



Supervisor Training

Using the EAP in Supervision



What is an EAP?



An Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a worksite-based program to assist:

- The work organization in addressing productivity issues
- Employee clients in identifying and resolving personal concerns that may affect job performance



EAP Basics



EAPs are confidential

- Identity is protected by confidentiality laws
- Confidentiality is also assured by the organization's EAP policy

EAPs are without cost to employees/ family members

- Employees are responsible for the cost of services to which they might be referred
- EAPs help them find affordable services



EAP Basics (cont'd)



EAPs do not interfere with administrative or supervisory practices



The EAP will not interfere with your job as a supervisor



- May offer consulting and coaching help, but will not tell you what type of discipline to use nor direct managerial decisions



It's True

EAPs are not “benefit programs” in the typical sense

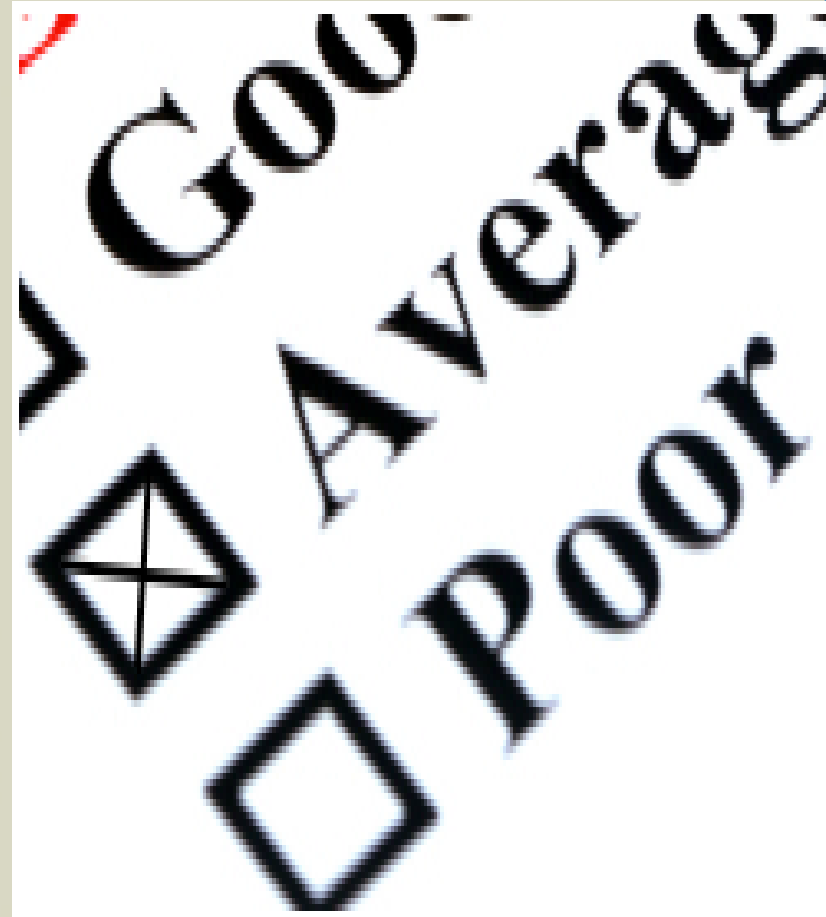
- They are pro-employee and pro-organization management tools that benefit everyone



EAPs are not a “safe harbor”

Participation in an EAP does not excuse unsatisfactory job performance

- Your hands are not “tied”
- You are not prohibited from taking action in response to job performance problems



EAPs are Voluntary

Employees are not “forced” to participate

- Getting angry or telling an employee it is “mandatory” to go to the EAP may harm the program's ability to attract employees and the organization's investment in it; utilization may suffer
- Employees who say, “My supervisor told me I had to come,” are typically less accepting of help



EAPs are Non-Disciplinary

- EAPs cannot dispense, recommend, or recommend against disciplinary action
- An employee cannot have job security, promotional opportunities, or position status jeopardized solely for participating in an EAP



Two Types of EAP Referrals

Self-referral

- An employee volunteers to participate in the EAP without being referred by the supervisor

Supervisor referral

- The employee agrees to participate in the EAP after being referred by the supervisor based on job performance problems (attendance, quality of work, behavior, etc.)




It's True



- An EAP may be charged with evaluating an employee who tests positive for drugs or alcohol at work, and then refer him or her to treatment
- The organization may choose to dismiss an employee if he or she does not accept the referral and follow up
 - This is still considered voluntary usage of the EAP, because the employee is being offered an opportunity to be accommodated rather than be dismissed for cause.



Tip

- With an EAP, a supervisor can focus on performance and not feel compelled to get “involved” in employees’ personal problems
- Supervisors should  take advantage and expect employees to take personal responsibility for using resources and accepting help offered by the EAP



EAP Benefits



Helps retain employees,
reduces turnover



- An employee who has been your most troublesome could become one of your most valued with the resolution of a personal problem



Reduces risk of lawsuits

- EAPs make it less likely that employees with performance problems will have to be terminated



EAP Benefits (cont'd)

Helps supervisors remain focused on performance

- You are an expert on performance, not personal problems – an EAP makes it easier for you to do your job 🔔
- EAPs also give you an alternative to tolerating poor performance, pleading with your employee to change, or figuring out how to terminate or transfer an employee



EAP Benefits (cont'd)

EAPs have more experience than any other profession in consulting with supervisors on managing difficult employees




- This experience builds into an extensive base of practical knowledge available within the EAP field



How EAPs Fit into Supervision



- A supervisor referral is appropriate when your employee's performance problems continue despite your attempts to correct them in the normal  process of supervision
- Your employee may or may not have a personal problem, but the criteria for a supervisor referral exists – a continuing performance problem



What is a “Troubled” Employee?

A troubled employee is an employee whose personal problems interfere with:

- Job Performance
- Attendance
- Quality of Work
- Behavior
- Attitude
- Availability



Referring an Employee

- Refer employees early before problems become severe and your relationship with the employee deteriorates
- Don't ignore a developing performance problem 📢
- Don't fear that your employee will be insulted by a supervisor referral to the EAP



How to Refer



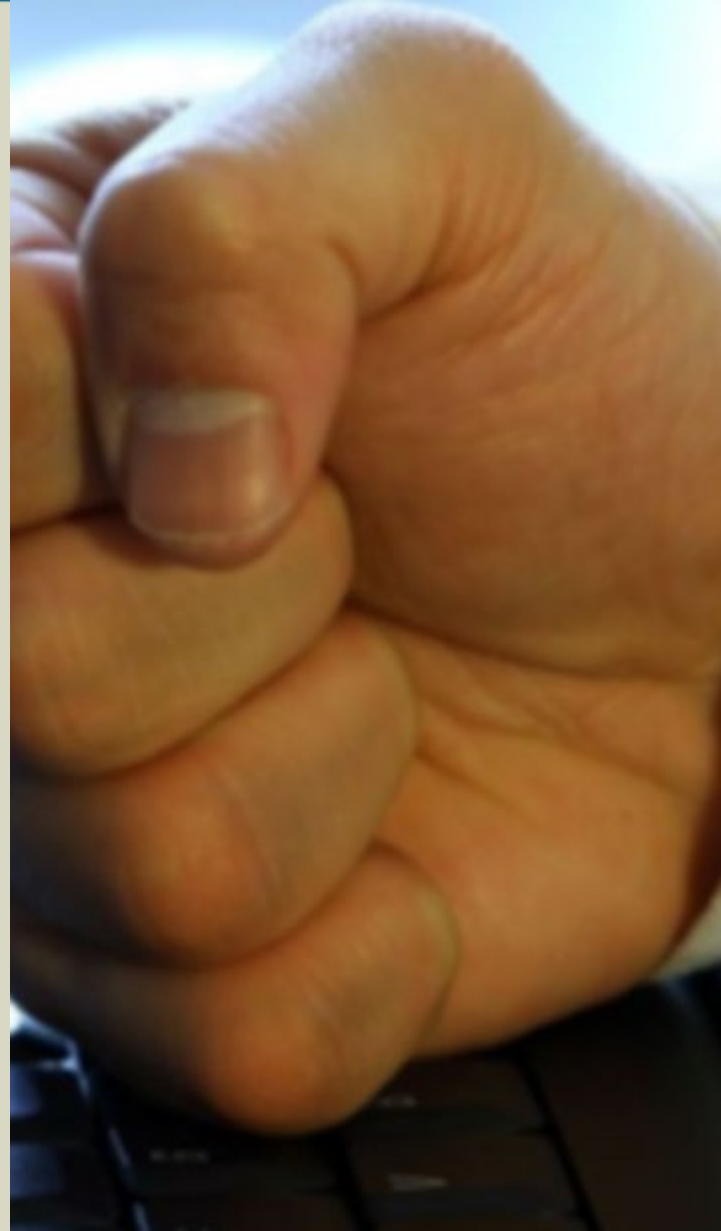
- A supervisor referral is based upon job performance issues, not upon the supervisor's belief in the existence of a personal problem 🔊
- The rationale for supervisor referral to the EAP is always based upon legitimate concerns of the employer, i.e. performance problems



When to Refer

Some problems may meet the criteria for immediate referral to the EAP, for example:

- inappropriate behavior 🗣️
- violation of the drug and alcohol policy
- violence
- sexual harassment



When to Refer (*cont'd*)



Other problems may warrant a strong suggestion of self-referral, for example:

- Being affected by a critical incident
- Death of a coworker, etc.



Encourage an employee to use the EAP as a self-referral if the employee discloses personal problems

- This helps you avoid becoming involved (but is not a supervisor referral)



It's True



- If you enable an employee with a performance problem, a personal problem may grow worse, and it may become more difficult to treat



- Refer employees early before performance problems, personal problems, and your relationship with your employee grow worse

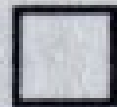
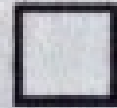
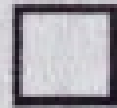


It's True (cont'd)



A supervisor referral is a formal step in attempting to correct performance, including:

1. Telling your employee you are making a supervisor referral to the EAP and why
2. Communicating the nature of the performance issues to the EAP in writing
3. Asking the employee to sign a release so you will have information about participation and follow-through with the EAP and its recommendations





Observing Performance ...

Observing Performance

Observing performance is important prior to constructing documentation



- Be alert to a decline or undesirable changes in your employee's performance



Observing Performance (cont'd)



The essential duties, functions, and behavioral expectations of one's position are the legitimate concern of the employer, and are typically evaluated, including:

- Quality of Work 📢
- Attendance and Tardiness
- Conduct and Appearance
- Attitude and Demeanor
- Availability to Perform One's Duties



Do's and Don'ts



- Don't participate in armchair diagnosis of employees



- Do not “analyze” their performance troubles to determine personal causes 📢



- Do not “rule out” a personal problem, and unwittingly decide that the EAP could not help the employee



Do's and Don'ts (cont'd)



It is okay to ask an employee what is causing a performance problem – this is not acting like an armchair diagnostician

- However, it is important not to **discuss** the personal problem if one is disclosed



If you know your employee well, it is tempting to analyze behavior and involve yourself in his or her personal problems

- This is a form of enabling, and it reduces the likelihood that your employee will use the EAP



Caution!

Never send an employee home alone who does not appear to be in control of his or her behavior, or has made suicidal or homicidal threats

- When in doubt, ask the EAP or another designated person within your organization who handles emergencies for guidance, or contact the police
- Know how your organization wants you to respond so you are prepared in the event of such a crisis



It's True

High tolerance to alcohol is normal for alcoholics – they may appear sober, when in fact they are intoxicated

- This leads some people to believe that a person with alcohol on their breath can drive a car or perform other functions





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