



MANAGER'S GUIDE

Helping Manage the Troubled Employee

Being a supervisor or manager is a complex job, so it's helpful to know that there are professional resources available to assist you in resolving some of the tough employee-related problems you may face.

Qualified professionals are available to consult with you when an employee's job performance is being affected by personal problems, and the employee is not responding to regular supervision. The confidential nature of the EAP encourages employees to acknowledge that they are troubled and helps them develop a course of action for resolving problems that are impacting their performance.

Your Role as Manager

As the supervisor or manager, it is not your job to solve your employee's personal problems. You are, however, in a good position to help direct an employee toward finding the assistance he/she needs. You can also, be a very important influence on the individual's decision to follow through.

You can help your employee by focusing on the following:

- Consult with an Employee Assistance Professional at any time during the process of intervention.
- Monitor the employee's performance and follow up with the individual at frequent intervals until you are satisfied that job performance has improved.
- Be consistent in following your organization's corrective action policy and procedure, and consult with your Human Resources Professional whenever you have a question regarding appropriate corrective action.
- Describe what the EAP is and how to contact the program.
- Stress the confidentiality of the EAP. Give examples from your own experience with the program if you can.
- When appropriate, continue the corrective action process if performance does not improve.
- If the employee will receive a final corrective action:
 - Call to advise the EAP that you have an employee who may lose his/her job.
 - Advise the employee that you expect him/her to get help to improve performance, and strongly urge the individual to contact the EAP for assistance.

Manager's Checklist

Watch for behaviors and performance changes such as:

- ✓ *Absenteeism*
 - Excessive sick leave, exhausted PTO, pattern of absences
 - Long lunches or extensive breaks
 - Frequently unexplained absences from work area
 - Chronic tardiness or requests to leave work early
- ✓ *Work Production*
 - Decreased work productivity or work quality
 - Failing to meet deadlines
 - Taking more time to complete tasks
 - Making frequent or unusual mistakes
- ✓ *Changes in Work Relationships*
 - Wide swings in mood or morale
 - Withdrawn, sad or cries frequently
 - Difficulty relating to or working with co-workers
 - Complaints from vendors or customers
- ✓ *Health*
 - Physical complaints on the job
 - Accidents on or off the job
 - Frequent illnesses

The Corrective Interview

- Be prepared!
- Conduct the interview in a private setting.
- Have on hand written documentation of declining job performance.
- Focus solely on declining job performance and the offer of assistance.
- Explain that the EAP is an available resource for employees who are experiencing personal problems.
- Emphasize that the EAP is confidential.
- Be clear about your expectations about work performance improvement and standards.

Avoid

- Diagnosing the employee's problem or getting involved in his/her personal issues.
- Making generalizations or moral judgments. Instead, focus on the specifics of the decline in job performance.
- Threatening corrective action unless you are prepared to follow through.
- Discussing the employee's situation with anyone except the EAP and those in management or Human Resources who have a business need-to-know.

Remember

- Call the EAP whenever you have questions or concerns about managing a troubled employee situation.
- The EAP is confidential.
- The EAP is available for all employees and their immediate family members. Remember that managers are eligible too.

Work 'n Life Matters
Employee Assistance Program
(800) 319-8111 or (310) 423-6447