

FRONTLINE SUPERVISOR

In this issue:

- The Business Case for Diversity
- New Supervisor Assistance
- Caregiving and Compassion Fatigue
- Unhappy Employee



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MIIA Employee Assistance Program

800.451.1834

The Business Case for Diversity

Q. Beyond respect and tolerance, how can I help employees see the value of diversity and use it as a resource to support work goals and the organization's mission?

A. Your question relates to the business case for diversity. Modeling the behaviors you want employees to follow is the way to accomplish your goal. Demonstrate inclusiveness when formulating teams and delegating assignments to communicate that everyone within the work unit has value. Believe that a diverse group of workers has the potential to find better solutions to problems to show that diversity can be a tool for increased productivity. When someone not of the dominant group expresses an idea, ask a lot of questions to show that learning and discovery are enabled by diversity. Spot ways in which diversity is not yet fully utilized in your work unit and seek ways to make it happen. Don't be a bystander to inappropriate comments associated with diversity. Challenge statements that undermine inclusiveness and respect. Be mindful of your own biases, and avoid statements that generalize characteristics of specific groups of employees.

New Supervisor Assistance

Q. I am a new manager and in my first job as a supervisor. What problems might I encounter early on that I can prepare for now? If I feel overwhelmed, can the EAP help me?

A. Becoming a manager can be exciting, but make sure you clearly understand your role and responsibilities. Have this discussion and nail down the details early. This will prevent many problems you might otherwise face as a result of overlooking important aspects of your job. Be prepared for difficult challenges that lead you to question your ability to do the job. This is normal. If your employees are performing well, do not see this as a signal to ignore them until they need you. Be proactive and engage with them regularly. The supervisory role includes influence projected by your knowledge and abilities, and leverage naturally linked to your authority. Both dynamics influence employee productivity. The EAP can help you with time and stress management, organizing work, managing difficult employees, coaching, conflict resolution, and team management. It can also support you when faced with tough decisions like terminating an employee, and offer counseling to help you avoid burnout.

Management Consultation Services

- Employee Performance
- Change Management
- Workplace Trauma
- Conflict Resolution
- Layoff Support
- Lunch & Learn Seminars
- Management Trainings
- Organizational Stress

Employee Services

Confidential Counseling

- Addiction
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Family Issues
- Stress Management
- Work Concerns

Resources & Referrals

- Legal
- Financial
- Child Care
- Elder Care

Caregiving and Compassion Fatigue

Q. Many employees are taking care of elderly parents while managing their households and parenting their own children. I think some of these workers are at risk for burnout, or at least for being unproductive at some point. How can managers play a role in helping these workers?

A. Compassion fatigue describes the type of burnout often experienced by caregivers. Additionally, the “Sandwich Generation” describes those adults faced with responsibilities for their children while also ministering to the needs of elderly parent(s). Like nurses who may experience burnout that contributes to less-effective patient care, absenteeism, and employee turnover, these employees may pose similar risks to employers. Realize that caregivers may not notice the level of stress they are truly under until symptoms like health problems appear. For burnout, these could include dozens of maladies and complaints—headaches, lowered resiliency, interpersonal conflicts, cynicism, irritability, low energy, more frequent colds, or blaming the employer for not appreciating his or her contributions. It can be a highly mixed bag of issues. When you witness productivity drop-offs among employees, refer early to the EAP. Scheduling flexibility may offer valuable help for employee caregivers, but a lot of accommodating can be difficult for employers.



Unhappy Employee



Q. My employee is not happy in her job. There is no place in the organization where she can be transferred. What can I do before suggesting an EAP referral? Being unhappy isn't a performance problem, so is an EAP referral appropriate? Should I coach her to leave?

A. Sit down with your employee and find out what is causing her to appear so unhappy in her job. Document this discussion. There are hundreds of reasons employees become unhappy, and they can range from not knowing what they are doing to having various medical or behavioral health problems. It is true that unhappiness alone is not a performance problem, but the behavior or attitude associated with being unhappy can still affect the work environment and the employee's initiative and demeanor. It can also create an unsupportive work environment that adversely affects coworkers and their productivity. If you can't make headway on work-related issues first, consult with the EAP. Together, you may discover ideas to help renew her enthusiasm for the position. Make the EAP referral if these first steps do not produce the results you need to help her become a fully functioning member of your team.

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