

JANUARY NEWS

2022

A worksite newsletter for supervisors provided by your Employee Assistance Program.

Q + A for Supervisors

Q. My employee made a group of coworkers aware of communication problems she was having with her husband. One employee gave her the name and phone of a marriage counselor. I was a little uncomfortable with this process. Should I have discouraged this exchange and recommended the EAP instead?

A. It is not unusual for employees to recommend resources to each other for dealing with problems, but the EAP would have been a better recommendation. EAPs don't do marital counseling per se because this is treatment/therapy, but they do start with an assessment that is free and unbiased. The goal of this assessment is to determine precisely the nature of the problem the employee is experiencing. Imagine the broad spectrum of issues that might exist in any situation like this one. Is this simply about communication problems or something more? Financial problems, drug and alcohol issues or other addictions, sexual issues, depression, or even an extramarital affair might be characterized in a group setting as "communication problems." Indeed, most therapists discover deeper and more maladaptive concerns within a couple once therapy begins. Go ahead and recommend the EAP, even now. It is possible that she did not follow through with her friend's recommendation. Share with her the nature of what a free and professional assessment can accomplish.

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Support & Resources

Q. Is it appropriate for a supervisor to raise mental health issues with employees, such as pointing out that an employee “looks stressed out”? This might prompt employees to consider using the EAP.

A. Although it is not uncommon for a manager to use phrases such as “you look a little stressed out,” those might be misinterpreted by your employee. So, why not consider a different question with a business purpose, such as “you appear rushed and are fumbling with your work. Is there something I can do to help? Is everything all right?” This can lead the employee to mention something personal, in which case you can respond by recommending the EAP as a resource. Mental health in the workplace has received much attention in business news recently. This does not mean that supervisors should probe mental health issues or become diagnosticians. Continue to focus on performance issues that don’t resolve. You will ultimately refer employees with personal problems earlier and more often.

Q. Over the years, I have noticed that the most difficult and troubled employees also offer the most resistance to a supervisor referral to the EAP. A few have actually agreed to go to counseling, but not to the EAP. Why is it important to not accept the employee’s alternative source of help?

A. The EAP plays a key role in reducing risk to organizations regarding formal referrals. It is not unusual for difficult employees to resist referral and offer their own “solution” at a corrective interview. However, serious risks may continue without EAP involvement. These risks aren’t dispelled even if the employee goes to the same source of help the EAP would have recommended. Follow-up allows the EAP to gauge progress or lack thereof, identify waning motivation to continue in treatment, re-motivate the worker to cooperate with the provider’s recommendation, identify additional help, or monitor post-treatment recommendations crucial to success. Imagine an employee with an intermittent explosive disorder, who is prone to violence, agreeing to get help but not going through the EAP. Accepting help is a good thing in such a case, but the risks mentioned above certainly remain.



The EAP can help.

Q. I have always struggled with being assertive. As a new supervisor, I can imagine some problems this might cause. Are there any problems outside my awareness that I should be careful to avoid?

A. Supervisors who struggle with assertiveness often fear saying no. Rather than state unequivocally to their employees that something won't happen or can't happen, and risk disappointment or anger, they may give the impression that there is hope or that they will "look into it." Whether it is about a pay raise or some other question, they give employees the expectation of an affirmative outcome. For the supervisor, the goal at the time is avoiding anger or conflict with workers. Their strategy is to "wait and see" with a middle-of-the-road approach. Later, when the thing hoped for does not materialize, anger and accusations of broken promises occur. Trust is lost among staff. Unassertive supervisors often know they are setting themselves up for these conflicts, but the need to avoid conflict in the moment overrides their better judgment at the time. If you struggle with this level of assertiveness, contact the EAP.

Q. What are the costs of misconduct in the workplace, and what are the dominant behaviors constituting misconduct?

A. There are many areas of misconduct, but the three that drive costs are discrimination, sexual harassment, and bullying. A recent study by Vault found that the cost of workplace misconduct nationally is about \$20.2 billion per year. When an employee leaves an organization because of these behaviors, the cost to hire a new worker averages \$4,126. And that is a low average, because this cost estimator from the Society of Human Resource Management is several years old and does not include many indirect costs. The latest report on misconduct in the workplace can be found at <https://vaultplatform.com/the-trust-gap/> (a short form appears before you can download the 16-page document). Among the findings, of women who have experienced sexual harassment, only one in five reports it despite today's education, policies, and legal remedies. Fear of retaliation and impact on one's career still drive the hesitancy to report victimization.

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Resources & Events



This Month's Featured Webinar

Achieving Harmony: How to Maintain a Healthy Work/Life Balance

In an effort to “have and do it all,” many people feel stressed by the demands of both home and work and feel challenged to maintain balance. In this webinar you will learn how to recognize the signs of poor work life balance, create manageable work and personal goals, plan your time productively, including breaks, and distinguish when you need support and how to get it.

The monthly webinars with Personal Advantage are available on the 1st day of each month and past topics are available for viewing at any time. To view the webinars, log into the Uprise Health member site with your assigned Access Code and click “Work-Life Services”. Certificates of Completion are available by setting up a personal login and password within the Personal Advantage site.

Product Spotlight: Financial & Legal Services

Tap into the latest resources and get support for financial planning and legal services. The following services are available as part of your EAP program. Go to uprisehealth.com/members and enter your access code access the Work-Life portal.

Financial Help

30-days of access with a personal money coach who will work with the member toward financial wellness by identifying financial goals, assessing current financial situation, and providing a suggested detailed action plan. Plus, access to 100s of interactive financial calculators and tools.

Legal Services

One 30-minute legal consultation per each separate legal matter at no cost, 25% reduction from the normal hourly rate if member retains attorney or mediator.

New ID Breach Scan

Did you know 37 billion records of data have been stolen? This ultimately means that all of us have had our information compromised. Through our partnership with CLC, we are happy to introduce a new online tool that is available at no cost. Beginning January 2022, you can access this new service on the Work-Life portal. On the CLC website, you can enter your email to receive a report on where your personal information may be at risk.

This Month's Featured Blog

5 Money Mistakes That Can Harm a Relationship

Read Now:

<https://uprisehealth.com/resources/5-money-mistakes-that-can-harm-a-relationship>

New for 2022

Skill-Building and Mental Health

We are pleased to announce a new monthly training series that will be available to all digital EAP members, families, and organizational leaders. Each month our expert panel of coaches and clinicians will present a new topic and will demonstrate successful strategies on how to use the self-guided modules to develop your resilience, stress management, and mental fitness. Registration links will be available early January 2022.