

# The Wellness Exchange



A Publication of  
**BUSINESS HEALTH SERVICES™**

*Solutions for a Healthier Workplace™*

For more information call 1-800-765-3277 or visit [www.bhsonline.com](http://www.bhsonline.com)

## Returning to Work After an Extended Leave



### Take Your Time

When returning to work, many employees want to be able to immediately slip back into their old roles and responsibilities. However, this does not always happen.

- It is ok not to have a routine.
- Focus on getting organized.
- Concentrate on learning any new skills, systems, and policies.
- Give yourself time to readjust to your work environment.
- Be patient and ease into your role gradually with open communication.

Returning to work after an extended leave can be difficult. Whether you were absent due to illness, on maternity leave, or away on travel, coming back and feeling comfortable in the work environment takes time.

### Changes

It is important to remember that while you were away from work, things have changed. Co-workers leave, new bosses arrive, company policies change, new technologies start, layoffs occur, and reorganizations and mergers happen. These are just a few transitions you may face.

Keep in mind that it may take you a while to get accustomed to the changes.

- Try not to compare your old job with the new responsibilities and systems.
- Keep your focus on the future, not the past.
- Recognize the change as a positive opportunity.
- Your colleagues may have changed roles and may also be adjusting to your return.



### Ask for Help

Talk with your boss and colleagues about your feelings. Be specific about which areas you are having difficulty with and ask for additional assistance. As with a new employee, you may need to learn new skills or relearn old ones.

Making and adjusting to job-related changes can take time. But ultimately, building a positive work environment can help make you more productive and your job more enjoyable.



### Role of the EAP

Take advantage of your Employee Assistance Program. The EAP offers services and resources to help make the transition back to work easier.

The EAP provides confidential assistance and cost-free resources to help effectively address any problems before they interfere with personal wellness, professional obligations and overall work performance. The services provided will help with a healthy and successful readjustment back to work.

### Learn More

[www.dol.gov](http://www.dol.gov)

[www.welfareatwork.co.uk](http://www.welfareatwork.co.uk)

**If you are feeling overwhelmed, depressed, or stressed, remember that there are Master's Level clinicians available to help you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Call today!**

# Brain Fitness: Exercise Your Mind!

We all know that staying active and exercising are important to our overall health and well being. Physical exercise can help prevent several medical conditions, such as diabetes, some cancer and heart problems. What about brain health? Can we exercise our brains? Yes!



## Brain Fitness

As we do with our bodies, we must also exercise our brains. It is important that we use and develop our brains through learning. By engaging in activities that utilize our senses and memories, we can strengthen the brain's functionality. The brain defines us as individuals, and working to sustain our brain's abilities will also preserve the person we are.

## Recent Developments

The idea that our mature, adult brain is unchangeable has changed in recent years. Scientists have discovered that our brain is continuously changing.

There is growing evidence that the adult brain creates new neurons, and many of these neurons survive and integrate themselves into the working brain. This research "could lead to improved treatments for many disorders, diseases, or damage – from Alzheimer's and epilepsy to stroke and traumatic brain injury – and it can help keep our minds and memories sharp." (<http://web.sfn.org>).



## The Crossword Myth

It is believed that doing crossword puzzles can keep the brain sharp. Research suggests that although crosswords can be a part of your brain fitness regimen, they are not enough by themselves. Remember to take part in a variety of activities. Do not rely on one interest.

## Keep Learning

As with physical fitness, brain fitness also requires a combination of exercises to strengthen and improve your health. But remember to have some fun! Learn to samba, or maybe a new language. When you put in the effort, your brain will thank you.

## Use It or Lose It

The best thing to do for your brain is to keep learning. Brain fitness activities should include the following criteria:

- Something new. To keep your brain strong, continually learn new skills.
- Challenge yourself. Activities should be challenging and require your full attention.
- Be progressive. Push yourself to improve your abilities.
- Use your processing systems. Engage in tasks that require you to use your processing systems and make distinctions among what you hear, see and/or feel.
- Reward yourself. Rewarding yourself for your activities can amplify brain changes.

To learn more about brain fitness, please visit the following websites:

<http://bfc.positscience.com>

[www.sharpbrains.com](http://www.sharpbrains.com)

<http://web.sfn.org>

**Business Health Services**  
is a free and confidential program  
provided by your employer for you  
and your household members. BHS  
can help resolve personal and  
professional problems.

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