

A SUPERVISOR'S GUIDE TO THE EAP

SOUTHWEST EAP



Keeping People Productive

at home...
at work...
at life.



Session Model 1 to ____ sessions per issue per year.

Eligibility Full-Time Employees Part Time Employees
 Household Members Dependent Children
 Retirees

Toll Free Number 1-800-777-1797

EAP Coordinator Name: _____
 Phone Number: _____
 Email: _____

Formal Referral
Procedure: _____

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Helping employers by helping employees...Helping employees by helping employers.

501/663-1797 or 1/800-777-1797
Fax 501/663-9488

THE EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

A worksite-based program designed to assist in the identification and resolution of productivity problems. Managers/supervisors, employees and their families have 24/7 access to assessment, crisis intervention, counseling, follow-up and referral if necessary. High quality confidential counseling for employees struggling with personal and work related concerns is provided. However, we go beyond the clinical aspects of the workplace performance problems. Also providing consultation, education and coaching, which enables employees and supervisors to proactively address workplace issues and assure that the company operates effectively. A properly implemented EAP will reduce overall costs, decreasing turnover, absenteeism, health care premiums and drug-free workplace liability costs, while increasing employee productivity.

□ **Services to the employee through confidential counseling services**

- Confidential Assessments
- Establish an appropriate course of action
- Provide short-term counseling
- Refer to the most appropriate service available in the community, when services are needed beyond the EAP sessions.
- Toll free, 24 hour, 7 day a week access to services
- Online services

□ **Services to supervisors / managers**

- Unlimited management consultations
- Assist in identifying troubled employees
- Determine appropriate intervention
- Assist the employee and supervisor in improving work performance

□ **Services to the organization**

- Training Programs designed to promote the use of EAP services as well as educate the work force on health and wellness issues, professional development and organizational policy development.
- Critical and Disaster Management Services to address and support the needs of individuals and/or departments in the event of a critical or traumatic incident in the workplace.
- Organizational Development to address issues and effect change within particular work groups and departments, or across the whole organization.
- Conflict Resolution / Mediation to address and resolve workplace conflict whether it exists between co-workers, within a workgroup or an entire department.

□ **Confidentiality:** The Cornerstone of the EAP

Contact with the EAP is strictly confidential. Discussion, either as a client or in a management consultation will not be disclosed to anyone except as required by law. The exceptions occur only when there is a life-threatening situation to self or others, or the mandated reporting of child or elder abuse.

HOW CAN WE HELP

The EAP counseling program is designed to help employees and their families with personal or work related problems in such areas as:

- Stress
- Emotional Issues
- Depression and Anxiety
- Marriage and Relationship Issues
- Alcohol and Drug Use
- Workplace Conflicts
- Career Concerns / Job Stress
- Family Problems
- Child and Elder Care Resources
- Legal Matters
- Grief or Loss Issues
- Budgeting and Financial Matters
- Anything that is causing unneeded stress in your life

Any of these problems can be serious enough to affect all areas of an employee's life, including their work performance. These problems may present themselves in various ways. Your role as a supervisor is to focus on job performance issues, while the EAP can help the employee with personal issues.

Role of the Supervisor

- Inform employees of work objectives
- Remain alert to changes in normal work pattern, behavior or productivity
- Refer employees to EAP

Role of the EAP

- Assess underlying problems that are contributing to work performance difficulties
- Develop an action plan
- Assist employee in addressing workplace issues

REFERRAL TYPES

- ❑ **Self-Referral** – Eighty-five to ninety percent of those using EAP services are self-referred. These people have chosen to use the EAP independently. They may or may not have a job performance problem, but they have sought out the EAP before a supervisor or manager becomes involved.
- ❑ **Concerned Referral** – This type of referral occurs when there is no pattern of deteriorating work performance, but a supervisor or co-worker is aware that an employee is experiencing some kind of difficulty in their personal life. This gives you the opportunity to remind them about the EAP and to suggest that they call to set up an appointment.
- ❑ **Formal or Supervisory Referral** – This type of referral takes place when there is an identified work performance issue, and disciplinary action is likely. In a case where there are performance problems that you must discuss with the employee, part of that discussion may involve a referral to the EAP.

THE EAP FORMAL REFERRAL PROCESS

Formal referrals can be a powerful tool to address productivity concerns. Although the majority of employees use the EAP on self-referral, voluntary basis, the formal referral is a more active way for the supervisor to approach workplace concerns.

When a workplace issue or pattern of poor job performance arises and previous attempts to correct the behavior have failed, a formal referral may be the next step. This type of referral allows the supervisor to determine the focus of concerns addressed in counseling. The supervisor also can provide input throughout the counseling process and receive feedback regarding attendance and cooperation. A typical process includes:

- ❑ Each organization determines it's own process for formal referrals. It is important to check with Human Resources and your EAP coordinator to obtain the appropriate referral form before beginning the formal referral process.
- ❑ Fill out information on the formal referral form.
- ❑ The employee signature on the formal referral form used by the EAP usually allows release of the following information:
 - Attendance at initial appointment
 - Whether or not the EAP counselor made recommendations
 - Whether or not the employee is following the recommendations

This allows the supervisor confirmation that the situation is being addressed, but prevents the supervisor from being involved in personal issues, so the supervisor can remain focused on job performance.

- ❑ Then mail or fax the referral to Southwest EAP or your EAP coordinator, according to organizational policy, prior to the first appointment.
- ❑ Remember a management consultation is available at any point in this process.

**Call Southwest EAP at 501/663-1797 or 1/800-777-1797
Fax 501/663-9488**

- For a management consultation
- To support you through the intervention process
- To arrange a formal referral

“For Every dollar they invest in an EAP, employers generally save anywhere from \$5 to \$16.” – U.S. Dept. of Labor, 1990

THE FIVE-STEP INTERVENTION

Use these steps when dealing with an employee who has a performance issue. Remember to stay focused on the objective performance issues. At anytime during the process the EAP can provide helpful and supportative consultation and guidance.

- STEP 1: Recognition of the Problem
 - Recognize warning signs
 - Identify continued and repeated behavior
 - Be objective

- STEP 2: Documentation
 - Record observations as they occur
 - Be clear and concise
 - Describe in specific terms

- STEP 3: Prepare an Action Plan
 - Develop a plan
 - Decide on an approach
 - Consult with others as needed
 - Plan the employee interview

- STEP 4: Intervention and Employee Referral
 - Meet with the employee
 - Address the job performance issue
 - Make the EAP referral

- STEP 5: Monitoring
 - Continue to observe and monitor job performance
 - Follow through with employee re-evaluation meeting
 - Acknowledge improvement
 - Continue with disciplinary course if job performance remains unsatisfactory

“We Estimate stress costs American industry \$300 billion a year in terms of diminished productivity, employee turnover and insurance.”
– DR. PAUL ROSCH
President, American Institute of Stress

STEP 1: RECOGNITION OF THE PROBLEM

The first step in addressing a job performance problem is to recognize and identify the problem. Some problems you will be immediately aware of and others will emerge as a pattern over a period of time. Either way it is important to address these concerns as you become aware of them.

Remember to:

- Identify concerns
- Watch for repeated patterns of behavior
- Do not diagnose the cause
- Provide an early and constructive response
- Refer to the organization's policies and procedures
- Be concerned with safety rules and regulations
- Pay special attention to any "at risk" situations
- Remain objective

ATTENDANCE

- Frequent unexpected absences
- Absent without leave available
- Excessive use of sick leave
- Prolonged, unpredictable absences
- Complaints of vague, unexplained ailments
- Excessive tardiness
- Elaborate and/or improbable excuses
- Leaves early from work
- Long lunch hours

JOB RELATED

- Missed Deadlines
- Increased mistakes
- Details often neglected
- Inattention or poor judgment
- Spasmodic work output by a usually steady employee
- Lack of concentration
- A high rate of accidents on and off the job
- Makes unreliable statements
- Apologizing for problems without correcting problematic behavior
- Refusal to follow reasonable request of supervisor
- Unwilling to change/rigid
- Overly dependent on others
- Needs constant supervision

- Blames others for poor job performance
- Frequent absence from work or post/site without reason
- Excessive personal phone calls, pages, etc.

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

- Deliberately avoids colleagues/supervisor
- Poor communication skills
- Complaints from fellow coworkers or those outside area
- Inability to accept feedback or constructive criticism
- Argumentative
- Overly critical of others
- Demonstrates disrespect toward supervisor and coworkers
- Grandiose, aggressive and /or belligerent behavior
- Personal problems consistently interfere with work
- Frequently borrowing money from coworkers
- Mood swings
- Remarks, jokes or humor of an ethnic, racial or sexual nature
- Use of profanity

STEP 2: DOCUMENTATION

The old saying is “if it isn’t documented, it didn’t happen.” Your documentation will be the basis for intervention. Be very specific about your instances where performance and behavior fail to meet acceptable standards. You will be more effective if you have specific examples to refer to when speaking with the employee. Remember, you are documenting work performance, not an employee’s personal life. And, you are doing so with concrete facts and incidents.

Documentation should be done at the time the alleged events occurred. In most cases your “running log” should include the following information:

- Documentation should contain:
 - Record a set of facts
 - Who, when, where, what. These should be specific, concrete, objective observations, e.g., what someone said – not what your opinion was of their comment
 - Specific interventions you make. Action plans
 - Expectations and time frame for improvement

- Why document?
 - To recognize patterns of behavior over time
 - Communicates the importance of good performance
 - To avoid misunderstanding of behavior or expectations
 - Helps to initiate a corrective process
 - Identify what needs to change
 - Helps the employee understand what is expected of them
 - Documentation will be helpful at the next step – meeting the employee
 - Your Human Resource department will need documentation should the employee appeal the discipline

- Remember
 - Be clear and concise
 - Describe events in specific terms
 - Do not diagnose
 - Do not make assumptions or accusations
 - Observe the employee in a variety of job situations
 - Store documentations in a confidential and secure place

“In 1990 it was estimated that the economic burden of depression was \$44 billion; 55% of that was attributed to workplace costs, including absenteeism and reductions in productivity.” - Greenburg et al., 1993.

JOB PERFORMANCE CHECKLIST

ATTENDANCE

Record date of each incident in boxes

Frequent unexpected absences					
Absent without annual or sick leave available					
Excessive use of sick leave					
Absent on Mondays, Fridays, around the holidays and after payday					
Prolonged, unpredictable absences					
Complaints of vague, unexplained ailments					
Excessive tardiness					
Elaborate and/or improbable excuses for absence or tardiness					
Leaves early from work without notice or permission					
Long lunch hours					

JOB RELATED

Missed Deadlines					
Increased mistakes					
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Inattention or poor judgment					
Spasmodic work output by a usually steady employee					
Lack of concentration					
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Refusal to follow reasonable request of supervisor					
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Demonstrates disrespect toward supervisor and coworkers					
Grandiose, aggressive and /or belligerent behavior					
Personal problems consistently interfere with work					
Frequently borrowing money from co-workers					
Inappropriate personal appearance/hygiene					
Mood swings					
Remarks, jokes or humor of an ethnic, racial or sexual nature					
Use of profanity					

Note: Keep this page as an original. Photocopy for each employee as needed

STEP 3: PREPARE AN ACTION PLAN

Confronting an employee whose job performance has deteriorated is rarely easy. It is especially hard when previous efforts to handle the situation have not worked, where tensions have built or where communication has become strained or blocked. The key to a constructive interview is being prepared.

□ **Planning the Interview**

- Write down the work-related behavioral concern(s) or refer to the documentation you have already written
 - Are your concerns and documentation observable, concrete, and specific?
 - Can you support your position?
 - Can you cite specific events or examples?
- Consult with others as needed
 - Talk to your supervisor. As the employee may contact him/her to appeal your documentation. Keep the focus on the performance issues
 - Talk to Human Resources/Personnel so that you have a clear understanding of your organization's policies and protocols.
 - Call the EAP for a supervisory consultation
 - ✓ The EAP counselor will help you determine the best approach to take with the employee
 - ✓ Your call alerts the EAP that an employee may be referred to the program due to work performance problems
- Schedule time to meet with the employee
 - Don't make the employee wait too long
 - Allow enough time to conduct the interview
 - Ensure that there is privacy

Don't
forget to

"An estimated 1,000,000 workers are absent on an average each workday because of stress related complaints."

"Unscheduled absenteeism costs employers as much as \$688 per employee per year." - The American Institute of Stress, 2000

- Be prepared for the employee to respond in various ways. For example, the employee may:

Employee Reaction	Suggested Response
Blame Others.....	Stick with the facts; let the record speak for itself.
Anger.....	Maintain a firm yet considerate stance. Do not lose your temper.
Crying	Acknowledge the difficulty of the situation, but emphasize the organization’s support by offering the EAP.
Silence	Acknowledge that the discussion is awkward for both of you.
Agitation	Allow a brief “time-out” then resume discussion. Keep to the point and keep it brief.
Emotional Appeal.....	Stay focused on your right and obligation to expect appropriate behavior and job performance. (<i>“As your supervisor, it is my job to seek a corrective course.”</i>)
Defensiveness or Denial.....	Stick with the facts, and avoid arguing. Do not assume responsibility for changing the employee’s point of view.
Reveals Personal Problem.....	Express concern but focus on work. Offer EAP.

- Prepare to listen for new information about
 - Work related behavior
 - Organizational issues that can impact an employee’s work

“Up to one-half of all visits to primary care physicians are due to conditions that are caused or exacerbated by mental or emotional problems.” - Collaborative Family Healthcare Coalition, 1998.

STEP 4: INTERVENTION AND EMPLOYEE REFERRAL

Assess the situation from the employee's point of view. Whether on your own or through a consultation with the EAP, you can try to anticipate how the employee is likely to respond to what you have to say.

□ **Conducting the Interview**

- Interview should include:
 - The specific job performance problem(s)
 - Show the employee the documentation
 - What the employee needs to do to correct the problem(s)
 - That he/she is expected to improve job performance

- Remember to
 - Look for and acknowledge the employee's strengths
 - Deal with unresponsiveness and hostility appropriately
 - Listen to their point of view
 - Listen to their explanations and excuses
 - Keep focused on work related issues
 - Do not get drawn into an employee's personal problems
 - Be aware of defensive mechanisms: sympathy, excuses, apologies, promises, diversions, innocence, anger, tears, etc.
 - Bring the focus back to job performance
 - Set a time period in which you expect the employee to improve job performance

□ **Offering the EAP**

- Recommending the use of the EAP can be difficult for some of us. The referral to the EAP should flow from the documentation of the causes for the poor job performance or behavior.
- Explain confidentiality and what the EAP will and will not report back to you.

□ **Closing the Interview**

- Make sure that the employee clearly understands what the job performance problem is and what you expect him/her to do to correct it
- Clearly explain the consequences for failure to improve job performance
- Develop a supportive statement to close the interview
- Provide a written summary documenting the plan of action
- Keep all remarks between you and the employee confidential
- Set up a specific time to meet again

STEP 5: MONITORING AND FOLLOW THROUGH

- After your corrective interview with the employee, it is important to follow through on what you discussed.
 - Continue to monitor and document job performance
 - Pay particular attention to the issues discussed in the meeting
 - Follow through on your schedule for meeting with the employee
 - Reinforce positive changes
 - If job performance remains unsatisfactory or deteriorates further, take whatever action is appropriate
 - Follow-up with the EAP and employee regarding progress. Both the EAP counselor and the employee will benefit from your feedback

There are many causes of poor job performance. The EAP is set up to assist you with identification and resolution of these issues. Let the EAP professionals help you turn around troubled employees and/or work groups. Remember there are two ways a supervisor can direct an employee to the EAP.

Concerned Referral – This simply means reminding them about the availability of the EAP as a resource if they have personal problems. You might give them a brochure or card or other item with the EAP's contact numbers. You might even consider assisting them with making the appointment, with their permission.

- Formal Referral – This referral is based on work performance issues. You should not make any diagnosis of personal problems. Deal strictly with the problem(s) you can identify on the job. You should consider a formal referral by the time you get to the written warning stage. This is your documentation that you have provided every reasonable accommodation.
 - A referral is recognized as formal ONLY:
 - If it is in writing in the format REQUIRED by your HUMAN RESOURCE DEPARTMENT
 - Is signed by the referring party and the referred employee, and
 - Is forwarded by mail or fax directly to the EAP, arriving prior to the first appointment
 - The formal referral offers several advantages, it gives the employee:
 - The circumstances (work performance issues) that need to change, the consequences if those circumstances do not change, the specific resources (EAP), and a timetable
 - It gives the EAP the right to notify the referring party (1) whether the employee kept the first appointment, and (2) whether the employee is following a plan for resolution
 - It serves as your documentation that a referral was made to a specific resource

Southwest EAP is a private company with no financial or organizational ties to any treatment organizations, insurance companies or medical groups. We have been providing EAP services to a wide variety of public and private organizations nationwide since 1978. Over that time, our services have evolved along with the changing workplace. We remain committed to providing the highest quality services to ensure productivity and a healthy workplace.

General Motors Corporation EAP saves the company \$37 million per year.” – Norton Information Resources, 1990.

**TO CONTACT YOUR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM,
CALL SOUTHWEST EAP.**

**501/663-1797 or 1/800-777-1797
Fax 501/663-9488**

Call between 8:00am and 5:00 pm for routine supervisory referrals, consultations, or to set up appointments for counseling.

*In case of emergency or crisis call anytime 24 hours a day 7 days a week.
A counselor is always available.*



NOTES: _____

Southwest EAP

Risk Management Solutions and Business Services

Employee Assistance Programs	<p>A worksite-based program designed to assist in the identification and resolution of productivity problems. Managers/supervisors, employees and their families have 24/7 access to assessment, crisis intervention, counseling, follow-up and referral if necessary. High quality counseling for employees struggling with personal and work related concerns is provided. However, Southwest EAP goes beyond the clinical aspects of workplace performance problems. We also provide consultation, education and coaching, which enable employees and supervisors to proactively address workplace issues and assure that the company operates at its highest level of efficiency. A properly implemented EAP will reduce overall costs, decreasing turnover, absenteeism, health care premiums and drug-free workplace liability cost, while increasing employee productivity.</p>
Organizational Development	<p>Programs and solutions designed to maximize the impact that organizational practices and management have on employees and assist both managers and employees in continuing to build on the skills that will be needed to enhance the organization productivity and profitability. These services include leadership development, executive and management coaching, needs assessment, conflict resolution/mediation, strategic planning and succession planning, 360-Degree Feedback, change management programs, etc.</p>
Work-Life	<p>A 24- hour comprehensive nationwide employee support network that provides employees with qualified referrals, resources, and education in the areas of adoption, child care, skilled nursing homes, assisted living, in-home care givers, relocation assistance, and other caregiver resources. Employees can access services in person, by phone, or online at their convenience. These services are designed to help employees balance their job, family and personal responsibilities with minimal impact to attendance and work performance.</p>
Corporate Health Programs	<p>Programs and services aimed at reducing health care cost, promoting healthy behavior, identifying at-risk individuals and lowering health risk factors. This program includes such programs as Health screenings and education, health lifestyle programs (ex. smoking cessation, weight loss, etc) and safety programs. Companies that take a proactive approach to health care can see a dramatic reduction in their health care cost.</p>
Crisis Management/ Debriefing	<p>A critical incident is <u>any</u> situation that causes strong emotional reactions that can potentially interfere with an individual's ability to function right after the incident or at a later time. Interventions may include an on-site Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD), individual clinical assistance, or a combination.</p>
Violence & Harassment Prevention	<p>Provides analysis and identification of areas of concern and potential liability of sexual harassment, workplace violence, drug-free workplace and fitness-for-duty evaluations.</p>
Corporate Training & Development	<p>A wide range of professional training topics are offered in different customized formats, varying course lengths, single session, modular and sequential training. Common topics include stress management, communications building, conflict resolution, alcohol and drug education, sexual harassment training, supervisory skills, identifying troubled employees, etc.</p>
Elder Care Planning	<p>Comprehensible in-home assessments and care planning for elderly relatives. This includes a health assessment, mental status examination, activities of daily living evaluation and consultation with the family to determine the appropriate level of care needed to ensure safety and peace of mind.</p>
Substance Abuse Program Management/ DOT Compliance	<p>Develop and coordinate with the organization's drug screening programs to limit exposure to liability. Providing assessment, treatment and follow-up care to those who are identified through screening. Training for supervisors on workplace alcohol and chemical dependency issues and educational information for employees. This can include Substance Abuse Professional (SAP) services as described by DOT regulations (49CFR 40).</p>
On-line Services	<p>Interactive website available 24/7 to supervisors and employees to access information, articles and ask questions. This interactive tool enables employees and supervisors to search for information on a wide range of topics including but not limited to, mental health issues, wellness, childcare, eldercare, drug and alcohol information, stress, grief, financial, legal and workplace concerns.</p>

For more information about Risk Management Solutions and Business Services contact Southwest EAP or visit our website at www.southwesteap.com



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