

Loss | *Tip sheet*

## Suggestions for Honoring a Deceased Co-Worker

The loss of a co-worker can be especially difficult. The deceased may be someone you worked with closely or someone you saw occasionally. You may have considered them a good friend, a mentor or a strong support at work, or simply someone you enjoyed seeing every day. Regardless of how often we see a co-worker or how close we feel to the person, we may feel the need to memorialize someone who dies.

Keep in mind, not everyone grieves the same way, and there isn't a right or wrong way to grieve. Knowing this, it's important to respect the way in which others grieve and appreciate that not everyone may want to participate in a group memorial activity.

Below are some suggestions for honoring a deceased coworker which can be done as a group or individually:

**Make a memorial donation in their name.** Perhaps they were an avid animal lover – consider a donation to the local animal shelter. If they were ill prior to their death, you may want to consider a donation to an organization that supports education and research for that particular illness.

**Honor through volunteerism.** Was the person interested in helping the homeless or working with shelter animals? Consider volunteering for their favorite cause.

**Enjoy an activity the person loved.** As a group or on your own, participate in something they enjoyed; for example, kayaking, swimming, walking, cooking, etc.

**Hold a fundraiser to help the family.** Plan a golf tournament, a 5K or dinner with donations and/or an auction. Donate the proceeds to the family for funeral costs or other financial support.

**Organize a charity drive in the person's name.** Ask for donations of food, toys or something else and donate the proceeds to a local organization in honor of the deceased.

**Designate a "favorite" day at the office.** Honor the deceased by asking everyone at work to wear the person's favorite color, team apparel, etc.

**Plant a living memorial.** If your building allows it, plant a tree, perennial flowers or a garden with a plaque that says "In memory of" the person. Or check with a local park that may welcome the added beautification.

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**Establish a scholarship fund.** An ongoing tribute in the form of a scholarship will help honor the memory of your departed co-worker.

**Be there for the family.** Reach out to your deceased co-worker's loved ones to see if there is anything you or your work group could assist with.

**Honor their memory through art.** Contribute to commissioning or purchasing a piece of artwork or photograph for your lobby in the person's memory. If it has a special theme that connects to the person, even better.

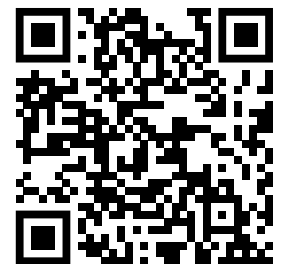
**Break bread and share memories.** Honor the deceased by holding a memorial potluck luncheon at work. It can also be a time to discuss your fond memories.

**Create a memory book.** Gather stories from coworkers about the individual and put them together in a scrapbook to present to the family.

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