

# Facilitator's Guide: Implementing *STAR:Office* Sessions

**STAR**  
SUPPORT. TRANSFORM. ACHIEVE. RESULTS.



**Office**

## **Facilitator's Guide to Implementing STAR:Office**

A STAR Workplace is a radical, commonsense rethinking of how we work and live. In a STAR, people stop simply “putting in” time or worrying about getting in at a certain time. Instead, they focus on results and only results. The contents of this guide will help you transform your organization, bringing about a change that will create the ultimate in accountability, while also giving everyone the freedom to live their life to the fullest.

Welcome to the future of work.

**Disclaimer:** A STAR Workplace challenges all of our assumptions about what work looks like. At the same time, companies still have to comply with local, state and federal labor laws.

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## The STAR Migration Step by Step

### Phase 1: Pre-Migration

- ✓ Read *Why Work Sucks and How To Fix It: The Results-Only Revolution*
- ✓ Review Pre-migration section of facilitator's guide
- ✓ Communicate the overall migration schedule to the organization
- ✓ Conduct Leadership Education session
- ✓ Conduct weSupport Training and Behavior Tracking Round #1

### Phase 2: Migration

#### Kickoff

- ✓ Review Kickoff section of facilitator's guide
- ✓ Run the Kickoff

#### Sludge Session

- ✓ **Read Sludge Session section of facilitator's guide**
- ✓ **Run Sludge Session**
- ✓ **Run Sludge Eradication Activity**

#### Culture Clinic

- ✓ Read Culture Clinic section of facilitator's guide
- ✓ Run Culture Clinic
- ✓ Go Live
- ✓ Run Do Something Scary Activity

#### Managers-Only Session

- ✓ Read Managers-Only section of facilitator's guide
- ✓ Familiarize yourself with Managers-Only Forum PowerPoint slides
- ✓ Run Managers-Only Session
- ✓ Conduct weSupport Behavior Tracking Round #2

### Phase 3: Learn and Evolve

#### All-team Forum

- ✓ Read All-Team Forum section of facilitator's guide
- ✓ Run All-Team Forum

## CHAPTER 3

### SLUDGE SESSION

#### Sludge Session: A Pep Talk

The great thing about migrating into a STAR is that a lot of your work as a facilitator is done for you outside the session. People will be talking about the Guideposts. They will be talking about why work sucks. They will be noticing those old, broken norms about time. Without any prompting from you, they will have these moments of clarity. Maybe it's when they were rushing to work to be in "on time" or maybe they were in a meeting that felt aimless and pointless. So they come in with knowledge that can't be unlearned. The Sludge Session builds on that.

Sludge is what we call the corrosive, toxic language that holds people back. Sludge is what keeps the workplace from being focused on results. Because as we'll see, if you are focused on results, there is no room for Sludge.

The most important thing about a Sludge Session is for people to take ownership. We are all responsible for creating the rules and norms of a traditional work environment. Even the coolest, most progressive boss still has moments when they mind the clock, or when they judge people by how they are appearing to work as opposed to what they are getting done.

So everyone, from the bottom to the top, has to take responsibility for the things they say, and for the consequences of those words. The Sludge Session is designed to be fun, but there is also a dark underside. If people start taking responsibility for their judgments of other people, they often take responsibility for not being the best person.

Your awareness, your compassion, and your resolve will be tested in the Sludge Session because it's very easy for it get away from you. A Sludge Session gone wrong will turn into a kind of massive bitch session, where people say things about others, but don't take ownership for their own misconceptions, misjudgments, and general nonsense.

You'll open by giving people a chance to voice concerns or thoughts from the Kickoff. People will often express doubts at what they heard. They have been buzzing about this idea for two weeks now and resistance has built back up in some people, while others are ready to take the plunge. The point of this first talk is just to get people talking about STAR so you make sure there aren't any runaway definitions. Stay firm and positive.

Then, you're going to ask them to dream about an ideal culture. They get to be the CEO of their own life. People are going to feel tentative about this idea. Part of the power of even the idea of a STAR is that once people get it they can sense how a STAR could affect their life, but they don't necessarily believe. They've had so many years of fake trust, and fake flexibility, that when you offer them real trust and real control, they won't believe it.

So someone might say, "Well I can't leave the country, can I?" And the answer in a STAR is that if you have a cell phone and access to the internet, then yes you can leave the country. If you can deliver results it doesn't matter if you are in your cube or at home or in Peru.

While you're asking people to talk about the current workplace and the ideal STAR workplace, you're looking for feeling words. You'll need to be comfortable with a range of emotions, some bad and some good. Work is complicated, so it's okay if some people think meetings in the traditional workplace have their uses. And it's also okay if people express fears about STAR. It's all part of the transformation.

Next up, the Sludge Game. How much you want to play this up is up to you, but we like to make it dramatic. It's that social change thing again. If people feel like they are bonding over this, then it's easier for the ideas to take hold.

Once they get Sludge it's ultimately up to them to eradicate it. It's like any kind of obvious, commonsense human thing. Do you think you should have a right to food that is clean and safe? Do you think women should be allowed to vote? Once remove fear barriers (we can't do it this way because it can't be done) and logistical barriers (too expensive, too time-consuming) what are you left with? You're left with what's the right thing to do.

That's essentially what you're saying at you send people off to eradicate Sludge. If we focus on results, we don't need to judge each other based on time. And if we're judging people on time and how work should look, then we can't focus on results. It's a leap of faith based on common sense. Now go forth and eradicate.

## **Sludge Session Overview**

Your goal is to teach participants how to eradicate Sludge from their workplace. In order to do this, they will need to know:

- ✓ The gap between the current and future state of work
- ✓ What is Sludge
- ✓ The types of Sludge
- ✓ How to eradicate the types of sludge.
- ✓ Sludge eradication is the KEY to un-sticking workplace culture. We cannot stress this enough.

You will be expected to:

- ✓ Endear yourself to the audience – develop allies.
- ✓ Hold true to the STAR philosophy.
- ✓ Be unwavering in your own belief about the change.
- ✓ Be confident but not arrogant.
- ✓ Educate but not humiliate or shame.
- ✓ Adapt when necessary based on participant reactions.
- ✓ Be both a teacher, and mentor.

The Sludge session is highly participative and FUN!

**Time:** 90 minutes.

**Session Participants:** Leaders, Managers and team members

**Session Logistics:** Meeting room for 10 – 25 participants. U-shaped set up preferable.

What you need to be armed with:

The best way to facilitate this session is by using a large whiteboard. If no whiteboard exists, prepare to use a lot of flip chart paper. You'll need sticky flip chart paper, or, if paper is not sticky, masking tape to tape paper to the wall.

- ✓ 4-3x5 cards with Sludge phrases
- ✓ Whiteboard or flip chart, markers
- ✓ Flip chart paper that says: Each person is free to do whatever they want, whenever they want, as long as the work gets done. (STAR definition)
- ✓ Flip chart paper with the Triangle (Judgment, Beliefs, Time)
- ✓ Flip chart paper that says: Name that Sludge, Sludge Justification, Sludge Anticipation, Back Sludge (or on whiteboard)
- ✓ Flip chart paper that says: Is there something I can help you with right now? Is there something you need? How can I help you? (or on whiteboard)
- ✓ Flip chart paper or whiteboard: 4 quadrants, one with the title 'STAR is'. (or use a whiteboard)
- ✓ Tape or Poster Putty
- ✓ Sludge poll example poster/handout for group behavior tracking game

## **Sludge Session Outline for Facilitator:**

1. Set up
2. Introduce yourself
3. Review Impediments
4. Position Sludge Eradication as a Tool
5. Define Outcome – Environmental Sludge Eradicators
6. Identify the Gap between Current/Future Culture
7. Part 1: What is a STAR?
8. Feelings
9. Part 2: Current State of Corporate American Culture
10. What is Culture?
11. Identify Company/Corporate American Cultural Attributes
12. Identify Beliefs about Attributes
13. Feelings
14. Choose a Culture
15. Position Gap as the 'language' that keeps culture in current (stable) state
16. Sludge Identification and Eradication Strategy
17. Sludge Activity
18. Directing Sludge at others and Why we Sludge
19. Types of Sludge
20. Justification
21. Anticipation
22. Back Sludge
23. Sludge Conspiracy
24. Sludge Eradication Strategy
25. Wrap-up
26. Next Steps

## Sludge Session: YOUR SCRIPT

**SAY:** Welcome to your STAR Sludge Session. I'm \_\_\_\_\_ and I'll be leading you through the session today.

As a reminder, STAR stands for Support. Transform. Achieve. Results. It is an innovative process for creating an effective and productive work culture. STAR guides teams to find ways to decrease unnecessary work, increase productivity, and increase everyone's control over their own work schedule. STAR also includes training and coaching for managers on how they can support their employees more effectively.

The definition of STAR is...

Facilitator's note:  
Unfold definition flip chart paper and read definition.

**ASK:** This is the workplace you are going to make a reality here at [company]. Do you remember the Triangle from the first session (Team Kickoff or Leadership Education)?

Facilitator's note:  
Most people will remember the Triangle

**DO** Unfold the triangle flip chart paper on the wall to display the triangle.

**SAY:** The three things in the work environment that we are working to change are judgment, the power of time, and the beliefs we have about the way work needs to happen.

**ASK:** Does anyone remember any examples of Judgment or Sludge in the work environment? What does it sound like?

Facilitator's note:  
Prompt the participants to give examples of Sludge. Ask them to think about comments in the workplace that are not productive or seem unsupportive and judgmental. They will say things like "I wish I could have 12 smoke breaks every day" or "So and so doesn't do any work. I do all of their work" or "Nice of you to show up". "I wish I could use the excuse that I'm working with offshore partners to show up late every day!"

**ASK:** Great examples. There are also our beliefs about work. What are some of the things we believe about the way work needs to happen?

Facilitator's note:

Prompt for examples. Ask what people believe about the way work needs to happen or what people believe about meetings or people with kids. They will say things like "people with kids have the best excuses to leave work early or come in late" or "the best collaboration happens in a meeting room" or "the best relationships are built face to face".

**SAY:** Good. And it's our beliefs about things that drive our behavior and how we judge other people in the work environment.

**ASK:** Time also has power over us. What is an example of how Time drives behavior in the work environment?

Facilitator's note:

Prompt for examples. Have them think about how the clock determines how they behave or what they think. They will say things like "people that work the most hours are more dedicated" or "if I come in at 8:30 I'm late or perceived as a slacker". Offshore workers don't work as hard as the rest of us.

**SAY:** Right. Time has a lot of power in the work environment.

Today, we are going to interrupt the cycle between judgment and beliefs. By removing judgment from the language of the culture, we will slowly change our beliefs about the way work needs to happen, and the power that time has over us will diminish.

Facilitator's note:

Point to jagged line (lightning bolt) between judgment and beliefs on the triangle chart.

**DO** For the next exercise, you will be using the flip chart with 4 quadrants – or a whiteboard where you've divided it into 4 quadrants. The upper right-hand quadrant has the title "A STAR workplace is:"

**SAY:** First we're going to talk about what STAR is. After you completed your first STAR session, you probably had some ideas in your head about what STAR might mean for you, and your workplace.

**ASK:** Can you give me a word or a short phrase about what you think or perceive a STAR workplace is?

**DO** Jot down the participants' words/phrases in the upper right-hand quadrant.

Facilitator's note:

If you have a large whiteboard, you could have participants come up and write words and phrases.

They will say/write things like “Teamwork. Freedom. Collaboration. Fun. Flexible”. If participants are somewhat quiet, or having trouble thinking of words, use the following prompts to get them talking: “What will this new environment be like?” “What will be happening in the STAR workplace?” “What will be different in the environment from what you experience now?” Some people may use more negative examples like ‘chaotic’, lack of teamwork, scary. That’s okay. Remind them that this is the environment they are imagining . . . an environment they would aspire to have. Keep prompting for words.

**SAY:** Good! That’s what STAR is all about. It’s the workplace you imagine it can be and you are going to create it and make it true.

Now we’re going to play a fantasy game. Pretend it’s one year from today and you have long since created your new work environment and everything is going great.

You have a place where (*read some of the words/phrases that describe STAR from the upper right-hand corner of the chart*). In fact, you’re able now to do some of the things you want to do in your life that you’ve given up on.

You’re going to your kids’ sporting events. You’re getting more rest.

You’ve taken up a hobby. You feel like you have complete control over your time.

**ASK:** When you are in this new place, how do you FEEL?

**DO** On the bottom right-hand quadrant of the flip chart or whiteboard write the feeling words. Keep prompting for ‘feelings’. If someone says “I’m going to be able to go back to school” ask “how would you feel if you could go back to school?”

Facilitator’s note:

You will get words like: Free, empowered, happier, stress-free, supported, respected, relaxed, rejuvenated, and productive. If participants mention words and phrases that aren’t positive, remind them that you’re asking them to think about how they would feel after they’ve gone through the change – when things are [read some of the words and phrases that describe STAR from the upper right-hand part of the quadrant]. If they insist that they would still feel the negative words and phrases, note them on the paper in a new column or different color. When you refer to the feelings later, circle the positive feelings and refer to those.

**SAY:** These are great words. This is exactly how we want you to feel. If you feel (*read words*), then you will have more energy for your work and this will flow.

Now we are going to come back to today – the work environment in which you are currently working. You have your own unique culture here with specific attributes that identify how work gets done.

**ASK:** When I say the word ‘culture’, what does that mean? What is ‘culture’?

Facilitator’s note:

Participants will say things like “behaviors, unwritten rules, processes, language, rules, attitudes and beliefs.

**SAY:** That’s right. Culture is all of those things. For our discussion about your culture, we will describe culture as ‘the way we do things around here’.

**ASK:** We know that different managers have very different styles, but generally speaking, how does the work get done?

Facilitator’s note:

You are now going to prompt participants to talk about cultural attributes. Write ‘cultural attributes’ on the upper left-hand quadrant of the flip chart paper or whiteboard.

**ASK:** What does it look like around here when work is getting done? What are people doing?

Facilitator’s note:

Prompt people to tell you how work is getting done, not the actual description of the work. You are looking for attributes like ‘meetings’, ‘face to face’, ‘hours’, Drive-bys (when people drop by another person’s work station and interrupt them). You can also prompt them by asking them to choose one cultural attribute over another. For example, is leadership more proactive or reactive? Is face-time important or not important? Is working a lot of hours is better in this culture that working fewer hours?”

**DO** Write the attributes on the whiteboard or flip chart.

**SAY:** Good. These attributes are common attributes that make up the culture of work in America. These attributes are not good or bad; they’re simply describing the way work happens around here. It’s what we believe about the way work needs to happen that causes us to behave in similar ways each day.

Let’s take a look at a couple of the cultural attributes and identify our beliefs about that attribute.

**DO** Select two or three cultural attributes (meetings, face time, and hours-focused are good ones to choose) and write them on the whiteboard or flipchart paper next to the attribute list.

Facilitator's note:

The exchange below is based on the cultural attribute meetings.

ASK:

What do we believe about meetings? What happens in a meeting?

Facilitator's note:

Participants will say things like 'decisions get made', 'information is shared' and 'we get more work' etc.

ASK:

Do you ever spend any time in an unproductive meeting?

Facilitator's note:

Participants will say that they do spend time in unproductive meetings. To understand how much time is wasted you might want to ask what percentage of meeting time spent each week is unproductive.

SAY:

You've shared a lot of beliefs about why meetings happen here, and what people believe about meetings.

ASK:

Do the things you believe about meetings always happen in meetings? Does work always get done? Is collaboration always effective?

Facilitator's note:

Participants will say things like 'no, not all meetings are effective' or 'sometimes meetings keep us from doing the work we need to get done'.

SAY:

That's right. Not all meetings are effective or the best use of our time but yet we still go to meetings and actually admit we're wasting time. It's our beliefs about meetings that are driving the meeting-heavy culture.

Facilitator's note:

Participants will say things like 'relationships are difficult to maintain' or 'the best customer service is done face to face' or the more face time you put in the more dedicated you are' or 'the time difference is definitely an issue'.

SAY:

Good. These are beliefs about your work drive corporate cultures to be focused on physical presence and face time, and illustrate the difficulties of working with different cultures and time schedules – sometimes clouding whether or not people are actually doing work.

The beliefs we have drive the way we do work. You like your work, but sometimes it's the WAY we do work that isn't the most productive.

ASK:

Let's talk about what it's like for you today. You have work. You have all the other things you need to do and want to do in your lives. You may be missing out on things

you want to do. You may have trouble keeping up with the things you need to do. You have work, and you have life. You may spend time in unproductive meetings. You may feel like there are not enough hours in the day.

With the way things are today, how do you FEEL in general?

Facilitator's note:

Write the feelings on the bottom left-hand quadrant of the flip chart paper or whiteboard. You will get things like: stressed out, tired, overwhelmed, left out, sad, disrespected, not valued, etc. You may also get positive words like happy, fulfilled, joyful (though you will mostly get more negative words).

SAY:

Good. These feelings are very common for people who work in any sort of traditional work setting. But you are going to create a STAR workplace where you feel less tired, overwhelmed, sad, etc and more free, supported, and empowered every day.

The way we're going to do that is by moving you in the direction of the right-hand quadrants of our chart (or whiteboard).

Facilitator's note:

Draw a line across the bottom from the bottom left-hand quadrant to the bottom right-hand quadrant. Make the line an arrow pointing right.

SAY:

In order to have a work environment where people feel [read some words and phrases that describe how participants would feel with STAR from the lower right-hand part of the quadrant], we have to remove the toxic language, Sludge, first.

Removing this language is KEY. As long as this language exists, people will feel [read some words and phrases that describe how participants feel in today's work environment from the bottom left-hand part of the quadrant]

For the next activity, I need three people to volunteer. You will be reading off of a 3x5 card. You can stay seated.

ASK:

Who would like to volunteer?

Facilitator's note:

Usually someone will volunteer right away. Encourage others to volunteer. As they volunteer, you will be handing them a 3x5 card with a Sludge statement on it. Use 3 or 4 cards. Examples below (other examples in Addendum).

- It's 10:00am and you're just getting in? I wish I could come in late every day!
- Can't your spouse stay home when your kid is sick?

- Are you taking another vacation day? How many vacation days do you get, anyway?
- I noticed you haven't been green very much lately on IM. What's up?

**SAY:**

Thank you for volunteering! What I'm going to have you do is read the statement on the card silently to yourself. Then you're going to pick someone in the room to say what's on the card to. I'd like you to say it with lots of drama!

Facilitator's note:

Encourage the volunteers to have fun with these role plays. Have each person with a Sludge card take their turn saying what's on the card to someone else in the room. The purpose of this activity is to demonstrate how these statements make people feel, and what's behind each statement – identify what they are reinforcing by saying these things in the environment.

After each person directs their statement to someone in the room, debrief by asking: Why would we say something like that in this culture? What's behind the statement? (Ex. For the statement "10:00 and you're just getting in? I wish I could come in late every day" participants might say that what's behind this statement is that they feel like they are doing more work, it's not fair that people get to come in late, etc.) What does it feel like to have that statement said to you? (Ex. Guilty, unappreciated, angry, etc.)

After each person demonstrates Sludge, collect the Sludge card.

**SAY:**

This language is not about the work or what needs to be done to support the residents or your co-workers. It keeps the culture from changing for the better and creates tension among workers. This language has no place in a STAR workplace, where each person feels supported both from a performance perspective and a personal/family perspective. The Sludge you just demonstrated is toxic.

Now we're going to go deeper and see how Sludge comes in different forms. Before we can eradicate it, we need to identify the types of Sludge that exist. To do this, we're going to play a game called "Name that Sludge". You will all be participating in this game. Each type of Sludge will be acted out and it will be up to you to try to name it.

Facilitator's note:

Use the flip chart paper with Name that Sludge on top. Make sure that the types of Sludge are covered up in the beginning of this activity. As participants identify the types, you will uncover each type in order beginning with Sludge Justification, then Sludge Anticipation, and then Back Sludge.

**DO**

Pick the person that had the Sludge card "10:00 and you're just getting in? I wish I could come in late every day!" Ask this person if they will help you out. Give the card back to them. Have the participant say the statement to you and have the following conversation:

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Participant: “10:00 and you’re just getting in? I wish I could come in late every day!”

Facilitator: “I know late but I have to get my daughter to daycare and it doesn’t open until 7:30. Then I often run into a lot of traffic on my way here. I do stay two hours longer.”

**ASK:** I was just Sludged and what did I do?

Facilitator’s note:

You just demonstrated Sludge Justification. When you got sludged, you automatically went to a socially acceptable explanation of why you came in ‘late’. Encourage people to guess what type of Sludge you just demonstrated. They will say things like ‘excuse Sludge’ or ‘you were justifying yourself’. When they get close you can uncover the first type of Sludge.

**SAY:** Good! The first type of Sludge is called Sludge Justification.

Sludge Justification is used when someone Sludges you. It’s human nature to want to explain or justify yourself. This keeps Sludge going. It does not eradicate it. We will talk about how to eradicate it after we uncover all of the types of Sludge.

Now let’s identify the next type of Sludge.

**DO** Ask someone in the room to say to you when you walk by them: “Hey! Are you going on another break?” See the conversation below.

Facilitator’s note:

You are going to be demonstrating what thoughts are in your head by speaking them out loud. Here is an example:

Facilitator: “Well, things are going well around here. I think I’ll go home, start dinner and do some more work after the kids go to bed.” Begin to walk past the participant.

Participant: “Hey! Where are you going? Are you leaving early?”

Facilitator: “Oh, I forgot to tell you. I have a dentist appointment this afternoon.”

What you are demonstrating here is that people will automatically get ready for Sludge by having a socially acceptable excuse in their back pocket in case they get Sludged. They may lie because telling the truth won’t be acceptable.

**ASK:** What kind of Sludge was that?

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Facilitator's note:

You will get things like 'preemptive Sludge' or 'lying Sludge'. When they get close you can uncover the second type of Sludge.

**SAY:** Good! The second type of Sludge is called Sludge Anticipation.

People will automatically get ready for Sludge by having a socially acceptable excuse in their back pocket in case they get Sludged. They may feel it necessary to lie because telling the truth won't be acceptable. This is very stressful for people and does not demonstrate trust or support of each other.

Now let's identify the third type of Sludge.

**DO** Pick a participant in the room to help you demonstrate this type of Sludge.

Facilitator's note:

You have gotten a good feel for participants by now. Pick someone that you know will be very demonstrative. You are going to pick a third person in the room that you and the person who's demonstrating with you are going to Sludge about.

**SAY:** [Participant's name] and I are going to talk/Sludge about [participant being sludged about]. We're going to be big Sludgers together. I'll start first and then [participant's name] will say something.

Facilitator's note:

The participant will get what you're doing. Here is an example of how it might play out:

Facilitator: [Participant being sludged about] is NEVER green on IM. It feels like she's never really working.

Participant: Tell me about it! Not only is she never green, she takes a long lunch.

Facilitator: I don't know how she gets away with it. I feel like just never being green so I can get out of work too!

Participant – and, because she works with offshore partners she comes in late

Facilitator: right – great excuse for not coming to the 8am team meeting but instead sitting at home in pajamas. It's not fair.

Participant: Yeah. Wish I could sleep in late every day.

Go back and forth a few times. You can also draw someone else into the demonstration so there are three people sludging.

**SAY:** Good job! We were Sludging [participant being sludged about] and [participant being sludged about] wasn't even in the conversation.

**ASK:** What type of Sludge was that?

Facilitator's note:

Prompt participants to name the Sludge. You will get things like 'gossip Sludge' or 'nasty Sludge'. When they get close you can uncover the third type of Sludge.

**SAY:** Good! The third type of Sludge is called Back Sludge.

It's when people are talking about other people behind their backs. When two people are talking behind someone's back it's Back Sludge. But when others join the conversation, it becomes a Sludge Conspiracy.

Facilitator's note:

You can reference how in high school or 'school' it's human nature to want to be in the cool group that's talking about someone else. You do not want to be the one talked about. But with STAR, it's cool to be a Sludge Eradicator, not a Sludger.

**SAY:** Now we are going to learn how to eradicate the three types of Sludge and then you will be Environmental Sludge Eradicators! You can support each other in not using this type of language in the workplace.

Let's start with Sludge Justification.

**DO** Use the same participant that helped you demonstrate Sludge Justification. Ask them to say the Sludge statement to you again. Make it clear that they are still a big Sludger and that you are a Sludge Eradicator. Explain to the group that you are going to show them how a Sludge Eradicator combats and eliminates Sludge Justification from the environment. Use the following conversation example:

Participant: "10:00 and you're just getting in? I wish I could come in late every day!"

Facilitator: "Good morning. Is there something I can help you with right now?"

**ASK:** When [participant's name] Sludged me, what did I do?

Facilitator's note:

You want people to see how you stopped the Sludge in its tracks by not justifying yourself and getting right to what is important in the moment. Participants will say things like "you didn't feed into it" or "you didn't give excuses".

**SAY:** That's right! I didn't fuel the flames of Sludge! Instead, I brought the conversation right to results –what is important in the moment. With STAR you will not be making excuses anymore.

**DO** Uncover the flip chart with the Sludge eradication phrases.

**SAY:** Here are the phrases that will eradicate Sludge Justification.

Now, let's eradicate Sludge Anticipation.

Facilitator's note:

Have the participant who demonstrated this type of Sludge with you help you out again. Use the following as an example:

Facilitator: "Well, things are going well around here. I think I'll go home, start dinner and do some more work after the kids go to bed."

Participant: "Hey! Where are you going? Are you leaving early today?"

**SAY:** Facilitator: "Is there something I can help you with before I go?"

This time I did not lie. In fact, I didn't use any excuses. I just went right to what is important and that's what needs to be done right now.

If the person does not have anything I can help them with, then they're just Sludging. If they do need something, I can choose how to help them – either immediately, or later.

Now let's eliminate Back Sludge.

Facilitator's note:

Ask the same participant that helped you demonstrate Back Sludge to help you with this. Have the participant begin Sludging about someone else in the room.

Participant: "[Name] is always taking 7 am calls and comes in late. It must be nice to be able to stay at home and not come in.

**SAY:** Facilitator: "Do you need something from [name]?"

In this situation, I did not get drawn in to the Sludging. I demonstrated that rather than talk about someone behind their back – which accomplishes nothing – the right thing to do is go directly to the person to ask for what you need.

If you do not get resolution from talking directly to the person, then it's appropriate to go to their supervisor. We will be working with supervisors on providing immediate and effective performance support.

Now you know how to begin eliminating Sludge from your work environment. Using the phrase “is there something I can help you with right now” is an effective way to eliminate language that is unproductive.

Facilitator’s note:

To see if the participants understand how to eliminate this language, test it out on a few participants. Sludge them and then point to the flip chart with the eradication phrases to help them use this method.

**SAY:** If you Sludge someone and they answer the Sludge question with a yes/no before using the eradication strategy you’ll need to point out that answering with a yes/no reinforces cultural elements/beliefs that we don’t want to reinforce in a STAR. (Ex. Facilitator: Are you leaving early again on Friday? Participant: Yes. Is there something you need right now?)

Facilitator’s note:

Saying ‘yes’ is reinforcing that leaving at a time that isn’t the normal shift ending time is leaving early. Repeat this to a few participants. Encourage participants to go directly to the eradication phrase without answering the question with a yes/no.

**SAY:** Eradicating Sludge from your work environment will open the door for supportive behaviors to emerge. Let’s take a few moments to describe what supportive co-worker and manager behaviors would look like. First we’ll start with co-workers.

**ASK:** If a co-worker was showing support from a personal or performance (results) perspective, what would that look like?

**DO** Make two columns on a flip chart or whiteboard. One column is supervisor supportive behaviors and one column is co-worker supportive behaviors. Jot down the ideas people come up with.

Facilitator’s note:

For co-worker supportive behaviors you may get examples like “being clear about what you need” or “making sure meetings have a clear outcome,” or ‘not sludging’.

**ASK:** These are great examples of how a co-worker could show support. How could a supervisor show support?

Facilitator’s note:

For supervisor supportive behaviors, you may get things like “works with me to make my expectations clear”, “listen and responds to performance issues of co-workers in a timely fashion”, “rewards good performance in a timely fashion”.

SAY:

These are great examples of how supervisors could show support. You are thinking from both a personal and a performance perspective. This is what STAR is all about.

Before you go forth to eradicate Sludge from your work environment, I'd like to see how you're feeling about it. We're going to go around the room and you're all going to give me a number between 1 and 10.

Facilitator's note:

If time is running very short, have the group hold up their fingers to give their numbers vs. going around the room. On a 1-10 scale, 1 being "I don't get this Sludge thing. I don't understand how it will help us at all. I'm not going to do it" and 10 being "I get it. This will make a big difference in our work environment. I can't wait to get started", where do you fall right now?

Have each person say their number or have participants hold up fingers to "vote" and note where people are. Generally, participants will fall between 5 and 10. This is good. Give positive reinforcement to the fact that they are ready to work the strategy.

If anyone is below a 5, have a conversation about why they are feeling this way. They might say "I can't do this with my manager" or "It feels disrespectful".

This is where you can facilitate a short discussion in the room to help the participant gain perspective. They will probably still feel uncomfortable with the strategy, but will appreciate your understanding in terms of how hard this is going to be.

SAY:

Everyone did a great job today. You're ready to eradicate Sludge from your workplace. You will all be in different places as you work on eradicating Sludge. As you saw today, some of you feel like you're a 9 or a 10, and others feel like 5's and 6's.

Remember, we talked about coworker support and supervisor support. Your supervisors will be receiving some specific training, but it's up to you all to also support one another, especially in eradicating Sludge – hold each other accountable and give each other pats on the back when you do a good job.

As you use the phrase a few times, it will become easier and easier and you'll feel liberated from the toxic language!

Facilitator's note:

This section covers the Sludge Eradication Poll. ***This can be implemented in different ways in different workplaces***, but the goal is to have each employee think about Sludge Eradication by answering 3 quick questions each day. An intranet site or a simple survey site (like SurveyMonkey.com) will allow the group to complete the questions and see results easily, but this can be done on a poster (sample poster included on free downloads page). Change the instructions below to match your plan for doing the Sludge Eradication Poll.

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**SAY:**

We have designed an activity to help you get started Eradicating Sludge as a group. For the next two weeks we want you to take a daily Sludge Eradication poll to report the number of times you (show example poster):

1. Used the Sludge Eradication Strategy
2. Thought about saying something Sludgy, but stopped yourself
3. Had a Sludge-Free day!

You'll see results as the group works on eradicating sludge together.

We're excited for you to get out and remove the Sludge from your work environment!

**ASK:**

Are there any questions about this activity?

**SAY:**

In a couple of weeks we will be getting back together for Culture Clinic. In Culture Clinic we will work on how STAR will operate on a day-to-day basis, and take some time to discuss some concerns you might have. We'll talk, as a team, about how to problem-solve with STAR.

You are now Environmental Sludge Eradicators! To help remind you to eradicate Sludge every day I am passing out Sludge Buttons.

Thank you for participating today and I'll see you in a couple of weeks for Culture Clinic.

## Addendum

Sludge Session  
Sludge Game Examples

### **SLUDGE EXAMPLES:**

Your kid is sick again? I wish I had a kid!

Boy those smokers get a lot of breaks!

Another vacation? How many vacation days do you get?

When is the boss going to leave so I can go home?

How could they get a promotion? They're never here!

10 o'clock and you're just getting in? I wish I could come in late every day!