

Managing Change



Many have commented about the difficult times, especially as people struggle to manage jobs with reduced and limited resources. Budgets are tight, and work places are in various states of change, including re-purposing and consolidation. Some may be wondering how they fit into the new ways of doing business.

Work has a great deal of psychological importance. It provides structure, security, social contact, expressions of competency, exercise of power and control, identity, fulfillment of values, self-esteem, and fun. What cannot be over emphasized, however, is that the current budget situation can be threatening and cause very personal responses, including:

- * **Anxiety** about more work to be fit into the same number of hours
- * **Fear** of possible loss of job or employment
- * **Concern** about new assignments which may feel unpredictable and uncertain
- * **Shock** that unexpected change could be happening, especially now
- * **Belief** that someone or something will stop the change before it happens
- * **Anger** or blame about the change not being fair.
- * **Depression** or despair about the future
- * **Guilt** about ones own concerns and feelings

Each person has implicit and explicit expectations of an employer. Especially in state government, many expect job security and some control over jobs. The current budget situation, however, seems to challenge established notions. Today, a person can do a great job and still have it phased out.

Coping with change is important. Coping, however, implies some degree of loss. Although each person has unique ways of dealing with loss, many people have physical (fatigue, insomnia, health issues), cognitive (concentration, memory) or emotional (fear, guilt, anxiety) reactions, almost all of which are normal. Those

who deal best often also display an ongoing capacity for commitment, control, and challenge.

- * **Commitment:** Knowing what is important in life and the ways to pursue it through everyday activities
- * **Control:** Making choices about important issues
- * **Challenge:** Looking for fresh opportunities for growth

However you best cope, remember management of stress and change takes time and energy.

Consider the following life style practices:

- * Remember you are normal
- * Acknowledge what you can/cannot control
- * Talk to friends and family
- * Get enough sleep
- * Minimize the use of alcohol and drugs
- * Exercise regularly
- * Keep your sense of humor
- * Recognize the values of your life, and be clear about your priorities
- * Find meaningful activities
- * Talk about what you are feeling, your concerns, frustrations, or possible excitement about the changes.
- * Remember LIFELINE at 1-800-284-7575

The SRS Office of Diversity, Employee Relations Office, also has a toll free, confidential number any SRS employee can use to talk over work related problems.

Toll-free: 1-877-277-1369
TTY: 1-785-296-1491

