

Workplace Supervisor

July 2016

Testimonials

Here are some quotes from HR Managers who recently called on CONCERN for a Management Consultation:

“The clinical manager was not only available to immediately provide me with the consultation and assistance I needed, but he was also a thoughtful and understanding initial point of contact. He responded to our needs immediately (late on a Sunday night), and he ensured that we had the support we needed immediately on the following Monday morning.”

“I have always been an advocate for CONCERN: EAP. With our facility tragedy, I knew you would be a great benefit for our employees. The clinical manager was responsive and supportive. Staff commented on how quickly we responded and had support available. Thank you!”



FAQs for Managing Employees

Q. I have attempted to refer my employee to CONCERN four times. Each time, the employee gave me good reasons not to refer him. These included how he was addressing his problems. Now I am on attempt number five! Where am I going wrong?

A. Consult with a CONCERN clinical manager to better understand what makes for an effective referral. Some troubled employees provide compelling reasons for the supervisor to postpone corrective action for performance issues. Referring an employee to the EAP or taking any job action is not a pleasurable thing, and naturally, any rationale to postpone these actions is welcome. This is what leads many supervisors to experience your circumstances. Focus on the performance issue, not the referral, and be decisive. Chronic problems often culminate in larger crises, and these can have significant consequences for the organization. Reducing this risk by combining proper administrative decisions with use of the EAP is what makes the EAP program the perfect partner in loss prevention. It is the employee's responsibility to improve and meet your expectations – you can only offer the resources that may be helpful for this purpose.

Q. How do supervisors and employees interfere with the perception that the EAP is confidential?

A. The familiar saying “Perception is reality” applies well to EAPs. The level of confidentiality perceived by employees corresponds to the credibility of the EAP. Some strategic thoughtfulness about helping CONCERN maintain a strong perception of confidentiality is therefore important to program utilization. Supervisors can damage an EAP's credibility by what they say or do. For example, do not discuss employee referrals with those who do not have a right or need to know about them, and resist asking employees about what happened in their EAP sessions. Do not insert records of participation in a file that others in management (or their administrative help) would have access to in the future. In addition, the EAP professional should not visit your office to consult with you about a troubled employee. Every EAP is a bit different, and can provide supervisors with dos and don'ts that help preserve and protect the program. CONCERN endorses the straightforward approach – “The EAP is a completely confidential and voluntary resource for you - no details about your use of it can get back to me or the company in any way without your specific, written permission”.

Q. I know supervisors should play a role in reducing stress, but my big fear is that the penalty for helping employees reduce stress is lower productivity. Isn't it a catch-22?

A. Many supervisors fear that if they are proactive in helping employees deal with stress, everyone in the workplace will slow down, thereby harming productivity. In fact, reducing employee stress is more likely to increase productivity! According to the *2016 Work and Well-Being Survey* released in June by the American Psychological Association, the five most stressful problems facing employees are long hours, low pay, lack of opportunity for growth and advancement, too heavy a workload, and unrealistic job expectations. The survey shows that at least 40%-50% of employees report either "very significant stress" or "somewhat significant stress" associated with these factors. Supervisors obviously have varying degrees of control, but simply by talking with your employees, you will discover ways to reduce their stress but not their productivity.

Source: <http://www.apaexcellence.org>
[search: "2016 work life study"]

Q. Is it helpful for a supervisor to disclose that he or she is a client of CONCERN, and even to offer an encouraging stand-up testimonial at a group orientation to support the EAP and encourage its use by employees?

A. There is no need to disclose your use of CONCERN's services as a way of encouraging employees to use the program. Some CEOs have made such announcements in larger public forums like EAP orientations, and it may be more impactful the higher up the manager is placed in the organization. However, there is no research that demonstrates such announcements improve utilization. More helpful to employees' likelihood of using CONCERN is speaking positively about the program regularly and reminding employees about its confidentiality provisions. Not doing so may contribute to a false perception that confidentiality is lacking, whereas doing so beats back this

false perception. This word-of-mouth promotion works with any product or service. Frequently repeating a positive message about CONCERN produces more results than a single, major announcement of acceptance by a key manager.

Q. My boss wants me to deal with my "anger issues" and suggested anger management classes. I admit that under pressure I sometimes act like a hothead, but isn't my boss being an "armchair diagnostician" by saying that I have anger issues?

A. Your boss can see and experience your anger. This makes it an observable and legitimate problem for him or her to address. As with absenteeism and disorganization, angry behavior that is disruptive can be quantified by the number of incidents and its effect on others. So your boss is not acting as an armchair diagnostician with such a statement but as an informed observer. However, deciding on the cause of your anger, suggesting the type of counseling needed, or making a decision that you don't need the EAP but anger management classes would indeed all be examples of acting as an armchair diagnostician. Anger management counseling helps a person gain control over his or her reaction to feeling irritated and annoyed. There are, however, many possible underlying causes for anger management issues that can be addressed in other ways as well. You should self-refer to CONCERN to discuss the anger issue first if you aren't sure anger management classes are the way to go. The EAP will lead to the right form of help.



CONCERN: EAP teams with Human Resources to provide another resource for managers and supervisors to consult about how to manage issues with individuals, within and between work groups, and across departments. When you call CONCERN: EAP, ask for a Management Consultation or request to speak to a Clinical Manager.

Call: 800.344.4222
www.concern-eap.com