

Early Intervention and Supervisor Involvement: Keys to Helping Employees Back to Work

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What We'll Cover

- Introduction of FOH and Magellan
- Research summary on psychosocial aspects of return to work
- Concept of Facilitated Transitions
- Process description
- Results
- Q&A

What Does FOH Do?



Works with its Federal customer agencies to design and deliver comprehensive occupational health solutions to:

- ✓ Prevent/reduce workplace illnesses/injuries**
- ✓ Decrease absenteeism and workers' compensation costs**
- ✓ Help improve employee-employer relationships**
- ✓ Help reduce employee turnover**

What FOH Provides

A wide array of occupational health solutions including:

- ✓ **Clinical Health Services**
- ✓ **Employee Assistance**
- ✓ **Work/Life Services**
- ✓ **Wellness/Fitness Services**
- ✓ **Environmental Services**
- ✓ **Special Programs**

Magellan Behavioral Health

- **Magellan Behavioral Health is the most comprehensive behavioral health, EAP and human service organization, responsible for the care management of more than 69 million lives in the United States**
- **The leader in its industry**
- **Is represented in all 50 states and Puerto Rico**
- **Contracts with 40,000+ credentialed providers**
- **Serves 3,000+ clients from government agencies, health plans, unions, and corporations**

Why Should We Care - Really?

- Private industry costs due to injury/illness
 - 6-10% of payroll direct costs
 - 6-14% of payroll when include indirect costs
 - 7-15% of employees are absent any given day
 - 3.9% due to illness

Why Care?

- Federal Worker 2000 Initiative
 - Decrease injury incidence by 3%/year
 - Reduce lost production days by 2%/year
- Lost production days in Federal agencies
 - 1.9 - 2.0 million days lost over a year

How Does it Affect Me?

- How does a co-worker or subordinate being out of work for extended period of time affect you?

Determinants of Absence

- When introducing self, what kinds of things do you say?

Return to Work?

- Assume you're out with a work-related injury, what would determine your eagerness to return?

Return to Work

- What happens the longer someone is away from work?

Research Findings

- Military
 - Proximity, immediacy, expectancy
- Industry
 - “Few objective physical or biomechanical measures were associated with return to work at six months, while a number of psychosocial variables were...” (Gallagher et al., 1989)
 - “Failure to RTW with back pain is the result of a failed social transaction” (Sinclair et al., 1997)
 - Line supervisor involvement reduces absence rate from 4.9% to 2.6% - 2nd most important cause of absence (Watson Wyatt, 2000)

Research Findings

- “important to take problem-solving, non-adversarial approach ... lower levels of co-worker and supervisor support are significant predictors of poorer outcome” (Feuerstein et al., 2000)
- Institute for Work & Health, 1996 - Primary Factors
 - Seeing improvement in condition
 - Accommodations allow gradual return
 - Job security upon return
 - Workplace is supportive environment
 - Supervisor will welcome back

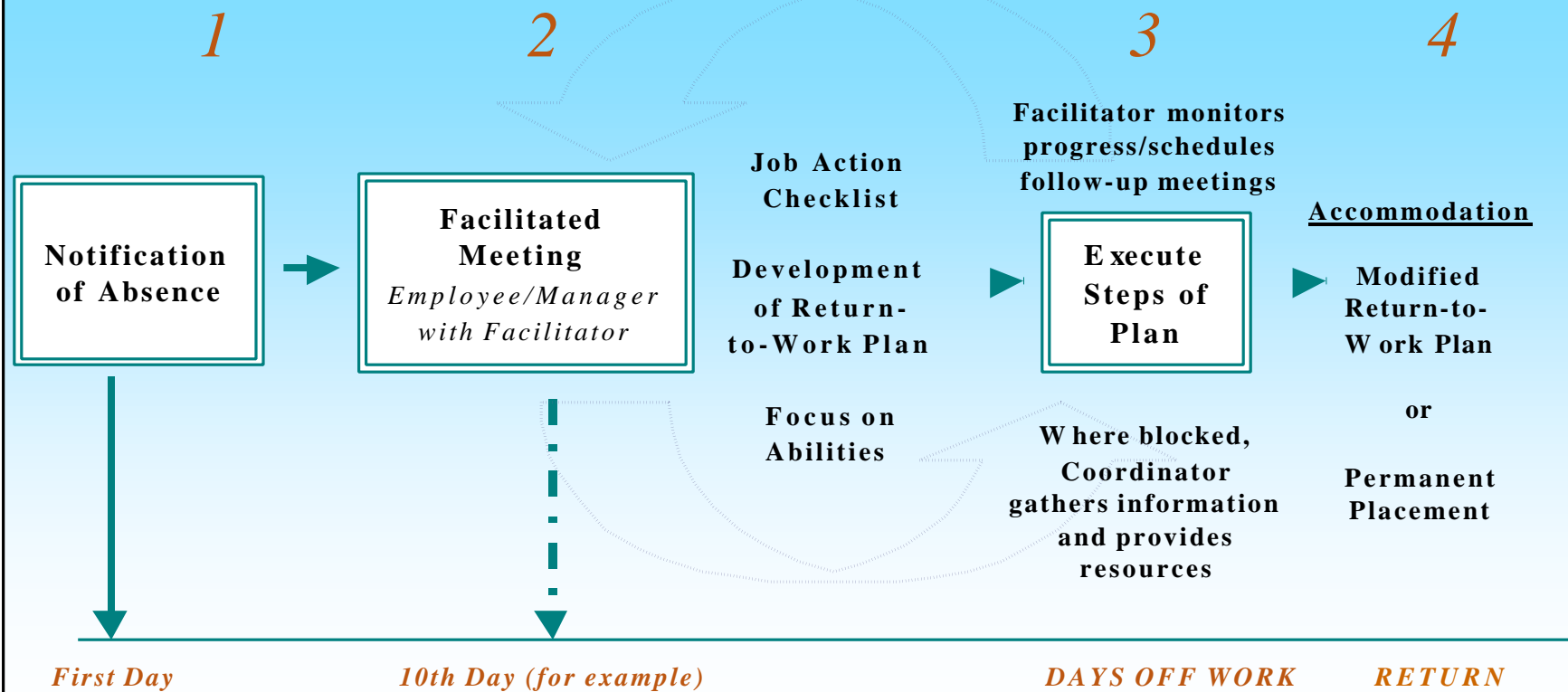
Facilitated Transitions

An approach for the new millennium that acknowledges the inherent impact of job stresses and acts to protect the employee by addressing the psychosocial aspect of disability. Together, the supervisor and employer work with a trained Facilitator to develop individual return to work plans.

Facilitated Transitions - Key Elements

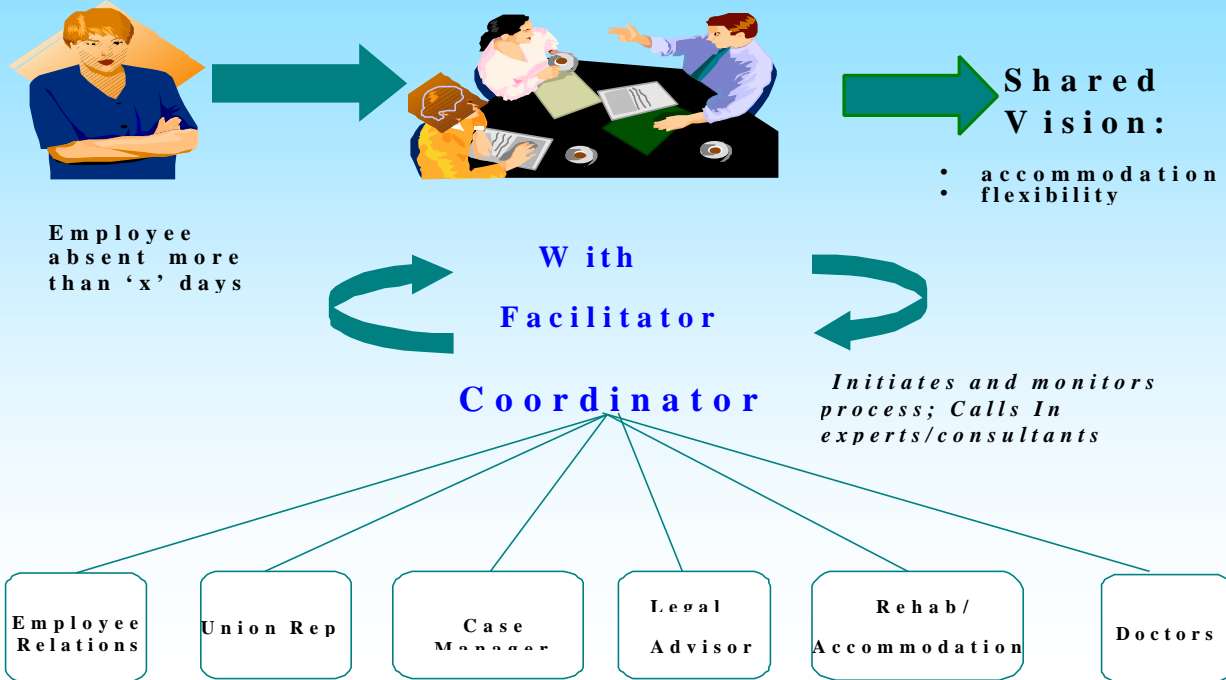
- Rapid intervention
- Supervisor involvement/relationship
- Focus on ability, not disability
- Maintain tie with workplace

How does it work?



How Does It Work?

Facilitated Employee-Supervisor Meeting



Roles in the Facilitated Transitions Process

Employee
Manager/Supervisor
Facilitator
Coordinator
Observer
Other Resources

Employee

- Maintain communication with the employer
- Participate in meetings
- Understand own medical condition and needs

Manager/Supervisor

- Maintain communication with the employee
- Participate in meetings
- Understand employer's ability to accommodate
- Represent the needs of the work unit

Facilitator

- Ensure that the meetings take place
- Keep the discussion focused and meaningful
- Document the meetings

Coordinator

- Coach/process support for the Facilitator
- Review documentation
- Problem solve

Types of Barriers

Capacity Issues

- Level of impairment/care issues
- Awareness of capacity
- Factors influencing perception of capacity

Accommodation Issues

- Workplace flexibility
- Awareness of options
- Safety concerns

Coordinator's Role as “Problem” Solver

Keep the process moving and ensure that its integrity is maintained:

- Issue/options/process clarification
- Highlight, elicit and/or obtain information
- Coach the process

Coordinator Responsibilities:

- Serves the employee
- Supports the work of the Facilitator
- Acknowledges perceptions
- May make a suggestion and invite a response
- Gets information for the employee
- Poses questions to consultants

Observer

- An interested 3rd party
- Support/counsel to either the supervisor or the employee
- May or may not attend meetings
- Does not actively participate in meetings

Other Resources

- Provide information based on their expertise in a specific area
- Answer specific questions posed by the Coordinator to serve the employee

Types of Resources

- Human resource specialists
- Medical
- OWCP
- Ergonomists and industrial hygienists
- Pension specialists
- Employee relations specialists
- Legal

Interface

- OWCP maintains responsibility for medical case management
- Disability Coordinator uses existing OWCP and/or agency resources to resolve barriers
- Return to work planning customized to ensure coordination with existing agency and OWCP policies, resources, and processes

The Facilitated Transitions Meeting - Goals

Facilitated, documented communication:

- Structured
- Non-medical

For a manager and employee to get:

- A shared understanding
- To determine what employee feels comfortable doing on the job and what accommodation possibilities are available

The Success of a Facilitated Transitions Meeting

D- documented

D- direct

E- encouraging

C- consistent

A- assertive

F- flexible

The Success of a Facilitation Meeting

- An immediate return to work is not necessarily an indicator of success
- A lack of return to work immediately following a meeting is not an indicator of failure
- In some instances, just HAVING a meeting is a positive indicator.

Facilitated Transitions - Results

- From mandatory, occ/non-occ program - 40k employees across Canada
 - Reduced days lost by 20%, # out more than 6 months decreased 40%
 - Average absence duration relating to STD down 32%
 - IMEs went from over 175 to 2
 - Litigation cases from 20 to 1
 - Named one of best 35 places to work

Questions?

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