

IMPATIENCE TIP SHEET

- Recognize the impact your impatience has on others. Your impatient response may unsettle others, disturb your relationships, undermine morale, and/or contribute to lower quality work. While you might feel that it benefits **you** and the organization, it is likely that your impatience has many unintended negative consequences.
- While impatience can be expressed with words, it is more frequently expressed nonverbally. People will get the message from your tone of voice, your facial expression or your body gestures. Be aware of how your impatience comes across, whether in a clenched jaw, fidgeting, or harsh tone, and work to moderate your expression of it.
- To guard against conveying impatience verbally, put your focus on understanding others. Strive to convey your open-mindedness by taking the time to really try to comprehend the other person. If you have difficulty with listening, then work on developing your listening skills.
- If you tend to come across as intimidating when you are feeling impatient, then be particularly cautious about expressing your opinions when you feel stressed or negative. Guard against coming across as critical by using “I” statements. For example, you could say “As I hear this discussion, I’m wondering about whether we need to consider these factors” as opposed to “Have you thought this through? What about X? Why did you do it this way?”
- Don’t assume that others share your level of knowledge or expertise. Sometimes people can become impatient or frustrated because they expect others to have an understanding of issues that they don’t possess.
- Practice mindfulness. Impatience can sometimes come from having a sense of urgency that exceeds the demands of the situation. Developing the skill to slow down and gain perspective can help you ensure you don’t become unnecessarily irritable.
- Recognize the pace of your organization. If you are in a large organization, it can be necessary to vet ideas and gain buy-in from multiple stakeholders. Different

people process information at different rates. While you might have a bent towards action, others may need to think things through. Being respectful of individual differences and the necessities of getting things done in a large organization can help you moderate your impatience.

- Sleep on big decisions. If you are impatient, you may sometimes jump into action too quickly before fully thinking things through. To guard against this, where possible, give yourself the time to process relevant data by sleeping on a decision before moving forward.
- Remember that learning takes time. If you have a heavy workload, you may become impatient if your direct reports or others around you, learn at a slow pace. Make sure that you are being realistic.