

Workplace Supervisor

October 2016

Testimonials

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

"Thank you to our clinical manager for his calm and collected words or wisdom!"

"I am always thankful for the help from CONCERN for staff and others in need. It is a great service that we have in place."

"Our experience was excellent. The onsite counselor was on-time, attentive and very cordial. She was available and was willing to stay if the need existed. An all-around positive experience."



FAQs for Managing Employees

Q. We experienced a death at one of our locations. The EAP came out to meet with employees and to offer support, but some close coworkers didn't show. I was surprised. Should I be concerned?

A. It is difficult to know exactly why some of your employees did not show up, but there are many possible reasons. Meetings of this type may be initially avoided by those most affected by the death. They simply may not yet be ready to share their reactions with others. These employees may demonstrate their grief later, and each potentially in a different way. Other employees may simply feel able or prefer to handle the loss on their own with family and friends. Everyone grieves in their own way- it's important to accept this. Let a CONCERN Clinical Manager offer guidance on steps you can take to help your employees respond to their grief reactions. Don't rule out having more than one meeting where employees can come together and share and talk with each other. These meetings in the workplace are valuable, and they almost invariably become collaborative planning sessions where coworkers take charge of logistics, communication, funeral assistance, supporting the family, honoring the worker's memory, planning meals, tending to household chores, dealing with pets, managing the employee's belongings, and more. Be attuned to the productivity levels of your employees in the coming months and suggest CONCERN for those who struggle to return to a desired level of productivity.

Q. I am a recovering alcoholic and attend a weekly AA meeting, where I was surprised to see my employee. And he saw me. This employee has absenteeism problems. Should I avoid discussing this chance meeting with him at work? Is it breaking confidence if I mention it to CONCERN?

A. If your employee approaches you at work about the meeting, it would be your decision whether to share personal information or discuss the encounter. Approaching your employee first, however, would not be recommended. Alcoholics Anonymous has time-tested traditions related to how it functions, especially with regard to anonymity. It would be inconsistent with those traditions to share your employee's participation with anyone. It is also not a work-related matter. Know that if you were to refer the employee to CONCERN for absenteeism problems, EA professionals accept referrals without preconceived notions as to what might ultimately explain a performance problem, but will typically screen

for substance abuse issues as they engage the employee client. The history of the EA profession is based on the precept that substance use can impact the quality of one's work, and life.

Q. I read somewhere that supervisors should never get angry at their employees. I am not sure I agree with that advice. Isn't it better for employees to see the real person in a supervisor rather than a machine with no emotions?

A. The supervisor's job is to coach, direct, develop, educate, and counsel employees on work issues. He or she performs these functions as a representative of the work organization with whom the employee has a pay-for-hire relationship. Supervisory functions do not include conveying anger toward employees for failure to perform satisfactorily. When the supervisor is expressing anger, it implies that it is personal, supplanting the organization's relationship with his or her own. When employees disappoint, corrective tools and administrative measures exist to help them improve performance. A supervisor can feel anger, of course, but to act on these feelings and display an emotional reaction can only diminish the quality and effectiveness of the relationship the employee has with the organization.

Q. Recently a rumor circulated that my employee lost \$100,000 in the stock market. A day later, he went on vacation. I feared he might commit suicide, but had no reason to phone 911. Upon his return, I did not inquire about the loss or recommend the EAP. Should I have?

A. When you learn through the grapevine that an employee is in crisis, that knowledge, learned within the context of the work setting, makes inquiring about it appropriate. This is not the same as probing a personal matter and invading privacy. While 911 would have been premature, you would have been acting within the boundaries of your role to reach out, share the rumor, and inquire about his or her wellbeing. Many employees attempt to make extra money, take risks, and fall prey to

Internet get-rich-quick schemes, or legitimate but high-risk money-making opportunities like options trading. Some of these after-hours activities can be associated with compulsive gambling or Internet addiction. Other personal problems may further exacerbate these issues. Obviously expressing concern and suggesting the EAP makes sense, and for this employee, doing so now might still be a good idea.



Q. I have an employee whose teenager was caught at school with "bath salts." Now I hear the teen is in a drug treatment program in another state. Is there any reason to suggest the employee contact CONCERN, since the teen is in treatment?

A. Suggesting CONCERN as a source of help and support would be appropriate, simply because the family may benefit from the support in addition to any treatment the teenager is receiving. As well, there will be recommendations by any treatment program for aftercare, follow-up, possibly 12-step meetings, and most likely self-help groups for the parents. Unfortunately, treatment centers out of state are notorious for minimal follow-up after discharge, and do not typically identify solid resources and help necessary to keep the entire family plugged in to recovery. If the family requests EAP assistance, these concerns and needs can also be easily addressed.

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