

life at esa

→ BEHAVIOUR GUIDE



life at esa

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This ESA Behaviour Guide is the result of several consultations with staff and contractors in ESA establishments, through the Quality of Working Life studies and through focus groups, interviews, testimonies, working groups and online collaboration.

Mission Statement

ESA has many missions. Life at ESA has one; to improve your work life. We are here to support you and help you support others...and to create an environment where skills, talent and cultural differences can help ESA reach further.

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esa

All life is here



because all life is here.

Because the same diversity of people in the outside world is also found inside ESA.

Director General's message



I believe that the strength of our organisation comes from the expertise and diversity of the people within it. As such I believe our organisation must include a range of people from different backgrounds and different points of view.

I recognise that our success is dependent on the dedication and passion with which people at ESA fulfil their roles.

I want to repay this with support and investment in our people and see that their well-being and engagement is key in achieving ESA's future objectives.

Our influential role in Europe means that we must be exemplary in the ethics and manner in which we conduct ourselves: this means that each representative of ESA, in all parts of the organisation should be mindful of the responsibility to demonstrate respect, integrity and fairness in every function of their work. We expect this every day, from every person, at every level.

This Guide covers a wide range of organisational practices and behaviours. It does not cover every issue that may arise, but it sets out basic principles to guide all employees (including staff and contractors). These principles should inform and facilitate our inter-personal relations; giving greater clarity on the ESA standards and expectations of its people. Standards that can only be upheld through peer influence and consistent reinforcement.

For that reason, a guide can help us to identify our own, shared set of norms and principles of behaviour, bringing different views together to create a 'One ESA' approach and work towards a more person-centric organisation as spelled out in Agenda 2015.

Appropriate conduct is not a passive process, but requires you to make conscious choices and decisions, and to exercise good judgement, consistent with the values of the organisation. Always bear in mind the impact of your actions on others and ask yourself how you would feel if you were on the receiving end. Always treat others in a courteous and professional manner.

I want an open culture where people ask if they are unsure what compliance means in particular circumstances. I also want concerns to be raised and if you believe someone has repeatedly perpetuated an unacceptable behaviour at ESA, you have a responsibility to act. The Guide explains how to do this.

Our reputation and our future success are critically dependent on compliance, not just with the law but with the highest ethical standards. This Guide is a further commitment to integrity for all of us and will help us to safeguard that asset.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'JJ Dordain'. The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

JJ Dordain, Director General, European Space Agency

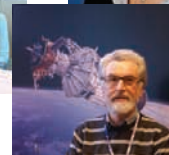
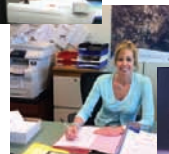
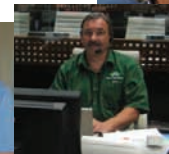
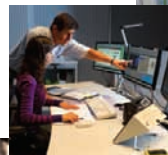
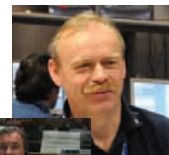
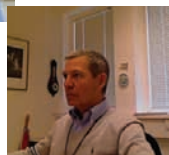
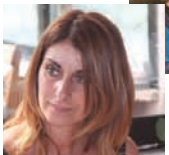
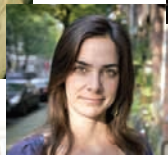
Why this Guide?

The Guide is aimed at and applicable to everyone working for ESA. Directors, managers, contractors and staff are all individually concerned.

This Guide is an attempt to create greater clarity in terms of standards and expectations of behaviour at ESA: it may not cover everything that you feel is important but it is designed to be pragmatic and useful in your everyday work. The Guide will foster discussions and support people at ESA to understand, abide by and if need be, develop the behaviour necessary to positively contribute towards ESA's goals. In this regard the Guide complements the ESA Charter of Values which sets a number of general principles, *inter alia*, on interpersonal relations.

You may find this Guide useful when you:

- Position your own behaviour compared to ESA standards.
- Select people.
- Conduct a performance appraisal.
- Take decisions about others.
- Reinforce positive behaviour in others.
- Address behaviour you feel may be inappropriate.
- Manage conflicts.
- Represent ESA's standards to external organisations.



What do we expect from each other?

...from everyone

We are all responsible for the culture and climate in which we work; they are defined by how we interact with each other, our values, customs, traditions, attitudes and feelings about our work and our organisation.

We each contribute to making ESA what it is and 'how it feels to work around here'. This implies a responsibility to be aware of our own impact and take steps when this negatively affects the work atmosphere or someone else.

around the organisation's goals. It is also about creating the kind of climate within your team where people can really perform to their best.

Being a good manager is not always easy; you may have budgets, projects, politics and targets to manage alongside your people but you only need to think of your best manager (and your worst) to remind you of the impact it can have on morale, job satisfaction and productivity.



We all recognise that people at ESA have very different perspectives, life experiences and expectations. That is the beauty of ESA and a key source of strength. It also makes it difficult to be sure of what principles guide how we work with each other and with people outside of the Agency. Following this Guide in a day-to-day sense is a means of establishing better common understanding and is something that we should all be able to commit to.

...from managers

Good management is not just about managing task delivery and technical resources effectively; it is about managing the human beings that embody those resources too. Being a good manager means recognising and leveraging the motivations, talents, differences, experience and expertise of each person and engaging each individual

...from HR

HR must act as the custodians of quality of working life at ESA. This means that they will act promptly and effectively to resolve issues of behaviour that threaten a good working climate at ESA. They will listen when issues are raised in good faith and will remain impartial. They will take action only with the agreement of the person raising the concern or when a breach of law or health and safety has occurred. In helping to resolve issues they will do their utmost to protect the interests of all parties involved. HR are committed to taking definite action to safeguard and improve the quality of working life for people at ESA. These steps are dedicated to preventing potential conflicts before they arise; they represent an 'early warning phase'.

Lead by example.

Four Principles

Through the Quality of Working Life research, you told us about behaviour you would like to reinforce within ESA's environment and the behaviour that you would like to change. These can be grouped consistently into four themes:

1. Respect, dignity and fairness.

We want a work environment that values the individual as a human being with rights; including the right to be heard, the right to common courtesy and the right to be treated fairly.

2. Integrity and Ambassadorship.

We want people to act in line with the values of the organisation and be able to be proud of the way in which we each represent ESA.

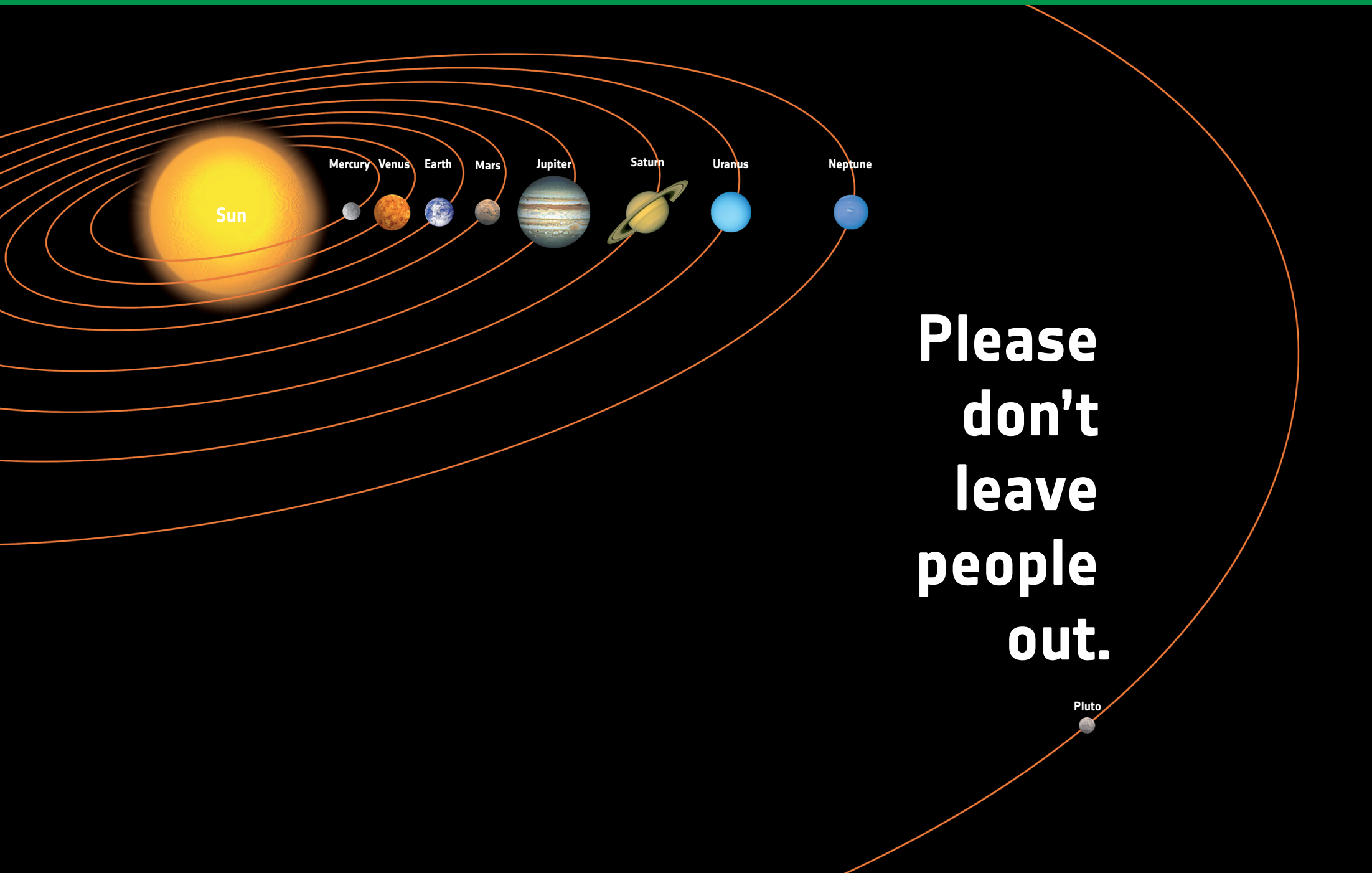
3. Cross-cultural sensitivity.

We want to work in a place where people value the cultural differences in their teams, where they take others' perspectives into account and where they collaborate and communicate to reach ESA's goals and share ESA's successes.

4. Working together.

We want to build the community of ESA and encourage everyone to work together openly and constructively to reach our shared goals. We want to be inclusive in our teams. We want everyone to take an interest in performance and development, to use clear, honest feedback to maintain motivation and pride in our teams.

Respect,
dignity
& fairness



**Please
don't
leave
people
out.**

Pluto

1

Respect, dignity & fairness

Respect: upholding each person's right to be heard and showing common courtesy.

Human dignity: creating a work environment that values the individual as a human being with rights.

Relationship management: building and maintaining positive relationships with peers and the team, and taking into account the feelings and perspectives of others.

Communication: communicating in a way that always supports the achievement of ESA's goals and that simultaneously respects the needs of others.

We want everyone to:

- Listen to others' views.
- Afford people the right to express their opinion and contribute in meetings.
- Show courtesy to others.
- Be polite in all interactions.
- Encourage respect in others.
- Stand up for ESA principles of behaviour.
- Set high standards of behaviour amongst their colleagues – peer • influence counts.
- Apologise when they see they are in the wrong.
- Apologise when they may have offended someone or affected their dignity.
- Speak out against inappropriate behaviour.
- Act transparently and honestly with those they work with.
- Discuss problems and issues as soon as they arise.
- Contribute to a positive work climate both inside and outside their teams.
- Show recognition of effort and achievement.
- Avoid spreading cynicism and rumours.
- Encourage others to keep one another informed and share information.

We don't want people to:

- Make negative comments e.g. on a failed job.
- Shout.
- Belittle people in front of their colleagues.
- Answer phone calls in meetings.
- Refuse advice when they are in a position to help.
- Ignore unacceptable behaviour.
- Make sexual innuendoes/suggestions.
- Engage in group-mobbing or bullying i.e. systematic exclusion.
- Blame individuals for group failure/mistakes.
- Ostracise someone – stripping them of their duties, non-communication, or otherwise isolating them.
- Make inappropriate physical contact with someone.
- Keep quiet when they know a colleague is suffering or being harassed.
- Withhold information or misinform with intent.
- Refuse the right of others to intervene in meetings.



Be aware of each other's views.

**Wear it on
the outside
inside ESA.
And vice
versa.**



**Integrity and
ambassadorship**

2

Integrity and ambassadorship

Integrity: acting in line with the values of the organisation.

Ambassadorship: representing ESA positively and responsibly in all contexts and proactively building the reputation of the organisation as a role model for European Co-operation.

We want everyone to:

- Inspire in others a sense of belonging and loyalty to ESA and its mission.
- Know when and how to use confidential information without abusing the confidence of the source.
- Avoid any activity that creates conflict of interest and be transparent in managing possible misperceptions.
- Report any conflicts of interest.
- Respect the resources of the organisation and use them efficiently.
- Ensure that we have a solid understanding of the values and activities of ESA as well as its political and competitive environment.
- Contribute positively to the reputation of their team, Section, Division, Department and Agency through their exemplary professionalism.
- Reflect on the impact of their own actions, behaviour and communication on the Agency's image and avoid jeopardising that image.
- Address issues promptly that may tarnish the reputation of ESA.

We do not want people to:

- Ask personal favours that people are not in a position to refuse.
- Leak confidential information.
- Threaten someone to stop them from speaking out.
- Abuse the trust that ESA puts in them.
- Undermine their colleagues in front of industry or other outside organisations.
- Openly criticise ESA in front of third parties; dealing with issues internally first shows greater loyalty and respect to our organisation.



Inspire a sense of belonging
and loyalty.

Ten, neuf, acht, sette,
shest, cinco, fyra,
drie, doi,
en...



Cross-cultural sensitivity

Cross-cultural sensitivity: being aware of your own impact, adapting your approach to the differing perspectives and needs of diverse cultures.

Equal opportunity: ensuring that everyone, regardless of culture, gender, age, sexuality, religion, personality, work-style, disability, background and grade has the same opportunities to contribute to ESA's success and be rewarded for that contribution.

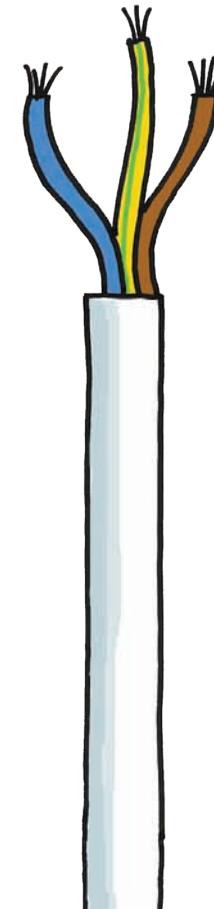
We want everyone to:

- Be fair in administering reward and reprimand – people will notice if we are not.
- Treat all people equally and fairly.
- Recognise that we all have a natural bias towards those we like and who are like us – look for diversity to enrich our teams.
- Challenge all forms of prejudices.
- Actively create an atmosphere of cross-cultural learning and openness.
- Modify and adapt our own style and professional practices accordingly.
- Work to create an environment in which cultural differences are understood and valued because they strengthen ESA.
- Confront cultural or national discriminatory modes of behaviour.
- Be mindful of their own biases – we all have them.

We do not want people to:

- Apply stereotypes or tolerate others doing so.
- Make sexist remarks.
- Make inappropriate jokes e.g. stereotyping cultures or behaviour.
- Exclude those in a minority position in a group.
- Let personal feelings get in the way of fairness.
- Treat cultural differences as a subject that is off-limits; differences can only be managed and valued once they are explored.

It's our differences that power us.





Fusion power. We've already got it.

Working together

Team work: working together for One ESA; within and across teams, between Directorates and Establishments, in partnership with other organisations.

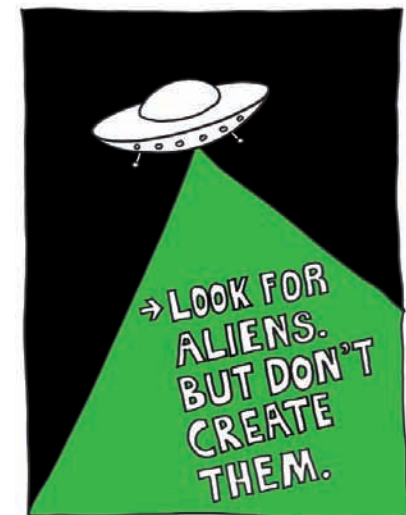
Leading and motivating others: taking an interest in the performance and development of others and demonstrating clarity, trustworthiness and feedback to maintain motivation and performance in a team.

We want everyone to:

- Give recognition and credit to the team rather than seeking individual credit.
- Express appreciation for the contributions of others.
- Try to keep morale high during periods of high pressure.
- Bring healthy debate and challenge into our teams and make people feel welcome and included.
- Regularly ask themselves the question: “is this appropriate conduct?”
- Lead by example.
- Motivate and inspire others to grow, develop and personally succeed.
- Delegate responsibilities not only tasks.
- Give preference to a face-to-face conversation instead of writing an email – in particular when tensions are arising or when there is conflict.
- Assess and encourage potential in others, reinforcing self-development and excellence.
- Take care of our teams – we each play an important role in the well-being of others.
- Be more people-orientated.

We do not want people to:

- Show preference or bias to members of their team.
- Withhold information and/or knowledge.
- Give poor feedback (unconstructive, vague, only through the annual assessment). Give no feedback!
- Come late to meetings; their colleagues and their colleagues’ time, are important as well.
- Neglect members of their team or make people feel excluded, e.g. greeting all but one person.
- Ignore people when they try to contribute to meetings.
- Speak a language that not everyone understands in a meeting.
- Leave someone with no work, no support, no explanation.
- Ignore the people element of their leadership role.
- Undermine someone’s competence with persistent, unconstructive criticism.
- Use their power inappropriately e.g. threatening someone’s career prospects or job security.
- Set someone up to fail e.g. putting someone in a position without the resources or information required to complete their task.
- Fail to show empathy when it is needed.
- Act in a way that undermines the trust within the team.
- Forget that their colleagues are human beings as well as professionals – everyone needs to feel they are being treated with consideration and humanity.



What should you
do about stress?

**Could you recognise
burn-out in yourself?**



5

What should you do about stress?

It is clear that when we are on the receiving end of negative behaviour or we are working in a difficult team climate, it can be stressful. The earlier you react, the more margins for manoeuvre you will have to reduce your stress. The steps below will guide you on where to get help with managing this and how to begin to regain control of the situation.

Step 1 – Detection:

a) Learn how to recognise the signs that you are stressed: the pattern of stress symptoms is different for everyone and includes physical, psychological and behavioural factors (see below). The sooner you spot these, the earlier you can intervene to alleviate or counter-balance the effects of stress.

b) Auto-analyse your key ‘stressors’ by keeping a stress diary; how are your stress levels each day and what things (small and large) are triggering a stress response? It’s easy to assume that there is just one element responsible for your stress but some analysis will give you a more complete picture. Remember that stress can be induced or aggravated as much by small hassles as by the big things.

Signs that you may be stressed

1. Physical – nausea, headaches, indigestion, gastric troubles, low immunoresponse (susceptibility to viruses and bacterial infections), increased blood pressure, heart palpitations, muscle tension, back and neck-ache, persistent tiredness, sexual dysfunction, dizziness, skin complaints, allergies, amenorrhoea, lack of appetite, rapid weight change.

2. Psychological – drop in motivation, irritability, anxiety attacks, procrastination, loss of concentration, reduced self-esteem/self-worth, anger, mood swings, feelings of helplessness, feeling out of control, paranoia, intrusive images or thoughts, nightmares, increased daydreaming, suicidal ideas, images or thoughts.

3. Behavioural – avoidance, passivity, snappiness/rudeness with colleagues, increased alcohol consumption, comfort eating, disturbed sleep patterns, withdrawal, compulsive or impulsive behaviour, eating/walking/talking quickly, absenteeism, decreased work performance, longer work hours, increased caffeine consumption, increased accident-proneness, poorer time management.

Step 2 – Get advice and support:

a) One of the most important determinants in how successfully people manage stress (and even how much they feel in the first place) is the level of social support they have. Having people who care about you close by who can help you out, listen to your worries and offer a different perspective is enormously important and can help people to get through the toughest times in their lives. Who do you feel you can trust? Who can you talk to? It’s a good idea to get to know people outside of the work context as well as inside, to give balance and an opportunity to detach yourself regularly.

b) Isolation tends to make stress impacts worse but it can be difficult to raise these issues if you are worried about how people will respond. You are not alone: ESA has a ‘safety net’ of people trained to support you and help you to work through the situation and explore different solutions. You can approach the Welfare Officers, psychologists, HR Advisors, ESA’s doctors, the SAC contact people and your manager for advice and help.

Step 3 – Take action:

The big difference between positive pressure and negative stress is that we feel that the demands of the situation outstrip our capacity to cope with those demands. This means we can do one of three things:

1. Reduce the demands of the situation.
2. Increase our capacities to cope.
3. Reassess our perceptions of those demands and/or our own capacities. (See over page for examples of each of these.)

All of these approaches are effective partly because the minute you begin to take proactive action, you are starting the coping process. In fact, the best stress management approach uses all three.

Action 1: Reduce the demands of the situation by:

- Letting your manager know that you have too high a workload or difficult activities to complete in the time given or with the resources allocated. Ask him or her to guide you as to priorities. If it is not possible directly with your manager, your HRA can help you.
- Asking for help, delegating, getting practical support.
- Renegotiating deliverables or deadlines...easier if you communicate early!
- Addressing a conflict proactively and constructively (with support or by yourself). We can have a tendency to avoid this sort of problem but often that means it gets worse.

Action 2: Increase your capacity to cope by:

- Seeking clarity about the situation and your position so that you can make informed decisions about how you can respond.
- Building your skills through training, practise, mentoring or coaching.
- Seeking emotional support from those who care about you.
- Looking after your physical health via exercise, diet and healthcare so that you have more energy, and more opportunities to release tension.
- Cultivate mental calm with time out, breaks, meditation or meditative thought, breathing exercises, and good time and focus management.

Action 3: Reassess your perceptions of the demands of the situation and/or your capacity to cope by:

Challenging 'thought errors' (the types of irrational negative thoughts that creep in when we're feeling under real pressure or very unsure of ourselves and that are often self-defeating). 'Thought errors' may be:

- Globalisation – “this is going to affect every element of my life, forever!!!”
- Dramatising – “if this goes wrong it would be the worst thing that could ever happen to me.”
- Over-generalising – “I always make mistakes;” “everyone thinks I’m incompetent.”
- Personalising – “this is all my fault”, “it’s all his fault.”
- Labelling – “I’m boring”, “I am a failure.”
- Self-defeating – “I can’t do it”, “I can’t stand it” (these can sometimes be realistic assessments, if so, look at gaining support and tackling the stressors instead. But they can also be a result of frustration or a loss of perspective);

...and cultivating self-efficacy beliefs

- Make a list of the skills, supports and resources you have at your disposal that will help you tackle the problem.
- If you think you're not good at something, remind yourself of what you are good at and what you have achieved. As well as being generally reinforcing, sometimes you can achieve what you need to via a different means.
- Remind yourself of times when you have tackled something similar or used some of the same skills successfully.
- Make a Plan B to reduce the anxiety of what you perceive as 'failure' and create alternatives and reinforce choice and therefore control.

ESA renewed its focus on stress prevention as one of the actions within Life at ESA and is committed to developing and maintaining a sustainable approach to health and well-being across the organisation. To read about current activities and resources in this area, go to http://intranet.sso.esa.int/esiHR/SEMKA3SNIG_index_o.html

What should you do now?

Every person working at ESA has a responsibility to look after each other and interact with respect and courtesy. We also have a responsibility to act if we see behaviour that we think might go against the principles ESA has set. This is the only means by which we can all create the environment in which we want to work.

What are the options available?

If you witness unacceptable behaviour you can either:

- 1. Raise the issue with the person enacting the behaviour** – often people are just unaware that their behaviour could cause offence or upset someone else.
- 2. Approach the ‘target’ of the behaviour** (when there is one) to ask them how they feel about the incident and if they would like support – often it can be very isolating to be the target of intimidating or humiliating behaviour. Speaking to the person in private is a critical first step.
- 3. Speak to a representative** of HR, the Staff Association, Welfare Officer or on-site psychologist to gain advice – sometimes situations can be delicate and whilst you would like to intervene, you may not be sure how best to help. Confidential advice is available. The only circumstance in which this could not be maintained is where the behaviour being reported represents a risk to other personnel, the person themselves or constitutes a criminal offence. In this case you will be informed that confidentiality cannot be maintained.



If you are the target of unacceptable behaviour you can either:

- 1. Tackle the behaviour directly** with the individual in question – this is a constructive way to address the behaviour if you feel able to do it as it allows the situation to be made clear at an early stage to all parties. In many instances the behaviour stops there. You should politely but clearly state that you find the behaviour unacceptable and that you would like it to stop. Any ambiguity can lead to complications later on.
- 2. Go to your manager** or any other manager that you trust – every manager has a responsibility to listen to, and respond to, complaints of behaviour that make you feel intimidated, offended or humiliated.
- 3. Seek advice** from HR, the Staff Association, the Welfare Officer, on-site psychologists, doctors – it can be very isolating to be on the receiving end of behaviour that you find unacceptable. The people listed are trained to help you deal with these situations.
- 4. Speak out!** – Letting unacceptable behaviour go unchallenged at ESA has negative consequences for all of us. Let's put a stop to it.

ESA is committing to tracking the impact of changes in the working climate and analysing how ESA principles are being applied. For more information on the prevention policies and procedure in place, please contact your HR Advisor, email life@esa.int or visit the HR intranet under Life at ESA.

ESA procedure on conflict prevention and management

A) Overview on conflict prevention at ESA

The Info Note “Reinforcing interpersonal relationships at ESA – Principles for conflict prevention and conflict solving” describes the main principles of conflict prevention and solving as well as the four different phases in addressing conflicts: the early warning phase, addressing internal contact persons, applying to mediators and the disciplinary phase. (INFO Note 2012/8)

B) Mediation mechanism of interpersonal conflicts

Mediation for interpersonal conflicts has been introduced in the Agency [ESA/ADMIN/IPOL(2012)3] to explore all options available to achieve a solution and possibly reach an amicable settlement between the parties. Mediation is accessible to all staff and contractors.

While the Mediator will remain external to ESA, He/She is supported by an ESA staff member acting as the Secretary who will be bound by confidentiality. All applications to the Mediator will have to be channelled via the Secretary.

In general, applying to the Mediator should take place after the case has been addressed first within the direct management and, if no solution has been found, then to an internal contact person, although each party may apply directly to the Mediator’s Secretariat (*ESAMediatorSecretariat@esa.int*).

All personnel are encouraged to speak out when they experience or witness a breach of the behavioural standards and may get in touch with one of the internal contact persons who will listen and advise on possible further actions.

C) Policy on harassment prevention

The policy has been updated and includes a simplified procedure for raising complaints and takes into account the new Mediator mechanism, although the principles and the message of the previous version remain unchanged.

ESA/ADMIN/IPOL(2012)2 reinforces the message that crossing the borderline between misbehaviour and harassment is under no circumstances acceptable and will be sanctioned.

Just as ESA delivers high-value creative and innovative solutions in response to the technical needs of European citizens and our Member States, the Agency is also expected to comply with the highest possible ethical standards. ESA is therefore actively promoting ethical behaviour at the workplace, in particular by protecting staff members reporting wrongdoings against reprisals or retaliatory measures, which may be subject to disciplinary actions.

To access the two ADMINS, the INFO Note and the list of contact persons, check out the HR intranet under Life at ESA.

life@esa.int



ESA Member States

Austria
Belgium
Czech Republic
Denmark
Finland
France
Germany
Greece
Ireland
Italy
Luxembourg
Netherlands
Norway
Poland
Portugal
Romania
Spain
Sweden
Switzerland
United Kingdom

**“ESA's Corporate Visual Identity
is the visual materialisation
of ESA's values, essential for
integrity and ambassadorship,
and inspiring a sense of
belonging and loyalty.”**

Guidelines are available at:
<http://intramedia.sso.esa.int/ESA-CVIM.pdf>