

EAP FOR SUPERVISORS

Your Job Just Got Easier

January - March 2008



REFER TO THE EAP - Financial Assistance

Today's news reports increasing gas prices, skyrocketing utility costs, and an avalanche of home foreclosures. Economists are also saying that it's going to get worse before it gets better. All of this information, whether you or your employees are experiencing these things firsthand, can create financial stress.

Financial stress can be defined as the perception that the circumstances we are experiencing are beyond our control, leading to a feeling of being overwhelmed. Each of us has our own definition of what we consider to be stressful circumstances, and how much of it we can reasonably handle. If financial stress levels pass our personal tipping point, the impact is negative, ultimately affecting performance.

As a manager, you need to be aware of how this financial stress is impacting your employees. Each person expresses stress differently. Some people shut down and refuse to communicate; others get hyper and won't stop talking. Some people release stress through healthy alternatives like exercise, but others will react by making unhealthy choices like excessive drinking, eating, or shopping.

It doesn't matter what the source of the financial stress is, you still have to manage the whole person. Sometimes, simply acknowledging changes you've noticed and allowing a person to vent is enough. When an employee hits stress overload, you may notice strained work relationships, argumentative behavior, increased customer complaints, lowered performance and motivation levels, or an inability to focus on details. Some physical signs are irritability, irregular sleep and/or eating habits, headaches, muscle tension and being easily startled.

Referring an employee that may be suffering from this type of stress to the EAP is as simple as providing them with the EAP's phone number and letting them know someone is available to talk to. If that employee's productivity is faltering, you can always call the EAP for a Supervisory Consultation. Counselors and Account Managers are available to assist you confidentially - 1-800-843-1327.

SKILLBUILDERS for Supervisors

Skillbuilders are self-paced on-line training programs you can participate in at any time by logging into your EAP Web Site.

Skillbuilders for Supervisors can be accessed by clicking on any of the topical areas in the top menu bar.

All 75 topics are free to VMC Clients and available 24/7! This quarter, we'd like to recommend:

Succeeding As A Supervisor and Personal Financial Planning

VMC
Behavioral Healthcare Services
1.800.843.1327
www.vmcceap.com

Monthly EAP
Web Site Themes

January
Financial Health

February
Relationships That Work

March
Travel and Adventure

The EAP - Rebranded

The Employee Assistance Program would like to take this opportunity to make you aware of some new and exciting changes for 2008. VMC has rebranded our company - We have new logos, a new color scheme, an upgraded web site, and improved communication materials.

VMC has departmentalized our services:

Connect - Your Counseling service

Wellness - Your Health & Wellness center

First Response - Your Critical Incident team

Peak Performance - Your Training program

Coordinated Lifestyle Management - Your integrated EAP, Wellness and Disease Management system

(Services available as specified in your company contract)

VMC's Web site upgrades include:

A New layout that is easier to follow -

A complete Spanish site boasting Double the Article/Tip sheets,

Links to sites in Spanish (such as Medline), and

Search Functions that will get Spanish speaking employees to quick and easy resources that they've never had access to before!

VMC's Communication Material upgrades include:

New 2008 Employee Assistance Program Brochure -

This single brochure is in English and Spanish and it includes a tear out wallet card for easy program access.

New 2008 Employee and Supervisory Newsletters -

Quarterly articles/themes, Skillbuilder reminders and Employee Assistance Program tips and tools to help make supervision tasks easier. Newsletters are always available on the web site for your convenience.



We know you'll find these improvements beneficial to you and your employees. If you would like assistance with any of this information, please call us at 1-800-843-1327.

Question & Answer Forum

Q. I have been criticized for my strongly worded documentation. Why can this be such a problem? Is this a common mistake for supervisors who prepare documentation to correct employee performance?

A. The use of inappropriate language that distracts the reader from the intent of a memo to correct performance is the most common mistake supervisors make in preparing documentation. Frequently, this is caused by strong feelings of the writer or a desire to punish the employee. Supervisors should avoid labelling and scolding, or unauthorized statements on behalf of the organization that are designed to intimidate the employee. Memos that label the employee are a personal attack, and may include words such as "unprofessional", "thoughtless", or "immature". Scolding uses guilt to shame the employee.

If you would like a consultation for an employee with decreasing job performance, contact the EAP.

Supervisor Consultation

1.800.843.1327

24 Hours - 365 Days A Year