



Management Services Available Through the EAP

Administrative Referrals

The Administrative Referral process is an integral part of your Employee Assistance Program and is designed to provide managers and supervisors with a constructive method of dealing with employees whose job performance or behaviors have become unacceptable.

A percentage of your workforce at any given time may be experiencing personal difficulties that negatively impact upon job performance. Some of these individuals will turn to their personal support system (family, friends, or clergy) for help. Others may access the Employee Assistance Program voluntarily for relief. But it is not uncommon for some persons to become so confused and paralyzed by their problems that they do nothing. Eventually, these employees will demonstrate a marked deterioration in performance at work. These persons cannot be threatened or cajoled into sustained performance improvement. Their record will not improve until they address their distracting personal issues directly.

The Administrative Referral process provides the supervisor and the employee with a constructive, humanistic method of realizing this goal. The objective is to retain valuable human assets that may be lost without a formal program.

When to Make the Referral

The bases of all Administrative Referrals are observable, documentable job performance problems of a continuing and repeated nature or solitary incidents which cross the line of propriety or violate company rules. Every worker has an occasional bad day or performance lapse; obviously, these situations are transient and require no intervention. However, when the job performance deterioration becomes a repeated and continuing phenomenon, management action becomes necessary. Subjective information, hearsay or unsupported allegations are not sufficient justification for a referral.

The following is a partial list of typical job performance issues.

- Chronic absenteeism or tardiness
- Anger incidents
- Poor customer relations
- Attention and concentration difficulties
- Sexual or other harassment
- Negative interpersonal relationships that directly impact productivity
- Substance Abuse Violations

Conducting the Administrative Referral Interview

Confronting an employee with unacceptable job performance is difficult. But remember, offering the Employee Assistance Program to an employee with obvious personal problems is a positive response to a negative situation. The employee's deteriorating performance at work may be connected to increasing personal problems or other distractions outside the workplace.

Your goal in meeting with the employee is to confront the deteriorating performance and to offer professional assistance to help the employee resolve the difficulty. Can compliance with administrative referrals be considered a condition of continued employment? The answer is a definite yes, especially in



instances in which an EEOC violation was found to have occurred; e.g., sexual or other harassment, threats against another employee, etc.

The following steps are recommended for the formal interview:

1. Be straightforward and stick to documented facts and observations that the employee cannot refute.
2. Do not attempt to discuss the employee's personal problems or motivations.
3. Hold all phone calls and other interruptions during the interview.
4. Do not moralize, preach or judge.
5. Maintain control of the conversation and emotional composure.
6. Do not be misled by sympathy-evoking tactics.
7. Show your concern but be adamant that corrective action is necessary. A good rule of thumb is to "document hard" and "confront softly."
8. Offer the employee the opportunity to participate in the Administrative Referral.
9. Provide the employee with a specific time/date by which he/she must contact the EAP. We recommend that you make this target time/date coincide with the date of your referral.
10. Ask the employee to sign the Release of Information and point out the very limited amount of information that may be conveyed. Then FAX the signed release to ESI at the number listed on the document.

What You Should Expect

1. Initial information about whether the employee made contact with the EAP by the designated deadline as requested.
2. Timely follow-up calls from the EAP regarding the employee's attendance at scheduled counseling sessions; information on the employee's attitude and prognosis.
3. Timely contact by the EAP if/when the employee deviates from the prescribed corrective counseling regimen.
4. Your feedback to the assigned case manager regarding the employee's on the job progress and improvements, or lack thereof, is vital.