



Solutions

A newsletter for managers, supervisors and human resource staff eligible for Kepro services



The following questions and answers are designed to help provide guidance related to challenges that supervisors face.

What are some of the problems I can expect with my employees who have transitioned to remote positions?

Some research shows that the most common concern for remote employees is isolation. Not being able to engage with coworkers and share a collective mindset, or the idea of being in something together can create a sense of going it alone. Supervisors should keep a pulse on their remote staff and could consider getting their teams together virtually for daily or weekly check-ins. The EAP should be a top-of-mind resource for remote workers and promoted and normalized frequently during this unusual time. Supervisors should still consider productivity issues as reasons to suggest the use of the EAP, just as they would in times of traditional in-person work.

Many supervisors don't appreciate the value of performance reviews in developing their team. Some view the process as a chore, which leads to the task being postponed or delayed. How can supervisors feel excited or develop more of a sense of urgency about completing them?

All employees have unique gifts and skills waiting to be discovered. Much of this is a lifelong process, and supervisors are in a unique position to spot these abilities, encourage and develop them. Reviews offer these opportunities, and employees are cheated without an effective relationship with the supervisor that helps unearth their true potential. Many employees will not spot how much they have learned, be able to articulate their skills, or grow in confidence without feedback. The payoff for the organization is

having employees who desire to take more initiative, along with increased willingness to take risks, such as bringing forth their own innovative ideas to solve problems. In addition, review time invariably brings up the topic of roadblocks, and sometimes these can be personal. The EAP can then be a resource for problem resolution.

My employee shows up late to work, and I am about to write a corrective letter as a first-level warning. What negative effects of tardiness can I insert into this documentation? And how are supervisors affected if they ignore tardiness?

Effects of tardiness include resentment from coworkers, which can result in conflicts. This in turn affects productivity. Morale also suffers. Being chronically late has ripple effects for almost every part of the organization's operation. Chronic tardiness is the type of problem that frustrated employees often take to their next level of management to lodge a complaint. You want to be proactive with this problem. Failure to do so will earn you a reputation for playing favorites, being unfair, and being a pushover. If employees believe you don't care about tardiness, they may begin to ignore other rules and standards of excellence, and be less concerned about their productivity.

What are the more common reasons employees quit attending the EAP after being formally referred by supervisors for a performance problem?

Common reasons employees stop visiting the EAP or do not follow the recommendations include: 1) The employee believes the personal problem can be resolved without following the EAP's recommendations; 2) The employee does not believe the organization will issue a disciplinary action for future performance problems if the personal problem remains unresolved; 3) The employee finds an alternative treatment option (usually one that is less directive and effective); 4) The employee has other employment options (or income sources) that decrease motivation and urgency to follow through with EAP recommendations; and 5) The employee believes the supervisor referral is punitive, not supported by tangible performance problems, and therefore unnecessary. Employee Assistance professionals are skilled at intervening and overcoming most of these motivational hurdles, but supervisor referrals that produce the most motivated employees are usually well planned. This requires good communication established in advance with the EAP.



I have suggested on many occasions that my employee visit the EAP because of his grumpy communication style. Can I make a formal referral to the EAP for this sort of annoying problem? I have no complaints about quality of work.

Generally, job performance is an umbrella term that includes attendance and tardiness, availability to work, conduct, behavior, attitude, quality of work, and quantity of work performed. This scope covers just about anything that can be measured within an employee's essential functions. If you can describe and document this undesirable attitude and its negative impact on others and productivity, then you have what's needed to push for change. Consult with the EAP. The problem you describe is likely part of a long-term pattern, one that many people have adapted to, and therefore resistance to change will be high. Rather than just speaking with your employee in an attempt to persuade, use a well-written corrective memo that includes the following: description of the problem, its impact, and past attempts by you to encourage change; outlines that you are making a referral to the EAP; states the desired outcome (what you would like to see changed); and how these changes must happen without delay. Get support from your manager and human resources so that everyone is on the same page with the corrective action plan.

Many supervisors with whom I have spoken have yet to make a referral of an employee to the EAP. I believe many see the EAP only as a source of help for troubled workers. What are they not fully understanding about the EAP and what it can do?

EAPs are often viewed mistakenly as programs that only address personal problems. Supervisors

should consider how EAPs can help them be better managers, help workers improve performance, and help resolve "people problems." Studies often show that poor workplace communication is every organization's key productivity roadblock. Kepro can provide guidance on this topic, and consultation is always confidential. Additionally, Kepro's website offers tips and resources related to stress management, promoting wellness, increasing emotional intelligence, conflict resolution, motivating employees, and dozens of other productivity improvement tools designed to assist supervisors.

Kepro's Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

The Employee Assistance Program through Kepro assists organizations and their workforce in managing the personal challenges that impact employee well-being, performance and effectiveness. Kepro's life management consultants employ a comprehensive approach that identifies issues impacting the employee and assists them in developing meaningful solutions.

The Employee Assistance Program can be accessed anytime, for free, confidential support from a professional consultant or online resource. Call or log on today.

Phone:

Website:

Company Code:

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