The Responsible Worker Toolkit

Aa **RESPONSIBILITY** noun
rĭ-spŏn″sə-bĭl′ĭ-tē

Being reliable to do the things that are expected or required of you.

You are dependable, consistent, attentive, and driven. This is why people love working with you. You simply get the job done - done well, done right. You value structure, organization, expectations, even deadlines - and you rock them all. Your high sense of responsibility makes you a superstar at work because you pay attention to the details big and small, and you tackle problems straight on knowing that a solution is out there. You should be proud of yourself! Not everyone can do what you do. While you have an affinity for many kindness concepts, congratulations - **your kindness superpower is responsibility.**

RESPONSIBILITY IN WORDS

Self-Talk

Do you acknowledge your ability to remember details and follow through on tasks? Do you let your high sense of responsibility drive you toward excellence or do you get stuck in an endless loop of perfectionism? Are you giving yourself the space to cultivate passion for your work alongside your commitment to it? The thoughts and words you speak to yourself set the tone for how you feel for the rest of the day. This in turn affects your attitude and how you speak with others. This means it's important to use positive self-talk on a daily basis. *Self-talk is the practice of consciously speaking to yourself both out loud and internally in a positive manner.* The following are suggestions to shift your self-talk towards a focus on responsibility. Consider using these self-talk phrases throughout your day:

Remind yourself of how efficient and dependable you are.
Example: Because I get my work done on time and with a high degree of quality, our workplace runs smoother, and I am setting a positive example for my co-workers.

Compliment yourself on your ability to complete tasks and follow through.
Example: I am capable of completing everything I need to get done today because I am organized and prepared.

> Remind yourself that ultimately you are only responsible for yourself, even if you support or supervise others.
> **Example: I know that I can only do my best, though I will encourage others to do their best as well. Ultimately, if they choose to be irresponsible in their tasks, I know I can control what I am responsible for and still achieve excellence in my own way.**

In One-on-One Interactions

It is likely that you work with others in a one-on-one capacity in some way, shape, or form. Perhaps you have to collaborate with another team member; maybe you have one-on-one meetings with a supervisor; maybe you have to have your work reviewed by another person or you have a mentor on your team. Knowing how you value responsibility at work and in your personal interactions with colleagues, here are some things to think about when working with people one-on-one that will let you showcase your high need for responsible engagements and work relationships:

> If a colleague is struggling with project management, time management, or task or project follow-through, offer your abilities to organize and deliver.

> Explain ways to keep tasks organized through checklists or other project management tools, or offer to hold colleagues accountable by checking in on their progress.

In Teams

Unless you are your own boss or are in a small business, you likely have a team of colleagues around you. This means you function as part of a team – either intimately or by extension (if you are not part of a specific team of people, your company as a whole is like a team – you are all driving toward the same targets and end goals). As such, it is important to see how your high degree of responsibility – and your expectation for a responsibility-focused workplace – impacts your place in the team. When engaging in team-based activities as a person who highly values responsibility – consider the following for improving responsibility among the team:

> Offer recommendations for making best use of team engagements like team meetings, shift changes, training/onboarding, or routine communications.

> Consider if work processes are efficient and effective. Do you have suggestions for how to improve them so that everyone can deliver on their responsibilities?

RESPONSIBILITY IN ACTION

In order to have a responsible workplace, there are some things you can do both at home and at work. How you start your day, end your day, engage at work and transition back home all matter for how you are able to show up both for your colleagues and for your friends and family.

Below are some suggestions for how you can ensure that your workplace actions express an attitude of **responsibility** towards both yourself and others, and set you up for success all day long.

Starting & Ending Each Work Day

Write (or mentally review) a to-do list or a checklist of the actions you need to perform or tasks you need to complete today.

Identify or review the general timeframe in which you should complete your work and challenge yourself to keep to the timeframes.

Review your progress at the end of the day. Were you able to achieve everything you set out to achieve? If so, well done! If not, what could you do to improve for tomorrow? Did you have too much to reasonably finish? Did you waste time?

At Work

Become familiar with the project or process management tools, software, or processes that your company uses. How do they impact the work you do? Are you and your colleagues utilizing these to their full potential and benefit? Are there inefficiencies that you, with your skills and inclination toward responsible work, could help correct or right size?

Remind yourself that ultimately you are only responsible for yourself, even if you support or supervise others. Do not unduly take on the responsibilities of others. You will burn out and that won't be good for anyone!

Transitioning Back Home

Evaluate how you "run" your home - whether you live alone, have roommates, or have a family. Have the home life responsibilities been evenly distributed? Are you doing more than you should? Are you allowing others to take some responsibility for making your home life run smoothly?

Similarly, are you over regulating your home routine? Are you able to relax or are you too rigid and structured that you feel like you never actually leave work? While your sensitivity to responsibility is a tremendous asset, it can prevent you from taking care of yourself by resting and relaxing. Find a balance between order and chaos that allows you and others to take some much needed downtime.
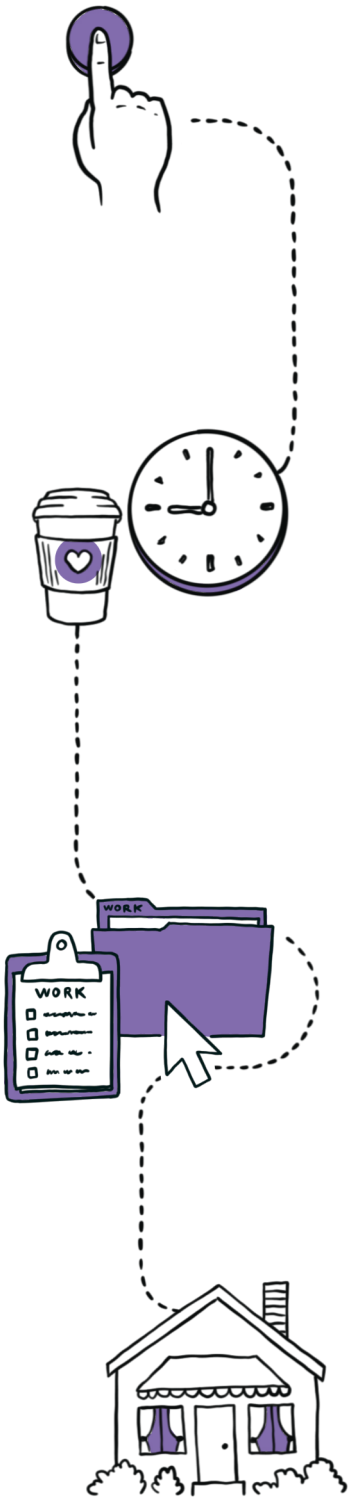
RANDOM ACTS OF RESPONSIBILITY

RAKs, also known as Random Acts of Kindness, are little acts of kindness that are often anonymous (though not required!) to spread kindness and joy in your workplace. The following series of RAKs focus on a lens of responsibility and encourage people in your workplace to not only be responsible, but to also spread an attitude of responsibility to others as well. **Let's explore ways to incorporate responsibility focused RAKs throughout your workplace in a variety of settings.**

Individually

Random Acts of Kindness (RAKs) for individual coworkers can be done to lift their spirits or give them a boost for no reason at all! Here are a few ideas to get you started:

> Offer to help a colleague establish a to do list for an upcoming project.
>
> Take on a task for a colleague without being asked.

In Your Team

RAKs for your entire team or workgroup is often simply fun and can increase morale.

These activities can be done whether you are in leadership or not and frequently inspire others to continue the cycle of caring and kindness in your workplace.

> Randomly give out treats when a meeting ends on time.
>
> Create a physical to do list to share with others.
>
> If you work remotely, share your virtual to-do list set up with everyone on the team.

Overall at Work

Your workplace as a whole can promote a community of responsibility and kindness through RAKs that not only affect the company or organization, but also externally within your community or communities (if in multiple locations). Look around and start to brainstorm ideas on how to infuse responsibility and kindness beyond your team. Go big!

> Examine your local community and identify one goal in which your workplace can positively impact the environment. Work together to accomplish this goal. **Example: decrease waste. See if your workplace can switch to zero waste policy or take on initiatives like "going paperless."**

KINDNESS RESOURCES

Want to learn more about how to tap into your interpersonal center of kindness and positively influence your workplace through a lens of responsibility? Check these out:

Creating a Responsible Workplace

16 Examples of Taking Responsibility at Work

The Importance of Work Responsibility and How to Achieve More

The Random Acts of Kindness Foundation website

The Random Acts of Kindness Foundation | LinkedIn Profile

Kindness Challenge

30 Days of Kindness in the Workplace

Now that you have worked your way through the toolkit, the final component is a 30 day challenge. Using the calendar below, try to accomplish one kind act each day (a suggestion is provided, or replace it with one that suits your workplace better).

Random Acts of Kindness Workplace Challenge