

Employee Assistance Program

Supervisory Training Manual

Personalized Care



Employee Assistance Program

Supervisory Training Outline

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Who to Contact:

Affinity Occupational Health
Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
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How the EAP Works

Employer Promise:

Affinity Occupational Health EAP promises to provide our corporate clients personalized care through partnership with your organization and your employees. We will work closely with you to advocate for positive resolutions, understanding that resolution is a process, rather than advocating for one party over another. We will teach employees how to utilize a constructive, assertive approach through goal oriented therapy and encourage all employees to utilize the proper management channels within your organization. We also promise to communicate and share with you pertinent information within the scope that regulations and professional ethics allow.

Promise to Client

Affinity Occupational Health EAP promises to provide our clients with personalized care through our partnership approach. Through active listening and counseling, we will help you define and move beyond your concerns. Our counseling process will use a positive, solution focused approach to give you the tools you need to develop an action plan that leads to a positive resolution. At all times, we promise to create an open and empathetic environment that encourages personal growth.

The EAP is designed to help employees and their family members deal with personal problems that may or may not be affecting job performance, absenteeism rate, etc. Typical problems might be alcohol/drug abuse, marital/relationship, family, stress, work issues, financial and health problems.

The counselor will initially assess the employee's problem to determine whether or not the counselor could help the employee resolve the problem(s) within the contracted number of sessions. If the counselor does not feel the problem(s) could be resolved in the allotted sessions, an appropriate referral will be made to an outside resource for treatment or assistance in resolving the problem.

All information about the employee is kept in the strictest confidence.

The counselor will also act as a consultant to the company. Counselors are available, via phone or appointment, to address questions supervisors may have about how to deal with a troubled employee or work performance issues. In addition, group educational sessions/training can be scheduled regarding specific issues/problems in the workplace, i.e. stress, alcohol use/abuse, communication skills, etc.

The EAP is, therefore, an additional resource for you to use in your supervisory capacity. You, the supervisor, are the key to the EAP. You see an employee's work habits on a daily basis. Early recommendations to the EAP are essential for successful resolution of problems.

Employees may obtain professional assistance through the EAP in several ways:

Self Referral

The employee may seek assistance on his or her own behalf by calling the EAP office for an appointment at 800-894-9327.

Supervisor Recommendation

Supervisors may become aware of employees' personal concerns through conversations. Referring employees to the EAP is one way to show concern/compassion for the employee by reminding them of available assistance.

Supervisor Referral

Supervisory responsibility entails addressing work performance issues. When a supervisor needs to address performance issues, or enter a disciplinary process with an employee, referral to the EAP can be an effective tool. For example, when talking to an employee about a specific work-related concern, the supervisor may say, "If there is a personal concern that interferes with your performance, please consider using the EAP." Further details about this process are identified in subsequent pages.

Mandatory Referral

Some employers elect to use Mandatory EAP Referrals. In this case the employee is required to be seen by an EAP counselor as part of the plan of corrective action. The supervisor will clearly identify where performance is lacking, what the work performance expectation is, and also identify the need for the employee to make an EAP appointment. Once the employee arrives at the EAP, the counselor will ask for the employee to sign a release of information to the supervisor. This allows the counselor to confirm that the employee has followed through on making/keeping the appointment. The supervisor can also provide the counselor with information related to work performance expectations. The counselor, supervisor, and employee MAY work together to come up with a plan of action for the employee. Details of sessions between the counselor and the employee remain confidential. Any information exchanged requires a release signed by the employee.

Other Referral

The employee may be referred to the EAP by co-workers, family members, physicians, etc.

Supervisory Responsibility in Employee Job Performance

- I. Know policies and when to take action
- II. Observe and document work performance
 - A. Satisfactory
 - B. Unsatisfactory
 - Focus on work behavior, not personality
 - Document, document, document
 - Specific, what policy/behavior are you addressing?
 - Date, time, details
 - Signed and dated by you
 - Look for patterns
 - Consult with HR, Employee Health Nurse, as needed
 - Keep in safe, confidential place
- III. Talk to the employee
 - A. Prepare
 - Documentation
 - Complete? Clear? Factual? Consistent?
 - What do you expect from the employee?
 - What information do you need from the employee?
 - What will consequences be? Further consequences?
 - B. Talk to the employee
 - Provide confidential, non-threatening atmosphere
 - Do not provide counseling or diagnosing
 - Remember, this may not be a comfortable conversation
 - Base conversation on performance, not the person – LEGAL ISSUE
 - Identify problem behavior, why it is a problem
 - Identify alternative behavior, clarify expectations
 - Identify current consequences (i.e. verbal warning)
 - Identify consequences if behavior continues
 - If employee bases his/her poor performance on some off-the-job problem, avoid involved discussion of this problem
 - Refer to confidential EAP services
 - Reinforce confidentiality of your conversation
 - Have employee sign a form/document indicating he/she received the information discussed – they may or may not agree
 - Document employee response
 - Arrange for follow-up session at an appropriate interval and document
 - Follow through per policy

Problem Categorization Exercise Worksheet

Definitions:

1. **Performance Problems:** Those work-related behaviors which are unsatisfactory to the company. These documentable, quantifiable, and objective problems are legitimate concerns of the company. Workers exhibiting such problems can be subject to disciplinary action.
2. **Warning Signs:** Circumstantial or behavior indicators that the worker may be experiencing a serious personal problem. Workers exhibiting just warning signs are seldom, if ever, subject to disciplinary action.
3. **Personal Problems:** Those problems, disorders, or illnesses which have an effect upon the health and behavior of an individual. Responsibility for resolving personal problems rests with the individual. Workers experiencing only these types of problems are not subject to disciplinary action.

Instructions:

- Using the above definitions, categorize the following situations.
(Note: some of them may fit more than one category.)
- Place a (1) beside performance problems.
Place a (2) beside warning signs.
Place a (3) beside personal problems.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| ___ A.) Personality changes | ___ P.) Financial problems |
| ___ B.) Missed deadlines | ___ Q.) Changes in personal appearance |
| ___ C.) Large number of grievances | ___ R.) Drug abuse |
| ___ D.) Marital discord | ___ S.) Large number of disciplines |
| ___ E.) Drinking problems | ___ T.) Family problems |
| ___ F.) Tardiness | ___ U.) Excessive absenteeism |
| ___ G.) Attitude change | ___ V.) Poor work quality |
| ___ H.) Medical problems | ___ W.) Customer complaints |
| ___ I.) Compulsive gambling | ___ X.) Legal problems |
| ___ J.) Accidents | ___ Y.) Poor productivity |
| ___ K.) Excessive use of sick leave | |
| ___ L.) Emotional problems | |
| ___ M.) Behavioral changes | |
| ___ N.) Wage assignments/garnishments | |
| ___ O.) Use of other's time | |

Patterns of Deteriorating Job Performance

All employees may occasionally exhibit some job performance problems. However, the employee with a drug or alcohol dependency, or a special health problem shows a pattern of unsatisfactory work performance over a period of time. When you observe the behavior patterns described below, you should document them.

Absenteeism from work

Although patterns of absenteeism vary with each individual, excessive absenteeism and increase in absenteeism should be noted, including the following:

- Unauthorized absences or excessive absences
- Monday and/or Friday absences
- Excessive tardiness, especially on Monday mornings or after lunch
- Leaving work early
- Unusual and increasingly improbable excuses for absences

Absenteeism on the job

- Continued absenteeism from work area (more than job requires)
- Long coffee breaks
- Frequent, temporary physical illness

High Accident Rate and Resulting Accident Claims

- Accidents on the job
- Accidents off the job which affect job performance

Difficulty in concentration

- Work requires great effort and is done with increased frustration
- Jobs take more time

Confusion

- Difficulty in recalling instructions, details, etc.
- Difficulty in recalling own mistakes

Spasmodic work patterns

- Includes periods of very high and very low productivity

Difficulty in making changes

- Change may present a threat because control of present duties and responsibilities allows the employee to hide unsatisfactory job performance.

Generally deteriorating job performance

- Misses deadlines
- Wastes material
- Makes poor decisions
- Complaints from co-workers or customers
- Improbable excuses for poor job performance

Poor relationships with co-workers and supervisor

- Results in decreased job performance, efficiency and morale
- Overacts to real or imagined criticism
- Has wide mood swings
- Borrows money from co-workers
- Begins to avoid associates
- Unreasonable resentments
- Complaints from co-workers

Supervisor Do's

- DO continuously monitor the employee's job performances.
- DO document specifics.
- DO confront as close to the occurrence as possible.
- DO consult with the employee in a private place.
- DO present specific information on job performance from your documentation.
- DO set up a plan to improve performance.
- DO ask the employee if he/she understands the situation clearly (review the plan, if necessary).
- DO set a specific time to review the situation.
- DO explain to the employee that help is available through the Employee Assistance Program.
- DO emphasize that all aspects of the program are completely confidential.
- DO explain that the employee must decide on his/her own whether or not to seek assistance.

Supervisor Don'ts

- DON'T try to diagnose the problem.
- DON'T take responsibility for solving the employee's problem.
- DON'T generalize about the employee's job performance.
- DON'T moralize. Restrict your criticism to job performance and attendance.
- DON'T cover up for a friend. Misguided kindness can lead to serious delay in the employee receiving help.
- DON'T be misled by sympathy evoking tactics by the employee.
- DON'T interrupt the employee.
- DON'T become involved in side issues or "bargaining".

EAP Case Studies

Case Study #1

George has been in your department for about seven years and has been an excellent employee. However, in the past four or five months, you've noticed his production has been down considerably and he seems to have trouble getting his work out, especially without mistakes. Recently, he has complained about problems at home. Production, overall, for your department has been relatively low. Other employees have constantly complained informally to you; and you've overheard gripe sessions when they complained about low pay, poor working conditions, and outdated equipment. Since overall production has been low and George's job performance has been noticeably poor, something should be done.

You decide to:

- Call everyone together and give them a "pep talk" to improve morale and production.
- Request outdated equipment be replaced.
- Ask George to call the EAP for an appointment.
- Observe George to define "his production has been down considerably". Talk to George about specific job performance concerns, clarify expectations, recommend the EAP. Have a follow-up conversation within a few weeks.
- Ask George why he has been making mistakes and if his problems at home are interfering with his work. Let George know you are willing to listen to him about his problems and you will help in any way possible.

Case Study #2

John has worked for you for approximately five years. He has a job that requires him to be out of the office quite a lot. You have heard from other employees that John has been drinking on the job. Additionally, you have checked the performance records and found his work has been inconsistent recently. You have seen his car parked outside a neighborhood bar occasionally during the day.

Your response is to:

- Tell John to call Alcoholics Anonymous.
- Monitor John's job performance closely to determine if it improves or continues to deteriorate.
- Wait until the next time you see his car in front of a bar during working hours, then stop and check to see if he is drinking.
- Call him in and discuss his drinking behavior in a friendly manner.
- Call him in; tell him you have noticed he has been drinking a little more heavily than in the past. Ask if there is anything, you can do to help. Recommend the EAP.

Case Study #3

Martha has worked for twelve years in the mailroom. She is very conscientious on the job and has good rapport with her co-workers. Because of her positive attitude and willingness to take on added responsibilities, Martha was promoted to a different department. She now is a file clerk, a position which promises potential career growth. The first three months on the new job were devoted to training for the position. After the training period was over, Martha started to miss work. She has been absent on several occasions for two or three days at a time and often leaves work in the middle of the afternoon complaining of a stomach ache. As her supervisor, you notice her work has not been up to department standards and that she is misplacing files. You check with her previous supervisor and find the change in job performance occurred after coming to your department. You also check her personnel file and find Martha has lived in the community all her life and graduated from the local high school in 1970. Her job application indicates she had problems answering the questions on the form and her handwriting is very poor. You call Martha in for a work counseling session, and she explains the new job has caused her to be nervous and her stomach has been upset.

You decide to:

- Send Martha to a physician or the medical department for a physical examination.
- Tell Martha that continued absences will lead to a disciplinary action. Remind her that the EAP is available to all employees and their families to help them with personal problems and recommend she call the EAP to schedule an appointment.
- Ask her about her job and whether she fully understands what is expected of her. Suggest she review the training materials to improve her skills and see a physician or the medical department concerning her health problems. Tell her you are concerned about her situation, but she still must not be absent from work. Explain that continued absenteeism will lead to the first step in the disciplinary process.
- Send Martha back to her original department after you explain she is not performing the job properly and has been absent so much lately.
- Ask Martha to explain her job to you to determine her understanding of it. Explain to Martha her work has not been up to department standards, she is misplacing reports and her increased absenteeism will lead to disciplinary action on your part. Recommend she call the EAP.

Case Study #4

Recently you were appointed supervisor of a work unit and are just getting to know your employees. You notice Kathy is often absent or late. Her work appears to be generally acceptable but there is not much of it. She makes minor mistakes due to inattention and seldom bothers to correct them without being told. The other employees mostly ignore her poor work habits and seem to get along with her. She is pleasant and friendly to everyone in the department. You review her performance and find she has had the same work habits the entire time she has been with the department. However, her former supervisor was a lax disciplinarian.

You decide to:

- Schedule a work counseling session to discuss department standards and a plan for improving work habits.
- Call her in and explain her work and attendance record has been unacceptable since she started. Discuss a plan to improve her work and recommend the EAP.
- Ignore the problem since it started with another supervisor but start to document unacceptable behavior for future action.
- Discuss the problem with her and tell her you are going to schedule an appointment with the EAP for her.
- Wait and discuss it with her at her next performance appraisal, which is in two weeks.

Name: _____

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM SUPERVISORY TRAINING QUESTIONNAIRE

An Employee Assistance Program has been established for you and other employees in the company. This program will be referred to as “EAP” throughout the questionnaire.

Please write True and False for each of the following statements;

- _____ The decision to formally recommend use of the EAP must be based on unacceptable job performance.
- _____ The EAP counselor is responsible for correcting job performance problems caused by personal problems.
- _____ The EAP counselor may see employees only if recommended by supervisors.
- _____ Using the EAP will not guarantee an employee’s job security, promotion transfer opportunities.
- _____ The EAP policy does not alter or replace existing rules or policies.
- _____ The EAP helps only employees with alcohol or drug abuse problems.
- _____ The EAP will serve as an additional resource for supervisors when attempting to resolve job performance problems.
- _____ The EAP policy only applies to plant employees.
- _____ The EAP counselor must be called before terminating an employee.
- _____ There are situations in which participation in the EAP is mandatory.
- _____ The EAP will only refer employees to community agencies that do not charge fees for their services.
- _____ The EAP may release information to the supervisor of a participating employee only if a release of information has been signed by the employee.
- _____ Employees cannot be terminated if they are participating in the EAP.
- _____ Employees are responsible for maintaining adequate job performance even if they have personal problems.
- _____ Supervisors should not attempt to resolve an employee’s personal problems.

- Documentation of job performance is only important during scheduled reviews or when an employee is being terminated.
- One of the purposes of the EAP is to prevent further deterioration of job performance and to return the employee to productive employment.
- Explaining the EAP policy to an employee is necessary when supervisors make a recommendation.
- The EAP can interfere with the supervisor's responsibility of carrying out discipline.
- Job security serves as a motivator for employees to accept assistance from the EAP.
- Supervisors should ignore an employee's personal problem if the employee's job performance is adequate.
- One function of the EAP counselor is to assist supervisors in identifying employees with job performance problems.

Please check all appropriate answers for the following:

The counselor's role concerning the EAP is to:

- Provide long-term counseling for employees
- Assess personal problems
- Evaluate supervisor's use of the EAP
- Correct job performance problems
- Follow-up with employees
- Consult with supervisors
- Prevent disciplinary action to those in the EAP

Please circle the appropriate response to the following statement:

- Yes No 1. When an employee comes to me with a personal problem, I try to help the individual solve the problem.
- Yes No 2. I would call the EAP if I had a question about the program.
- Yes No 3. I document job performance for purposes of employee evaluation.
- Yes No 4. I will recommend the EAP to employees with persistent job performance problems.
- Yes No 5. A recommendation to the EAP takes only a telephone call.
- Yes No 6. I can describe the EAP to my employees.
- Yes No 7. I would call the EAP for assistance with **my** personal problems.

Reminders

Don't allow the employee to play you off against higher management or union representatives. The program has joint labor-management support to deal with troubled employees. No union approves of poor job performance. If necessary, have the union representative present.

Don't make idle disciplinary threats. Follow through with your warnings. The motivation to seek help frequently comes about when the person is allowed to experience the consequences of his/her behavior.

The goal of the Employee Assistance Program is to keep people on the job, not to get rid of them.

It is not your responsibility to correct personal problems; it is your responsibility to insist on good job performance.

If an employee does not improve performance, that is his/her decision. You are not responsible for his/her decisions, only for using the resources available to you to offer help.

EAP eliminates the need for any personal or embarrassing discussions with an employee about whether or not he or she is an alcoholic or a drug dependent person.

If presented properly early in the process, EAP helps restrict disciplinary action to its legitimate function or corrective action for unsatisfactory job performance – and not for having an illness.

EAP gives supervisors specific direction to deal effectively with a problem which has heretofore caused them a great deal of difficulty.

Barriers to Supervisory Referral of Employees

Sometimes a supervisor does not make the proper early referral even when the employee's job performance continues to deteriorate and his/her work behavior worsens. Frequently, this reluctance is caused by feelings and attitudes such as:

Anger – The supervisor may feel anger because the employee is frequently absent, causing continual schedule adjustments or because the employee breaks promises and turns in unsatisfactory work. The supervisor may also feel self-directed anger at his/her inability to change his/her employee or to even understand such unpredictable and irrational behavior.

Guilt – The supervisor may feel guilt because he/she thinks he/she may have handled the situation incorrectly or thinks he/she is incapable of handling it. The supervisor may feel guilt because he/she has lost his/her temper with the employee. Guilt leads to feelings of inadequacy which may cause the supervisor to avoid dealing with the situation at all.

Fear – The supervisor may feel fear because he/she considers discussions with the employee to be highly personal. The supervisor may also fear losing control of his/her actions if angry. The supervisor may fear criticism in return for some real or imagined failings. He/she may also fear the effects which a referral will have on the employee's job security. Or he/she may fear that confronting the employee may cause him/her to experience even more or deeper problems. And finally there is always the fear of actual or threatened harm or other types of reprisals.

Denial – Frequently, a supervisor may deny the employee has a job performance problem. This denial may be reflected by statements such as: "The best employee I have, when he or she is here." "Job performance is great except when he or she gets into moody periods."

Ego Involvement – Ego involvement between the supervisor and the employee occurs when the supervisor feels that he/she has molded the employee in his/her own image. The supervisor sees the employee's successes and failures as his/her own, and, therefore, wants to solve the problem alone rather than request consultation and assistance.

All of these feelings are normal. Most people are reluctant to become involved in what they see as difficult and unpleasant situations. The supervisor needs to be aware of these feelings because they prevent the employee from getting assistance.

Assessment

Once you compile a record of the problem, your next task is to assess whether it is the result of the management difficulties, personality difficulties, changes in the environment or work conditions, or other factors. Ask yourself these questions:

1. Is this a single incident or part of a pattern?
2. Are other employees exhibiting this pattern?
3. Does this represent a change in the employee's behavior?
4. Is the performance problem due to:
 - Poor communications by management?
 - A change in the work environment?
 - A lack of knowledge, training, or experience?
 - An obvious physical problem?
 - A conflict with management?
 - Unreasonable standards expected by the employer?
 - Being overqualified?
 - A recent trauma?
5. How serious is the problem behavior and what are the potential dangers and consequences if this problem is not resolved?
6. Could the employee change the performance if his/her life depended on it?
7. Am I equipped to handle this problem myself, and if not, who can help me?
8. Am I prepared to take disciplinary action if necessary?
9. Does the employee want to work and does he/she want this job?
10. What is a realistic goal for the employee?

After you assess the information, your next step is to prepare to talk to the troubled employee, present the problem and the options, and attempt to correct the problem.