or emergency plan for your team. It's important to keep in mind that there may be added impact to employees of various communities such as, international, LGBTQIA+, those with disabilities, etc.

- Empower managers to handle a variety of employee responses and how to prevent conversations from escalating into hostility.
- There could be joy and grief post-election. Listen actively. People should speak from their own experiences and not try to represent others or entire groups.
- Model the behavior you desire. In tough times of stress employees carefully watch the words and actions of leaders. Speak briefly, resist interrupting and emphasize common ground.
- Show leadership through empathy.
- Ensure employees know how to reach your EAP. Post contact details for accessing by phone, email, text, etc. You should publicize in the physical workplace, on your intranet and website. All employees—whether in person or remote-can tap into the resources and confidential counseling you provide through your EAP.

START
HERE

1 MONITOR HOW MUCH MEDIA YOU WATCH.

Constant exposure to political upheaval and the pandemic can create anxiety, insomnia, and symptoms of trauma. Evaluate how the news makes you feel. Take a break from the news and political banter to ease anxiety.

2 SET BOUNDARIES AROUND POLITICAL CONVERSATIONS.

Election season can be challenging if you disagree with the political views of coworkers, family and friends. If you choose to discuss politics, focus your conversations on curiosity and friendly debate rather than persuasion.

3 AVOID COMMON THINKING TRAPS.

Thinking traps are negative thought patterns that block you from seeing things clearly and rationally. Some common thinking traps include:

- **Catastrophizing:** Forecasting the future in the worst case scenarios
- **Overestimating:** Believing that these negative scenarios will actually occur
- **Negative filtering:** Negating positive facts about situations and one's ability to cope

4 FUNNEL YOUR STRESS INTO SOMETHING PRODUCTIVE.

An effective way to reduce stress is to feel like you are making a difference. Donate to a cause, volunteer at an organization, or simply help your neighbor with a meal.

5 TIPS TO FACE YOUR THINKING TRAPS.

- **Check in:** Notice your thoughts when you feel a spike in anxiety or stress.
- **Re-examine:** Reevaluate your thoughts and consider alternative, rational thoughts.
- **Take action:** Replace the catastrophic thoughts with a productive action, such as problem-solving and self-care.

6 TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF.

Create healthy habits to manage the stress. Consider meditation, going out in nature, reading a book, or working on a hobby. Studies show that moving our bodies, including walking, biking, or even dancing, can improve mental health and reduce anxiety and depression. Make sure you get enough sleep and exercise, eat a healthy diet, and avoid using alcohol and drugs.

✂️ THE BOTTOM LINE 🗂️

Elections are stressful. If you feel anxious, know it's normal. Many people feel the same way. Remember the things you can do to minimize conflict and take care of yourself. Prioritize self-care first so you can cope with what comes next.