

Saving Good Employees



A Supervisor Guide to:

- Using your EAP
 - Making a Referral
- EAP and Your Role as a Supervisor
- Ways your employees can use the EAP

Solutions
FOR PROBLEMS IN THE WORKPLACE

When Your Employees Need Help...

Your employer has set up an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) designed to help employees who have personal problems that affect their well-being and job performance, such as stress, alcohol and drug abuse, marital, family and emotional concerns.

We hope that most employees will use the EAP to clear up personal problems before job performance is affected. But when work does start to suffer, you—the supervisor—must step in. In the past, “stepping in” often meant discussions with the employee or disciplinary action. Now you have another way to help an employee return to a productive role: EAP.

This guide explains the Employee Assistance Program, from a supervisor’s point of view. It tells you what to do and how to do it. As in other situations involving employees, you should work closely with your supervisor and human resources representative and follow your established personnel procedures.

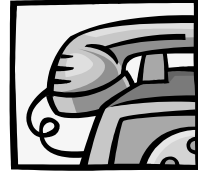


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EAP FACTS



- ☑ EAP is FREE
- ☑ EAP is Confidential
- ☑ EAP helps with all types of problems

- ☑ EAP is available to family members too
- ☑ EAP counseling is:
 - Short term, here and now
 - Problem solving and solution oriented
 - Non-judgmental

4 WAYS TO USE THE EAP

In-person Counseling:

- ◆ This is the heart of the EAP service. Call to make an appointment with one of our experienced Masters level counselors.
- ◆ Convenient appointment times and locations are available. Usually, you won't have to wait more than a few days for an appointment.

LIFE *tips*, PARENT *tips*, STRESS *tips* & GRIEF *tips*

- ◆ Simply give us a call to request information on a wide variety of topics, including: Parenting, Stress, Alcohol & other Drugs, Budgeting, Bereavement and many others.
- ◆ Call to receive one of our faxback checklists or get one online.

Employee Workshops & Group Sessions:

- ◆ Workshops may be provided on a variety of topics, including Stress, Transitions, Parenting, Budgeting, Conflict and more.
- ◆ EAP can conduct group sessions or debriefings that will help employees recover more quickly from a traumatic event.

Telephone Consultation

- ◆ You may speak to an EAP Counselor by phone.
- ◆ Call during business hours, Monday – Friday, 8:00 – 4:30 to arrange a time to talk.

ROLE OF THE SUPERVISOR

As a supervisor, you have THREE KEY responsibilities in the program:

- **First**, to provide information about the program to your employee. This means you need to know the facts (the who, what, where, when and how of the program).
- **Second**, to encourage a troubled co-worker, friend or subordinate to use the program if she/he is having a personal problem. We all develop friendships at work. This is natural. And it's over coffee or lunch that a friend might indicate that something has gone wrong at home, a financial problem has developed or legal assistance is required. This would be an opportunity to mention the program and suggest to your co-worker/friend that he/she check it out.
- **Third**, to refer the employee with an on going continued job performance decline to the EAP. The EAP can serve as a supervisory tool for you when dealing with an employee whose performance is declining.

HOW CAN YOU USE THE PROGRAM AS A RESOURCE?

- As a resource for you. The EAP coordinator is available to discuss performance problems with you and to help determine whether a specific employee is a good candidate for EAP help.
- As a referral source for your problem employees. The EAP can assess, through short-term counseling, what is causing the job performance problem, and the EAP can suggest corrective action.
- A referral to the EAP makes good sense because it indicates that you, as a supervisor, have done everything in your power to try to help the employee turn the problem around. This is especially helpful in cases of arbitration or legal action.

No one can deny that performance management is a tough job. We hope that you will come to see EAP as an additional resource for you to add to your supervisory "bag of tricks." The EAP may help you save a valuable employee.

TO MAKE A REFERRAL

- Don't need to know cause of problem
- Use job performance documentation as basis

Recognizing Performance Problems NOT personal problems

The key words in relation to the job performance problems noted below are continued and repeated. When continued repetitive patterns of job performance deterioration begin to appear, documentation is required. The following are areas of deteriorating job performance:

1. **Absenteeism** - patterns of absenteeism vary with each person. The following are some general patterns. Generally, any excess absenteeism and increases in absenteeism should be noted.
 - A. Unauthorized leave
 - B. Excessive sick leave
 - C. Monday absences, Friday absences or Monday and Friday absences
 - D. Repeated absences of two to four days
 - E. Absences of one to two weeks (5 to 10 days)
 - F. Excessive tardiness, especially on Monday mornings or in returning from lunch
 - G. Leaving work early
 - H. Peculiar and increasingly improbable excuses for absences
 - I. Higher absenteeism rate than other employees for colds, flu, gastritis, etc.
 - J. Frequent unscheduled short term absences (with or without medical explanation)
2. **"On-the-job" Absenteeism**
 - A. Continued absences from post, more than job requires
 - B. Frequent trips to water fountain or bathroom
 - C. Long coffee trips
 - D. Physical illness on job
3. **High accident rate and, consequently, accident claims**
 - A. Accidents on the job
 - B. Accidents off the job but affecting job performance
4. **Difficulty in concentration**
 - A. Work requires great effort
 - B. Job takes more time

Recognizing Performance Problems (continued)

5. **Confusion**
 - A. Difficulty in recalling instructions, details, etc.
 - B. Increasing difficulty in handling complex assignments.
 - C. Difficulty in recalling own mistakes

6. **Spasmodic work patterns** like alternate periods of very high and low productivity.

7. **Difficulty in making changes** may present a threat because control of present job duties and responsibilities allows employees to hide low job performance.

8. **Coming to or returning to work in an obviously abnormal condition**

9. **Generally lowered job efficiency**
 - A. Misses deadlines
 - B. Makes mistakes due to inattention or poor judgment
 - C. Wastes more material
 - D. Makes bad decisions
 - E. Complaints from consumers of service
 - F. Improbable excuses for poor job performance

10. **Employee relations on job** like friction in employee relationships including supervisor, usually results in decreased job performance and efficiency. The following is indicative of behavior that affects job performance and may be indicative of some sort of problem.
 - A. Over-reacts to real or imagined criticism
 - B. Wide swings in morale
 - C. Borrows money from co-workers
 - D. Complaints from co-workers
 - E. Unreasonable resentments
 - F. Begins to avoid associates

REMEMBER: All employees, including yourself, exhibit some of these job performance problems occasionally. It is the pattern of job performance problems over a period of time you should note and document.

IDENTIFYING ENABLING BEHAVIORS ON THE JOB

An *ENABLER* is someone whose actions shield a co-worker from experiencing the full impact of the consequences of addiction or psychological impairment. An enabler helps, often unknowingly, to protect a co-worker and allows the impairment and the addiction to continue.

Questions to Assess Enabling Behavior

1. Do you find yourself doing for a co-worker what he/she would normally be doing for him/herself?
2. Do you "take over" a co-worker's duties when he/she is not performing optimally or has left a job incomplete?
3. Do you offer to "help out" with this co-worker more often than others?
4. Do you make excuses for the co-worker's behavior?
5. Do you hold a belief that "someone as intelligent or as nice as that couldn't have a problem"?
6. Do you hold a belief that taking action would be worse than leaving the situation alone, or that it isn't your job to get involved?

Questions for Supervisors

1. Do you overlook tardiness, absenteeism or other signs of decreasing performance?
2. Do you accept excuses without holding the employee accountable for his/her performance?
3. Do you accept yet another broken promise from the employee?
4. Do you frequently make special arrangements for the employee such as giving him or her less work, more time, more "talks" or personal attention?

The enabler needs to:

- Recognize that an unhealthy pattern of interaction is occurring.

GUIDELINES FOR EFFECTIVE JOB PERFORMANCE DISCUSSIONS

Do's and Don'ts

DO'S

1. Choose your time and place carefully - Your Turf!
 - A. Allow plenty of time - no rushing.
 - B. Private meeting place - your office or conference room.
Definitely Not in front of other employees.
2. Have thorough documentation present during discussion.
3. Judge the performance, not the person.
4. Stick to the facts.
5. Allow person an opportunity to express his/her view, but don't discuss or solve the excuses. Remain objective.
6. Remain calm and cool. Take time out if you become angry.
7. Develop a plan of action and follow-up time to discuss progress or lack of it.
8. Be part of the solution, not the problem.

DON'TS

1. Don't make the meeting a negative confrontation.
2. Don't speculate about personal problems that may be negatively affecting job performance.
3. Avoid being judgmental.
4. Accept no promises, excuses or outbursts designed to evoke your sympathy.
5. Remember that job performance is the issue—you are not obligated to protect a person who was once a "good employee".
6. Don't fear that you are endangering a person's career by your EAP referral.

“POSITIVE CONFRONTATION”

Suggested Steps

1. **Say something positive**, affirming past work history, contributions, technical skills, etc.
2. **Present the performance problem(s)**. Have documentation ready to present as a visual illustration of the problem, if needed, to break through defensiveness, arguing.
3. **Clearly state your expectations** for improvement, preferably in writing, including a timeframe.
4. **Set consequences**, if any, resulting from the current situation, including future steps if the stated expectations are not met.
5. **Make referral to EAP**, as a *routine resource* to assist in correcting *performance problem(s)*.
6. **Arrange for follow-up** plans to monitor progress and/or continue with discipline process.

What Can a Supervisor Say to a Troubled Employee?

"I'm concerned that you've been late to work recently and aren't meeting your performance objectives... I'd like to see you get back on track. I don't know whether this is the case for you, but if you have a personal problem you can speak confidentially to one of our employee assistance counselors. The service was set up to help employees that are experiencing personal problems. Our conversation today and your appointment with the counselor are confidential. Whether or not you contact this service, you will still be expected to meet your performance goals."

or

The Sometimes Speech

"Sometimes job problems like these are the result of things going on outside the workplace. It may not be true in your case, and it's really none of my business. However, because it is true sometimes, the company does have an Employee Assistance Program. It's free and it's confidential. It has helped a lot of people."

DIFFERENT TYPES OF REFERRALS

Self Referral

- ☑ Most employees call on their own—about 80% of all EAP cases are self referrals

Supervisor Referrals

INFORMAL REFERRAL

- ☑ Start here if you can
- ☑ Not based on job performance
- ☑ When you become aware there are some outside problems
- ☑ Sometimes the employee will come to you and share details
- ☑ Please do not try to counsel the employee
- ☑ Inform the employee of the EAP
- ☑ Give brochure or card and sell it.
- ☑ Assure confidentiality

FORMAL REFERRAL

- ☑ Based on documented performance decline
- ☑ Either the disciplinary procedure is in place,
- ☑ Or, the very next step is to start discipline
- ☑ Consult with your HR Department
- ☑ Strength of referral increases with progressive discipline
- ☑ Make the focus of your discussion on performance, not on the personal problems

MAKE YOUR REFERRALS PROGRESSIVE

- ☑ Start as early as possible. Remember, the key is early intervention. The earlier an employee recognizes and deals with a personal problem, the easier it will be to resolve.

WILL YOU KNOW IF AN EMPLOYEE HAS FOLLOWED THROUGH?

- ☑ Only under certain conditions when the employee is close to termination. Call us so we can discuss before you refer the employee.
- ☑ Only when you notify us ahead of time, so we can have a release signed.

REMEMBER TO CALL US FOR ADVICE OR COACHING

WHAT CAN THE EAP DO FOR YOU AS A SUPERVISOR?

- ☑ We are a service to you as well as the employee
- ☑ Provide confidential consultation, coaching & counseling
- ☑ Help you decide whether to refer an employee
- ☑ Coach you on how to make a referral
- ☑ Help you with the on-going management of the employee
- ☑ Call EAP to discuss an employee or your own problems:

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