

Making your EAP a strategic partner

As a human resource professional, a manager/supervisor, CEO or other leader, how do you view your employee assistance program (EAP)? What role does it play in the success of your organization?



Is your EAP there to help address substance abuse in the work place, or as a required referral source for employees who test positive? Do you use the EAP for management referrals to

help address job performance issues? Does the

EAP exist as a benefit for employees who have problems that exist outside of work and need professional assistance? Do you use your EAP as a resource for consultation—whether seeking assistance for employee behaviors, training issues, change management or organizational development?

Ask different people within an organization what role the EAP serves and you will probably receive different answers, depending on how that individual uses the EAP. An employee may say the EAP helps with personal problems. A risk officer may say the EAP is used for drug and alcohol referrals.

A manager may say the main reason for having an EAP is for management referrals. Someone in HR might cite several reasons for using the EAP, including training or that it's an employee benefit. And, while all of those answers are valid, as your EAP we would like our customers to see our value in providing all of those services and more.

Furthermore, as a comprehensive EAP offering services that push the limits of a traditional EAP, we would like you to start thinking of Ease@Work as a strategic partner in the success of your organization.

Of course Ease@Work is there to assist your employees in the traditional sense of an EAP, however, as a leader in your organization, we ask that you expand your vision of how we can help you to be a better manager, meet departmental performance objectives, assist with change initiatives or request consultation related to organizational development.

In addition to new hire orientations, promotional materials, and substance abuse referrals, Ease@Work can also help with the following needs:

- Education for managers/supervisors about how to use the EAP for both management and "soft" referrals

- Training and education programs developed and facilitated by proven, quality subject matter experts
- Leadership development, mentoring and individual coaching programs
- Conflict resolution and mediation
- Assistance with policy writing and review
- Consultation on organizational development projects, such as performance management and needs analysis
- Management consultations
- Change management support
- Critical incident stress debriefings
- Health fair planning and coordination
- Assistance with workplace wellness programs and initiatives

Our ability to offer the comprehensive services listed above allows Ease@Work to be more than a referral source. . . more than an employee benefit.

As your EAP, we understand your business and culture; we understand your managers and employees; and we seek to understand your organization's strengths and vulnerabilities, so we can better serve your needs. We consider these aspects of understanding to be an advantage in preparing a meaningful approach in how we assist you, your managers and your leadership. We are well-prepared and ready to be an integrated part of your organization's strategic plan.

Call your dedicated account manager to discuss how Ease@Work can support your organization's needs in 2011.

Looking to start off 2011 with something to inspire and re-energize your workforce? Try offering a seminar on *The Science of Optimism, The 13 Principles of Happiness, or Restoring Peace and Passion to the Workplace.* Contact Valerie Nosek at 216/325-9323 or vnosek@easeatwork.com for seminar highlights or to discuss scheduling.



Q: As the HR Manager of a small company, I see the garnishments that come through to be processed by payroll. Is there anything I can do that might reduce the number of garnishments we see?

A: Processing garnishments can be a drag on the payroll system, costing time and money. While it would be nice to think garnishment action could be completely eliminated, that would be unrealistic. However, there are some things an employer can do to help their employees. First, Ease@Work has paycheck stuffers reminding employees of the financial services available to them; this paycheck-size flyer can be included in the paycheck envelope when an employee's wages are being garnished. This form of promotional material is appropriate as a soft referral in a timely manner. Employee education would be another way the EAP could help. Often a Budgeting Basics class is enough to get employees thinking about better financial management and it can provide simple tools that can be used right away. Other classes might cover how to use credit appropriately, how to pay down debt, or how to start saving money. If financial problems are affecting an employee's work performance—for example, an employee repeatedly receives calls from collectors while at work and this is impacting productivity—then a management referral may be appropriate.

WE KNOW PEOPLE

Staying on track

We know people! EASE@Work is connected to an extensive network of specialists who support the unique needs of Human Resources.

If you're not sure if we can help you with your needs, just ask!

Here's an example of how we can help:

Company ABC knew they had to develop a new harassment policy and implement training within six months. An internal team was assigned to work on the project, assessing needs, developing the policy, creating the training program and presenting the training sessions.

After two months, it became apparent that the team's ability to complete the task in a timely manner was questionable.

The HR director suggested calling Ease@Work for assistance. The account manager suggested a consultation with one of our experts who has developed and presented numerous harassment programs for a variety of organizations. The consultant was able to take the policy that had been developed by the team, review it and make some suggestions for added clarity.

The consultant then developed interactive training for both managers and general staff. And, given the short time frame, the company decided to have the consultant present the initial training sessions to all staff. The consultant also prepared a facilitator's guide and a master copy of the materials so the company could have an internal facilitator present the training in the future.

Company ABC was able to complete the project in time, with all staff and managers trained on the new policy and related harassment education.

Furthermore, the company was also prepared to have an internal person present the training to new hires or as a refresher course—a forward-thinking, cost-saving measure.



What have you missed at Interact@EASE?

Visit www.easeatwork.com and click on the "Visit our blog" link for the latest conversations about human resource, EAP and wellness-related topics.