

24-hour hotline

Rocky Mountain EAP

1-866-260-9490

or

208-234-8089.

Thank You



Employee Assistance Program

... Helping People Help Themselves...



A Supervisors Guide



Preface

Over the past decade, work/life issues have impacted over 15% of our nation's workforce, at a cost of over \$100 billion. At any given time, 15% of the workforce have personal problems/issues that impact their jobs. These same employees are absent 2 to 4 times more often and are 25% less productive than the average worker. Well over 60% of all employees will experience work related problems/issues severe enough to adversely affect their performance.

*EAPs can, on average, reduce sick leave by 33%, work related accidents by as much as 65%, workers' compensation claims by approximately 30%, lost time by 40%, work related grievances by as much as 50%, and time spent on supervisor reprimands by 70%.

Your **Employee Assistance Program** is designed to provide assistance to any employee with personal problems that impact job performance. Families are also a factor in an employee's job performance, which is why your Employee Assistance Program has been extended to immediate family dependents.

As a supervisor, you are the key, not only to the success of your organization, but to the identification and rehabilitation of employees who are experiencing difficulties that are impacting your team and the organization. Your EAP is there to assist you; don't forget that a very important part of your job is letting trained professionals do theirs.

* National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH),
and the US Census Bureau.

Notes

How to Contact Your Employee Assistance Program

Employee Assistance Program Office

Address: _____

Employee Assistance Program Office Phone

#: _____

Contact

Person(s): _____

Notes: _____

Supervisors Role

Supervision is a difficult task, and as a supervisor, you are responsible for seeing that the work is completed in a timely, safe and effective manner – in addition to ensuring customer satisfaction, and services provided all meet the standards expected by your organization. One of the supervisor’s major concerns is an employee’s job performance and on-the-job behavior. As a supervisor you are in the best position to note behavioral changes that directly or indirectly significantly impact an employee or their co-workers job performance.

The Employee Assistance Program is there to serve as one more tool in the supervisor’s arsenal. Your Employee Assistance Program is staffed by trained professionals, providing at no-out-of-pocket expense to the employee or their immediate family dependents, fast, safe, confidential counseling services. An individual who requires assistance can either self-refer to the program or is referred by a friend, family member, co-worker or supervisor.

When a supervisor notes an individual employee’s job performance starting to deteriorate, supervisors have not only the right to provide feedback to the employee with performance issues/concerns, they have a responsibility to do so, and in a timely manner. Poor performance or behavioral deterioration should not grow to crisis proportions when your Employee Assistance Program can help.

The Employee Assistance Program is there as an aid to the supervisor. When effectively utilized, it can have a significant impact on improved productivity, decreasing absenteeism, turnover and other issues that often make the role of a supervisor difficult. Remember the Employee Assistance Program does not change the roles/responsibilities of a supervisor - it simply helps supervisors fulfill those responsibilities with greater efficiency.

As a supervisor, **remember**, there are clear warning signs that you can watch for in your employees.

Warning Signals

Rocky Mountain EAP is committed to assisting your employee's return to full productivity as soon as possible. The EAP is distinct in its **workplace focus**, and it is designed to:

- Quickly identify and respond to employee and dependent personal problems;
- Assist employees restore and maintain high levels of productivity;
- Reduce absenteeism, tardiness, and accidents that may result from employee personal issues that impact their performance;
- Assist in retaining valuable employees;
- Improve management's ability to recognize and respond decisively to employees who are experiencing alcohol and other substance abuse-related issues that impact performance;
- Provide a means for employees and their families to receive assistance in a crisis or when personal problems interfere with their performance and/or quality of life;
- Reduce overall health care costs.

Should an individual or immediate family dependent be confronted by a serious personal issue, there is a great possibility that it will eventually have an impact on their ability to function in the workplace or at home. A few individuals have the ability to subconsciously hide issues for long periods, but those issues will still impact their behavior, attitude, morale and interaction with family and or work colleagues. Both managers and supervisors should be concerned with work performance deterioration and specifically, with any **repeating pattern** of deterioration.

Psychosocial/Environmental Concerns:

- Job/occupational issues
- Marital/family problems issues
- Relationship issues
- Grief/loss
- Concern about another's substance abuse
- Compulsive behaviors (e.g., Internet use, shopping, gambling, etc.)

Clinical Problems Related To:

- Anxiety
- Depressions
- Mood disorders
- Phobias
- Gambling
- Eating disorders
- Psychosis
- Hyperactivity
- Learning disability
- Others



Other Facts:

- Confidential
- No-out-of-pocket expense to individuals and immediate family dependants
- Individuals and immediate family dependants are served
- 24-hour crisis hotline
- Off-site offices

To explain your expectations with regards to behavioral change. Be specific and supportive in your discussion;

To not diagnose;

To not discuss personal problems/issues;

To not moralize or stand in judgement. Restrict confrontation to work performance only.

A Summary

Your Employee Assistance Program can be utilized as part of a management tool for improving individual's deteriorating work performance when personal/behavioral issues negatively affect it. The following services within your Employee Assistance Program are available to assist in resolving problems that are affecting work performance.

Services:

- Consultation - you may confer with an EAP professional, when deciding whether personal issues may be causing work performance deterioration;
- Counseling - short term Counseling with trained professionals in your vicinity;
- Referral - when short term counseling is not sufficient, an individual may be referred to appropriate services;
- Follow-up - the therapist will provide a coordination of services to aid the individual and the supervisors in a follow-up;
- Orientation - Training.

Problem Areas Addressed:

- Marital and/or family issues
- Alcohol and/or drug abuse
- Emotional well-being
- Health issues
- Work-related concerns

Deterioration In Employee Relationships

- Swings in morale of co-workers related to an employees behavior
- Over-reaction to criticism
- Resentments to co-workers
- Complaints from co-workers relating to an employees behavior, attitude, etc.
- Borrowing of money from co-workers
- Repeated criticism of organization
- Ongoing requests for a transfer
- Unrealistic expectations of job promotion
- Friction with colleagues (supervisors, subordinates, co-workers, friends)
- Avoidance (wanting to work or be alone)
- Aggressive, belligerent interactions

Absenteeism

Patterns vary, in general an increase in absenteeism should be noted.

- Increased sick leave
- Unauthorized leave (AWOL)
- Absences
 - Monday and Friday
 - Extended absences of 2-4 days
 - Extended absences of 1-2 weeks (5-10 working days)
- Excessive tardiness after lunches or Monday mornings
- Improbable excuses for absences
- Greater absenteeism rate than other employees

Noted On-The-Job Absenteeism

- Missing from post/work station
- Frequently at the rest room, coffee machine, cafeteria or water fountain
- Extended coffee breaks or long lunches
- Drowsiness
- Lethargy

Concentration

- Work requires greater effort
- Time to complete a given task is greatly increased
- Involuntary hand tremors and twitching while concentrating
- Accidents on the job (frequent trips to first aid station/nurse)
- Accidents off the job that affect work performance

Confusion

- Complex tasks becoming increasingly difficult
- Recalling of instructions and details
- Repeatedly making the same mistakes
- Missed meetings or appointments
- Unpredictable
- Alternate periods of high and low productivity

Efficiency

- Mistakes due to poor judgement
- Higher incidence of mistakes
- Bad decisions
- Complaints from co-workers, supervisors, or customers
- Safety rules and work details ignored or overlooked

Other Symptoms

- Sloppy appearance
- Mood swings
- Withdrawn
- Inappropriate dress
- Suspicious
- Sensitivity (extreme)
- Anxiety and nervousness
- Threatening or physically assaulting
- Very talkative
- Incoherent
- Frequently argumentative
- Outbursts of crying
- Excessive personal phone calls

Making a Referral

When the call is made to the Employee Assistance Program professional, information pertaining to the individual will be required to assist in the recovery process. Your input and personal insights, together with an overview of the interview process will aid the therapist to assist the individual. From this discussion, both parties can develop a follow-up plan. The following information is required to help the therapist formulate a plan of action *

- Individual's name
- Performance issues (as documented)
- What performance improvement is expected
- If performance requirements are not met what is the next step (Disciplinary guidelines/action)

* Ensure that all documentation is also provided to the employee, and that the employee is aware that a formal referral is being made as part of your organization's disciplinary process.

Remember: it is now up to the individual, and use of the Employee Assistance Program by the individual is still voluntary. You as a supervisor still need to monitor work performance, whether the individual follows through with the referral or not.

Remember

To tell the individual that work performance is yours and the organization's only concern;

To be aware that personal problems impact work and home and without trained professional help, generally get worse, not better;

To emphasize what is discussed within the meeting is strictly confidentiality;

To explain that seeking help does not exclude the individual from standard disciplinary guidelines, nor does it include special privileges;

- Ensure that the individual is aware that with or without the Employee Assistance Program involvement, performance must improve or the organizations disciplinary guidelines will be enforced;
- **Remember:** a referral is for helping the individual return to full productivity and is not for the purpose of disciplining or punishment;
- Discuss a plan of action with regards to follow up on improvement/progress at regular intervals;
- Record the highlights of the interview, course of action and follow up;
- Have the individual sign a voluntary confirmation of all documentation;
- Always end on a positive note. Expect results but not miracles.

Remember: the key to a successful interview is to stick to the facts, and don't get caught up in or involved in the individual's personal problems and avoid emotional manipulation. Troubled individuals can be helped more by referring them to trained professionals; don't forget that a very important part of your job is letting trained professionals do theirs.

Two types of referrals to the Employee Assistance Program are:

- Informal Referral
- Formal referral

Informal Referral: A supervisor, co-worker or eligible dependent recommends EAP services to the individual

Formal Referral: A referral usually initiated by management. In this type of referral, there are job performance issues, which have necessitated the referral. Generally, management/supervisors will request feedback regarding the outcome. Check with your own organization's H-R office for policy guidance. EAP providers **should never** communicate directly, even if contacted by the employer, without a signed consent to release information to employer, signed by the individual concerned. The supervisor can be told if an appointment has been made, was kept, and if a treatment plan is being followed.

NOTE:

Everyone exhibits some of these issues/characteristics during their working life. It is a pattern of behavior over a period of time that should be noted and documented, before confronting a troubled employee.

So What Can I do as a Supervisor?

As a supervisor you have an extra tool in your arsenal—the EAP. It is available to assist you with employees who are experiencing problems, and leaves you free for your primary responsibility—the employee's performance. You don't have to be a counselor, and you can still help!

Your Employee Assistance Program has a 24-hour toll-free hotline that can be accessed for immediate consultation or to arrange an appointment off-site for the employee and/or a dependent family member. Your employer has taken the stance that each employee is a valuable asset to the organization. Management recognizes that many personal issues identified in the early stages can be improved and even resolved quickly. This early intervention results in retaining valued employees (and assisting their families), while improving the productivity of the employee, affected co-workers and the organization.

The following will assist you in deciding what steps to take in helping your employee return to full productivity.

Documentation

A clear and specific record of poor work performance is essential to effective employee assistance. Your organization has standard policies and procedures for dealing with poor work performance. Remember the Employee Assistance Program doesn't change or replace those guidelines. A decision to refer an employee must always be based on work performance.

First eliminate the possibility that it is a management issue:

- Additional training required
- Retraining
- Work force balance
- A manpower issue
- Lighting
- Temperature extremes
- Inadequate materials/equipment

If you have ruled out these possibilities, then the performance may stem from a personal-medical problem, and documentation, interview and referral are appropriate.

The following steps enable the supervisor to most effectively utilize the Employee Assistance Program, and minimize the discomfort the supervisor or the employee may have.

The following steps are normal good management practice/procedures:

- **Take care of yourself** - What are you feeling/thinking about the issue, remember to be objective, and control your feelings;
- **Observe** - Observe behavioral patterns that are affecting work performance issue(s);
- **Document** - Note your observations;
- **Discuss** - Request an interview with the individual concerned, and discuss the specifics relating to poor performance and agree to a corrective course of action;
- **Continue to monitor work performance.**

Keep all documentation confidential, and only discuss it with the individual in question during an interview (Ensure that the interview is conducted in a private setting). You may wish to discuss the matter with your immediate supervisor or the Human Resources Department if appropriate.

Interview Process

- Arrange a adequate, convenient and uninterrupted time period in a private setting;
- Interviews are confidential;
- Interviews are conducted in a constructive manner;
- Follow your organizations guidelines relating to poor performance;
- Be specific – stick to the facts – present documented observations;
- Focus on work performance;
- Allow the individual to explain their shortcomings/failures;
- Ensure the individual has an exact understanding of what is unsatisfactory performance;
- Ask for the individual's input for corrections as they apply to work performance;
- Come to agreement on how work performance should improve;
- Ensure the individual realizes that you and the organization are serious regarding work performance improvement, and that there are consequences if the standards are not met and maintained;
- Focus on performance, not the individual;
- **Remember:** the aim is to restore the individual as a productive member of the team;
- There should be no indication that you are attempting to pry into an employee's personal life;
- When and if the individual makes known his/her feelings with regards to personal problems that may be affecting or contributing to a decline in work performance, a referral may be made to a therapist in the Employee Assistance Program;
- **Note:** interviews are not personal problem solving sessions and you should make no attempt to diagnose or counsel the individual. Your Employee Assistance Program has trained therapists in these areas.