

# Solutions

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## The “Attention Economy” Wants You“

Where is your attention going? Michael H. Goldhaber, a physicist and futurist, wrote about “The Attention Economy” in 1997. His argument: human attention, like time, is a limited resource, easily grabbed and manipulated.

Being aware of the attention economy can help you improve focus, be more intentional with decisions, and stay in control amid daily digital bombardment. Not managing your attention can leave you vulnerable to interruptions, scattered thinking, and reduced productivity. So awareness is your first power, but it's a continually developing skill.

The first step is understanding that your attention is what market forces seek to influence. Your decisions, values, and sense of what matters most all are targets.

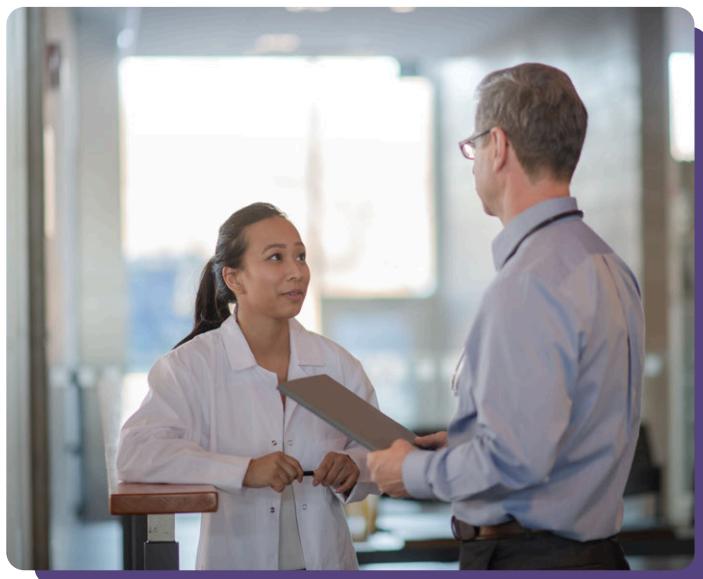
Recognizing this gives you pause, allows refocusing, and enables choices rather than being pulled into a vortex of agendas. Feeling in control gives you the satisfaction of directing your attention where you want.

## Understand “Meta-Communication” to Avoid Conflicts

“I like your new shirt ... I think.” Meta-communication refers to the underlying messages a person conveys beyond their actual words. It reflects how something is said—tone, body language, timing, and other cues. You notice it when the emotional message feels different from what was stated.

While it is not always negative, addressing it early can prevent misunderstandings, stop conflicts from escalating, and protect morale. If you grew up where vulnerability was discouraged or authentic communication was rare, you may use meta-communication more often and detect it more readily—and sometimes even expect it when it isn't there. Feeling frustrated by mixed signals? Sensing tension with a coworker?

Talk with the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). They can help you sort out what you're experiencing and identify the next healthy step for maintaining positive workplace relationships.



Connect with us.

1.800.668.9920

## Should You Participate in 'Dry January'?

"Dry January"—originally a United Kingdom tradition—encourages people to abstain from alcohol for the month of January. The practice was inspired by concerns about frequent holiday drinking. Alcohol abstinence can bring noticeable benefits, including better sleep, increased energy, improved mood, less depression, and healthier weight management.

These benefits overlap with those experienced by people recovering from alcohol use disorder (AUD). If alcohol is a concern, talk to your doctor before stopping drinking suddenly, as withdrawal can pose serious health risks and may even require medical supervision. If you are concerned your drinking has become problematic—meaning it negatively affects your life—contact your EAP for a confidential assessment. EAP professionals can provide guidance, resources, and support tailored to your needs, helping you determine whether alcohol use indicates a potential AUD and offering strategies to support your progress toward sobriety.



## First Impressions Count with Your Supervisor

Making a strong first impression matters if you are a new employee. Research with supervisors shows its importance. Your first week's actions may shape how your supervisor sees you for months to come. What supervisors notice first are reliability, punctuality, follow-through on commitments, communication effectiveness, responding promptly, and engaging in conversations early on with professionalism.

Also noticed is the ability to take initiative, showing curiosity, adapting to the team culture, and remaining confident even if unsure of how to handle problems or issues. What hurts first impressions are being late, appearing disorganized, and needing repeated reminders. The biggest misstep is acting like you know better before understanding how things are done. Most worrisome signs are negativity, low energy, boredom, and acting like you don't want to do the job.

