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A manager's resource guide for the workplace

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Contents

In today's demanding work world, your job is often complex and challenging.

As a manager, you're expected to have proven job skills in your area of expertise. Your organization counts on you to have the skills for resolving workplace problems and supporting employees so they can excel at their jobs.

Why a manager's resource guide?

During the course of the day, you may be asked to assume many responsibilities: support, motivate, lead, organize, delegate, mediate, resolve, reward and plan ahead.

Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is here to help you. We've put together this manager's resource guide as a reference source filled with useful tips and practical strategies that can help you build a more effective workplace.

This guide is one tool you can use. You should always consult your organization's human resources policies and procedures when dealing with matters that concern employees and the work environment.

And remember: you can get additional support, have questions answered or request information on specific services by contacting a Management Consultant.

How your EAP can make being a manager a little easier

As part of your EAP, you can take advantage of a range of services designed to support your professional needs.

Management Consultation Services. As a leader of employees, you may face situations related to work performance, substance abuse or other concerns. To assist you with these issues, we provide unlimited phone consultation.

Managers, supervisors or Human Resources professionals can contact our skilled workplace-trained consultants, who work with you to help:

• Identify and resolve problems and issues

• Increase employee satisfaction

• Promote a productive workforce

Educational Programs. You can request training seminars to address your organization's unique needs. Our nationwide affiliate educator network includes experienced trainers, educators and subject matter experts who can deliver training programs on diverse topics such as stress management, effective communication, strengthening work relationships and time management.

Setting up a seminar is as easy as calling your EAP representative. We'll work with you to deliver a customized seminar to meet your goals.

Critical Incident Services. Should you experience a traumatic workplace event, whether it's the death of a coworker or a customer-related trauma affecting a group of employees, we can consult with you to:

• Determine the best approach

• Obtain resources and guidance to handle the situation

• Get on-site counseling support if needed

• Provide topical literature or handouts

Supporting employees

As a manager, you set the tone and pace for employees to help boost performance and productivity on the job. While there are different ways to assist and empower employees, this guide covers four that can be effective:

Motivate people

Motivating employees is one of a manager's most important jobs. It may also be one of the more difficult. And it's further complicated by the reality that motivating factors are as different as the personalities of your employees. One person's incentive is another person's turnoff.

Your challenge is to discover what motivates your employees and make sure you integrate this into the workplace. You can create situations that allow for:

• Developing new or unique assignments

• Keeping employees "in the loop"

• Providing for advancement

• Allowing employees to have a stake in the project

• Receiving support for work/life balance

How do you uncover what makes your employees tick?

These tips can help:

Look for the right fit. Know your employees' skills and passions. Help employees find work they excel at and enjoy. When people have the opportunity to do satisfying, successful work, they are motivated to challenge themselves further. At the same time, add a little spice to the routine by helping employees take on new tasks or projects. Also, identify your "peak performers," but don't overload them.

Listen. Active listening means actually hearing what your employees have to say. It conveys respect for and interest in what the other person is saying. You may have to put aside personal views and really hear what your employee is telling you, even if you disagree. And, chances are, if you really listen to your employees, they'll be more likely to give you the same respect.

Practice what you preach. People learn by observing. Demonstrate the behaviors you want your employees to mirror, such as taking risks, learning from mistakes and acting with integrity.

Provide tools. People often feel frustrated when they don't have the right tools to complete their jobs properly. Whether in the office, on an assembly line or at a remote site, employees need to have the equipment, training and resources necessary to be successful. Find out what they need and remove barriers to help them obtain it.

Guide. Support and instruct employees who are taking on new responsibilities, moving to different positions or simply struggling with some aspect of their work. Encourage, motivate and position them to succeed.

Share relevance. Sometimes employees don't clearly understand the purpose of their jobs, especially within the context of the larger organization and its mission. Let them know how their work fits in and how it relates to the company's goals.

Challenge. Encourage employees to occasionally challenge their boundaries and push themselves to greater heights. The status quo may be comfortable, but it doesn't advance your organization's goals or excite your employees.

Recognize and reward

Receiving acknowledgement for a job well done is vital. It can keep employees on a high-performance path, as well as encourage them to maintain excellence and aspire to greater things.

Acknowledgment, however, must be timely and sincere. And, remember, nothing will dilute praise more than its overuse.

Recognition. While you should get familiar with any official rewards programs offered by your organization, know that recognition doesn't always have to be formal. You can simply acknowledge employees for a job well done. If people believe they are appreciated, they feel better about themselves and their ability to contribute.

Make sure to tailor your recognition to the employee. Some enjoy receiving public appreciation, while others cringe at the thought of being singled out, even for something positive.

You can:

• Personally thank the employee, privately and/or publicly

• Recognize the person in an e-mail, memo, letter or report

• Award and display a certificate of merit

• Create a bulletin board with photos and announcements of recognitions

• Send a compliment to the employee's supervisor if they don't report to you

Reward employees financially. Financial rewards — compensation and benefits — can be powerful motivators. If available, incentive plans, bonuses, cash awards and trips are ways to single out employees who have performed above and beyond the call of duty.

For a system of recognition and rewards to be effective:

• Find out how employees like being acknowledged for their accomplishments, verbally or in writing, publicly or privately, or any other ways.

• Determine what types of rewards are meaningful: money, comp time, movie tickets, a pizza party, group outings or something else.

Standardize the process. Set standards for what actions and behavior are rewarded and how success is measured. Make sure that all employees who meet the criteria are considered in the process. Then follow through and acknowledge those employees who qualify.

Keep it relevant. Recognition is more effective when the employee knows what actions are being rewarded. State the exact behavior or accomplishment being recognized and let the employee know how it benefited the workgroup, department or company.

Sincerity counts. Inflated or insincere recognition can make an employee feel uncomfortable or upset. Reward specific accomplishments or successes so the praise is meaningful.

Focus where it belongs. If a group of employees contributed to a successful project or task, make sure everyone on the team gets credit.

Timing is everything. Don't wait too long to recognize or reward. The sooner you recognize the action, the better the chance for reinforcing the behavior.

Celebrate the group. After a tough deadline has been met, a large contract signed or some milestone achieved, celebrate the accomplishment. Bring in donuts and coffee or a catered lunch, and let the employees get together to applaud each other. Or, consider an activity away from the workplace.

Work on time management

Employees today juggle demands of work, family and personal lives. This may cause anxiety and affect job performance.

You can help them become more organized and productive in their jobs by working with them to set priorities and manage their time.

Manage your own time wisely. Review your own time management skills. If you find you have areas for improvement, adapt your work habits accordingly.

Consider these tips:

• **Set goals.** Establish goals for projects large and small. Keep in mind the SMART — Specific – Measurable – Achievable – Realistic – Time-based — formula. It's an easy-to-remember method and is effective in mapping out objectives employees can follow.

• **Start a calendar.** Record the final date of a project. Then work backward to note in-between steps and due dates needed for completion. These steps can be recorded on a calendar, with daily, weekly, monthly, even quarterly or yearly deadlines. It's also helpful to see the project or activity mapped out in a logical order. Consider the use of project management software to keep you on track.

• **Simplify.** Break down large tasks and projects into smaller, more manageable activities. This may keep the project from seeming overwhelming. Help your employees assign priorities to these tasks, and celebrate small milestones.

• **Schedule daily tasks.** Create a to-do list for the day to keep focused, building in time for interruptions and unforeseen responsibilities. This adds flexibility to help you complete priority work while letting you manage unexpected developments.

Your challenge is to discover what motivates your employees and integrate this into the workplace.

What can you do if an employee seems to have trouble balancing work and home life?

You can make sure that your employee is aware of the many benefits and resources of your Employee Assistance Program. In a private and supportive way, let the employee know that you encourage use of this program, but that the decision is a personal one.

And make certain they understand that your EAP is completely confidential.

Help with stress management

Even the most organized manager or the most efficient employee has a breaking point. Be on the lookout for some symptoms of stress:

• Decrease in productivity or performance

• Absenteeism and lateness

• Aggressive or defensive behavior

• Loss of self-confidence

• More frequent physical illnesses

• Changes in interpersonal relationships

You can help your employee deal with stress, regain their personal and professional balance, and improve on-the-job performance by enlisting the support of your EAP as needed.

There are several key areas of employee stress and burnout, as well as actions that can help resolve the issues.

The job

Perhaps the employee doesn't know or understand the job he or she is expected to perform. Maybe the tools to do the job are unavailable, or the workload is becoming too heavy. Find out what's going on with the job and what you can do to improve the situation. Maybe it's lobbying for additional resources and budget, or finding ways to extend a deadline.

Ambition

Employees may have aspirations that you're not aware of or that don't match their current position. This may lead to job dissatisfaction. Ask them where they see themselves in a year, in five years, and help them work toward achieving their goals, if appropriate.

Professional development

To grow on the job, people need to have the right training and support and be kept informed of their performance. Find out what learning opportunities are available and notify your employees. Encourage them to take advantage of appropriate courses and seminars. Finally, let them know how well they are meeting departmental, group or company goals.

Work/life balance

Employees may have a tough time maintaining balance between their work and personal lives. In these cases, you can refer them to programs provided by your Human Resources department that can assist in reducing stress levels. These may include the Employee Assistance Program, dependent care resources, even flexible working arrangements.

How can you bring teams together in a way that benefits both team members and the organization?

- **Clarify the vision.** This is critical. Your mission — and your strategies to get there — must be clearly defined so that everyone is on the same page.
- **Inform.** The team goals must be communicated to everyone in the group, at all levels, so that members understand individual and team responsibilities.
- **Make it safe.** Team members should feel that it's okay to speak their minds in a non-threatening way, offer input and make creative suggestions. By making it acceptable for everyone on the team to share their contributions, you can learn new and creative ways of doing things.
- **Appreciate the differences.** Team members bring with them a range of skill sets, experience and knowledge. Recognize these differences and allow members to share their strengths. It will let you use the talents of the group to the team's advantage.
- **Keep it positive.** When you bring together a group of people, personality issues and finger-pointing can occur. Remind team members that they're all "in it together." Reinforce the idea that, when things go wrong, it doesn't matter who's responsible. It's up to the team to work together and correct the situation.
- **Keep focused on the goal.** Make sure to monitor team progress to see that individuals don't get caught up on minor details or move off course. It's your job to keep the team on task.

As you learn and practice the skill of delegation, you can motivate employees to willingly seek new opportunities and become more productive.

Managing the work environment

Employees spend a major part of each day — a good part of their lives, in fact — on the job. And if they work in a supportive, positive environment, they are more likely to feel better about themselves and their work.

Here are some guidelines that can help you build and sustain a positive workplace:

Keep communications open

Communication happens all the time, but that doesn't mean it's always effective. Be mindful of how you communicate with employees.

What can you do to become a more successful communicator and maintain open channels with your employees?

- Listen, really listen, when employees talk to you.
- Understand and respect different viewpoints.
- Put yourself in the other person's shoes.
- Be open to new ideas.
- Ask questions if you don't understand.

- Use open body language, make eye contact and nod your approval or understanding.
- Don't interrupt the speaker; wait to make your point.

During times of change or uncertainty, effective communications become even more important:

- **Don't allow rumors or half-truths to circulate throughout the work environment.** Rumors are morale killers.
- **Do keep your door open during this time for visits.** This may encourage employees to ask questions.
- **Do let your employees know, very clearly, what is expected of them** during a time of change.
- **Don't deny that change will have an effect.** For every action, there is a reaction. However, that doesn't mean that things will change for the worse. Change can be highly positive and beneficial for you, your employees and the company.
- **Do be honest.** Even if news is less than positive, communicate it clearly and openly once you are permitted to do so.

Build effective teams

Teams can be a great way to foster collaboration, improve employee relationships and meet goals. However, people on teams bring with them their own ways of thinking and doing. That means teams can also create duplication of effort, cause disharmony and lead to control issues. You want to structure your workplace to encourage teamwork and put it to use for the company.

Delegate when needed

Consider the following situations:

- You need to complete the quarterly sales results and a major client presentation by next week. You can't meet both deadlines, but you believe there's no one with the experience to take over either project.

- You'd love to turn over the monthly status report and meeting, but you're afraid you're the only one who can get it done right.

- The employee training session is a perfect job for the new hire, but your schedule is blocked for the next two weeks, leaving you no time to explain the project and make a transition.

If you find yourself in similar situations, it's time to think about delegating. You're not being as effective as you could be if you find yourself with so much work that you're not sure where to begin. Or, the same holds true if you don't have enough hours in the day, even though you feel like you're spending too much time on the job.

What happens? Deadlines can be missed, your employees can be frustrated in completing activities or projects, and productivity may suffer.

With effective delegating, however, you can free yourself from excessive workloads or jobs that can be competently handled by someone else. You can also recharge yourself and concentrate on the managerial or higher level activities that really do need your attention. It's a win-win situation for the whole team.

You can also help employees learn how to delegate in certain situations so they can be more productive on the job. Work together to determine tasks that they can entrust to other team members.

If you're uncertain about where to start, here are some suggestions that may prove useful:

- **Decide what to delegate.** This can be harder than it sounds. After all, you may have to turn over a task or project that you enjoy. You should look at those activities that don't require your personal attention and can be more efficiently handled by another individual.

- **Get the right person.** Evaluate employee strengths and weaknesses, as well as experience and professional goals. In some cases, you will want to match the work with someone who can easily handle the task. In others, it may be best to give it to a competent, but inexperienced employee who is ready for new challenges.

- **Learn to let go.** It can be counterproductive if you over manage or try to impose your way of doing things. Don't be afraid to let go. Trust that you've selected the best person and empower them to do the job. And, it's okay if they do it differently than you would do it, as long as the job is well done.

- **Give the details.** Make sure the employee understands the project or task. Explain the job's purpose and outline the steps required. List major responsibilities and set deadlines for completion. Make sure to discuss the expected results. Provide plenty of opportunity, especially the first time, for the employee to ask questions.

- **Manage effectively.** Stay involved at a high level. When your employee takes over, provide constructive feedback — about what they're doing right and what needs to be improved. This keeps the employee on track and lets them adjust along the way. Remember, even though you've delegated the task, its successful completion remains your responsibility.

- **Recognize.** When an employee successfully completes the delegated project or job, give him or her the recognition that's deserved.

As you learn and practice the skill of delegation, you can motivate employees to willingly seek new opportunities and become more productive.

Promote problem solving

Just because you're the boss doesn't mean you have to have all the answers or make all the decisions. Employees who are empowered to solve problems on their own are less dependent on you. And, this can promote a calmer work climate and reduce on-the-job stress.

Consider these three helpful steps in problem-solving:

1. **Define the problem:** Working alone or with the employee or team, clearly express the problem or challenge. Put it in writing.

2. **Develop a plan:** Determine what you and the employee or team can do to resolve the issue(s) and arrive at a workable solution.

3. **Do something:** Draft an action plan, using as much detail as needed. Then work together with the employee or team to put the plan into action.

Reverse engineering. Determine the results you want. Then, working backward from the solution, try to identify the steps you'll need to take to get that result.

For instance, competitors routinely deconstruct products and services to examine components, ingredients and processes. Ask, "Why is theirs better than ours?" Then look inside to see if you can figure it out.

Means-ends analysis. You have a current situation or issue, and a goal that you and your employee want to reach. In between, you have a number of steps that can lead to the goal. Suggest that the employee create a flow chart, with various lines — different options — leading from start to finish. This allows the team to see the alternatives that are available and which might be best to reach the goal.

Picture it as determining the "best" way to get from Chicago to Los Angeles. "Best" can mean different things: which one gets you there the quickest, which costs the least, which allows the most visits with clients?

Negative brainstorming. Try asking "How can we not solve this problem?" or "How can we really mess this up?" It may get a laugh at first, but after the jokes are made, you and your employee may find the unexpected. And that may be just what you need to solve tough problems in creative ways.

For instance, try asking, "What could go wrong if we gave customers money back for poor customer service?"
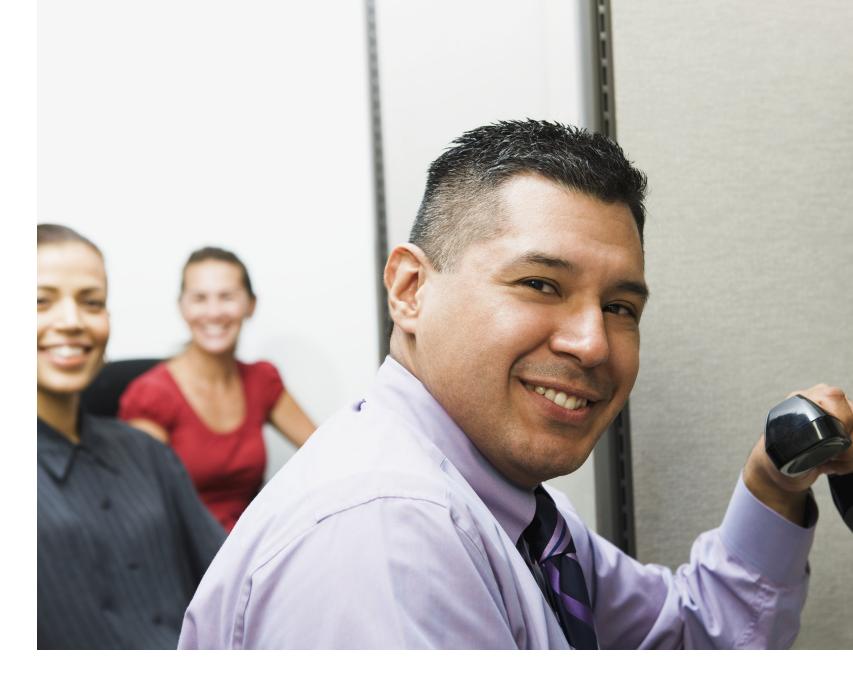
Take care of conflict

The personalities on your team may be as different as night and day. Employees bring with them differences in opinions, mindsets and behavior that can energize your team and result in creative work. These differences can also create conflict, "turf wars" and other disagreements.

Take the lead in conflict resolution. The goal is not necessarily for everyone to get along, as desirable as that may be. Rather, the goal is to maintain an environment where employees can get along well enough to be productive.

Take effective steps to resolve on-the-job conflict:

• **Investigate.** Research your company's policies on managing workplace conflicts. Then look into the details of the situation and determine if the disagreement is affecting individual or team performance.

• **Have a talk.** Discuss the situation with each employee privately and ask them to provide a factual description of what occurred. Make sure to stay unbiased.

• **Explain.** Let each employee know how the issue is affecting others.

• **Review.** Go over the organization's policies on job conflict with each employee. Make sure they understand any consequences that might result from an ongoing disagreement.

• **Bring them together.** You may need to hold a meeting in a neutral spot where the employees can try to work things out. Here are some tips that can help this meeting be more successful:

— Let each person have an equal chance to speak, without interruption.

— Keep the focus on the issue — no blaming.
— Practice an active listening skill — ask each individual to restate the other's description of the problem. They may see things differently when they are standing in the other person's shoes.

— Ask for suggestions from both individuals.

— Offer your own recommendations. This may be necessary if neither party comes up with a solution or if they offer unworkable ideas.

— Enlist their support in working together toward a resolution. Make sure to keep tabs on how well the conflict resolution is progressing. Another meeting at a later time is a good idea.

Your Management Consultant is an additional resource. Through phone consultation with trained specialists, you can get more information on dealing with conflict in the workplace.

Employees bring with them differences in opinions, mindsets and behavior that can energize your team and result in creative work.

Resolving issues

There are times when you may need to manage difficult situations. Handling employee performance or behavior problems at work is an essential part of your responsibilities.

You should know your company's policies on dealing with employee issues. Follow your company's steps and address these issues in a timely and professional way.

Deal with problem behaviors

You can take steps to help employees be more productive and less disruptive at work. Here are several behaviors that can disrupt the workplace, as well as some suggested interventions.

Employee	Identifying traits	Effective strategy
The pit bull	Angry, aggressive. May be demanding of others and provoke coworkers.	Remain calm and give the employee some time to calm down. State the need to discuss the issue when the person is ready to listen. Follow up with a meeting to clearly state the impact of the person's behavior and how it affects the team.
Chip on the shoulder	Defensive, resentful. May feel unappreciated and adapt defensive posture.	Show interest in learning employee's strengths and contributions. Make an effort to recognize or reward as appropriate, and acknowledge their suggestions.
Wet blanket	Pessimistic or negative about coworkers, the team, the project, or the manager.	Try to identify the cause by asking questions about the employee's concerns and request ideas to solve them. Provide opportunities that can build the employee's confidence. Recognize past attempts to resolve similar issues, as the "wet blanket" will often claim, "we tried that years ago."
Clinging vine	Hesitant, lacks initiative and confidence, requires a great deal of manager's time.	Teach problem solving and planning. Encourage independence and methodically detach yourself from employee's constant attention. Reinforce positive, independent behavior.

And remember, you can contact a Human Resources representative or your EAP if you need additional assistance.

Watch for performance issues
In certain cases, an employee's behavior may point to an underlying issue.

How can you tell?
You can look for signs that an employee may be having an emotional, substance abuse or other type of problem.

Performance
- Misses deadlines
- Can't handle existing and/or new assignments
- Needs increasingly more supervision
- Makes excessive mistakes
- Forgets details or instructions
- Turns in work that is incomplete
- Generates customer complaints

Attendance
- Has unexplained absences
- Is frequently late or leaves early
- Takes long lunches or breaks
- May disappear from work without notice or explanation

Attitude
- Has mood swings
- Can't concentrate or focus
- Is argumentative or withdrawn
- Complains frequently
- Responds to input in a defensive or angry manner

Other
- Sloppy appearance or grooming
- Increase in number of incoming/outgoing personal calls
- Generates complaints from coworkers
- Has more frequent on-the-job accidents
- Shows no concern for workplace or coworker safety

Why employees don't always measure up
Sometimes, there are simple reasons why an employee is not performing as expected. They:
- May not understand the job
- Don't realize they're not performing
- Are afraid to do the job
- Can't do it
- Face obstacles beyond their control
- Are frustrated by conflicting information
- Think their way is better

Investigate problems

If you notice some of the warning signs, you'll need to address the issues directly with the employee. Left unresolved, these issues can affect other people on your team, lowering their morale and productivity.

If you're ever concerned that an employee might be at risk for self-harm or for harming others, consult your company guidelines for action steps. While we can consult with you in these instances, you should refer all crisis situations to emergency services, such as the local emergency room or rescue squad.

Otherwise, set up an informal meeting to provide feedback on what you have noticed.

- **Be objective.** Keep your comments to observed statements and relay them in a calm, professional manner. When you do, the employee may be less likely to feel defensive or react emotionally.
- **Keep it private.** Maintain the employee's dignity and confidentiality by keeping the matter between the two of you.
- **Listen.** Let the employee have a chance to speak and make every effort to really hear what he or she is saying.
- **Set targets.** Determine if additional assistance or training is needed to help the employee. Then, agree upon standards for improved performance.
- **Revisit.** Set a time period necessary for the employee to show improvement and then follow up with a review. Consider a referral to the EAP.

Document performance

At the same time you're planning the meeting, you should begin to formally document concerns.

This lets you objectively record any actions or problems that may occur over time. It also helps you correctly remember events and gives you a chance to take steps to help resolve the problem. Finally, it protects you and your organization if the employee is terminated at some point.

Please consult your organization's progressive discipline or employee performance policies.

In addition, these guidelines may help you:

- Take note of situations and problems as they occur. Write down a description of what happened, the date and time, and individuals involved.
- Use a notebook or file folder to keep your information organized and in one location. You may want to arrange the information so that you can show a pattern over time.
- Keep it factual — record incidents, not thoughts or feelings.
- Note the impact to the work team, department or company.
- Keep it timely, while incidents are clear in your mind.
- Be consistent in keeping track of situations.
- Attach samples of work or memos and notes sent to the employee, if appropriate.
- Protect the privacy of the individual by keeping the information in a safe place.

While you are documenting performance, work with the employee to help him or her improve. Make sure the person understands how they are not living up to expectations. Counsel them on ways to reach an acceptable performance level.

You can suggest that they contact your EAP for assistance in dealing with any job or personal issues. You may want to offer company resources, in the form of training or courses that may help them reach their goals. You can schedule regular meetings to review the employee's progress.

Hold a formal meeting

You may have clearly and repeatedly expressed your concerns and expectations, offered coaching and support and documented the problems over time. Still, you may find that an employee doesn't measure up to expected levels of work performance or shows significant problem behavior. At this point, you may decide that a formal performance meeting is required.

You'll want to maintain a professional, objective manner and keep emotions in check. Being consistent across the board can remove any hint of favoritism. And following clear guidelines makes the process as fair as possible.

Prepare yourself

- Organize your documentation.
- Read through the material and draft an agenda of discussion items.
- Make a list of acceptable and unacceptable levels of work performance, using the job description and performance reviews as starting points.
- Focus on job or performance, not personal, issues.
- Check with your Human Resources group to make sure that you are following company guidelines for a formal performance meeting.
- Call your Management Consultant for assistance.
- Mentally prepare yourself to deal with defensiveness or even hostility on the part of the employee.

Set the meeting

To protect the employee's confidentiality, conduct the meeting in a private location. Make sure you schedule enough time so that you don't have to rush through issues. Inform the employee of the time and place, making sure the employee is available.

Keep it constructive

Even though the meeting is being held to discuss a performance issue, it can still be positive. To work toward that end, you can:

- State in clear, nonjudgmental terms the reason for the meeting.
- Explain that you are concerned about the employee, his or her performance and the impact on the overall work team.
- Recognize that the change in performance is not reflective of previous work or behavior.
- Balance negatives with positives; remind the employee of past accomplishments and contributions.
- Confirm that your goal is cooperation, not confrontation.

Focus on the issue

Once you have established the reason for the meeting in a positive way, you can begin to share with the employee your specific concerns.

- Review the job description.
- Review levels of work performance.
- Describe what is acceptable and unacceptable.
- Use factual, easy-to-understand language.
- Give specific examples, referring to your documentation folder as needed.
- Maintain a calm attitude.
- Allow the employee to share his or her perspective.

Develop an action plan	Discuss steps that can be taken to improve on-the-job performance and/or behavior. It's important to put this information into a written document in which you can:	• Clarify the performance issue(s) or behavior(s) in question. • Establish if further training or assistance is needed. • List specific steps the employee needs to carry out. • Decide and agree upon a review period during which the steps will be implemented and monitored. • Clearly set the improvement standards that are required by the organization. • Plan dates and times to review the employee's performance progress.
Consider your EAP	You may want to make a referral to your EAP. You can provide the employee with contact information and details on the full benefits, which you can get from your Human Resources representative. Referrals to the EAP are generally voluntary and confidential. However, in some situations, you may want to make a Mandatory Management Referral to the EAP. Regardless of whether the referral is a suggestion or an instruction, certain guidelines apply:	• Call us and consult with a Management Consultant letting them know the situation, before meeting with the employee • Address the employee by name, and tell him or her that the company has EAP resources that may help address the issues being discussed. Emphasize the idea that the EAP can be of assistance in dealing with personal or family issues that may be affecting job performance or attendance. • Don't ask the employee to comment on personal issues. • Let the employee know that using the EAP is a voluntary decision, unless you are making a mandatory referral. • Reassure him or her that the program is confidential. • Give the employee the Management Consultant's contact information that you talked with or your company's dedicated number. • Offer the use of your office or other private space for the employee to call the EAP. • Agree to meet again within a specified time to review progress. This meeting should focus only on the performance, attendance or behavior issue, and not on any issues the employee discussed with the EAP.
Reach agreement		•For the best chance of success, it's important to have the employee buy into the written plan. • Schedule a follow-up meeting to give the employee time to review the plan. At the meeting, answer any questions and have the person sign the plan. • Make sure the individual understands his or her commitment to the steps he or she will take. • Explain the consequences of failure to comply with the plan. Check in with your Human Resources and/or Legal departments on the organization's disciplinary process and actions that can be taken. • Try to end on a positive note. Tell the employee that you want them to succeed with the plan and will make yourself available to provide guidance and support.

Continue to follow-up

Monitor performance over the agreed-upon time frame. You should continue to document incidents, if appropriate.

Arrange for periodic meetings to talk with the employee and review progress. Take care to recognize positive changes. Similarly, make sure you explain that you will follow through with disciplinary procedures if needed.

In some cases, you will find that your employee — faced with the facts of the situation as well as expectations of what must be done to improve — shows improvement. In other instances, the individual may decide it's best to look for another position.

There are other cases, however, when an employee cannot or will not make the needed change. And in these situations, there may be no other alternative than termination.

Extraordinary circumstances

You may find yourself faced with circumstances of such a serious nature that the safety and well-being of the employee, or coworkers, is in question.

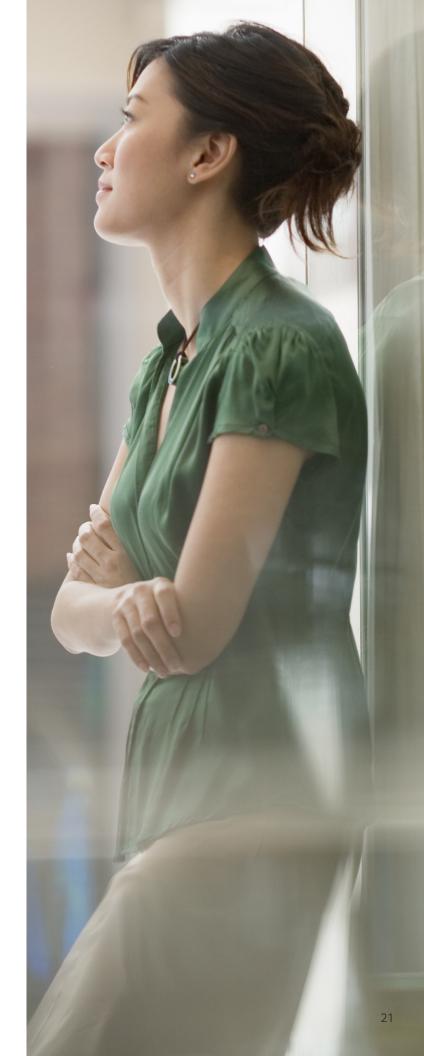In such a case, you should take immediate action.

Make sure you have a copy of your organization's policies and procedures for handling dangerous situations. Follow all of the steps listed for dealing with the crisis.

Once the immediate danger has passed, you can contact your EAP for additional resources or to discuss our Critical Incident Services counseling, if needed.

Mandatory referrals

When an employee voluntarily elects our services, the results are usually more effective. However, in some instances, such as positive drug tests, an employee may be required to seek help through the EAP in order to keep his or her job or current job status. Check with your Human Resources department to determine whether this mandatory referral is used within your company.

If mandatory referrals are part of your company's EAP, you can contact a Management Consultant. They will provide the information and support you need. Please note, however, that making a mandatory referral does not replace your need to directly address the employee's behavior or performance. The steps outlined earlier in this section, such as holding a formal meeting and developing an action plan, are even more important when making a mandatory referral.

Steps for a mandatory referral

1. Call and talk with a Management Consultant before meeting with the employee.

2. Inform your employee that you are requiring that he or she contact the EAP.

3. Give your employee the Management Referral Form (MRF) that you got from the Management Consultant in step one to sign.

4. Provide employee with the phone number for the Management Consultant with whom you discussed the situation.

5. Fax a copy of the signed release forms to the ORMC at the number provided to you by your Management Consultant.

6. After you notify us, your employee must also speak with the EAP.

7. When your employee calls, the Management Consultant will help locate a counselor or schedule an appointment.

8. Your employee needs to attend the counseling sessions and follow the plan outlined by the EAP counselor.*

9. The Management Consultant with whom you discussed the situation will monitor the employee's progress and provide you with updates at a mutually agreed upon time.

10. As long as the release form has been signed and sent to us, as the manager or supervisor of the employee, you can call to confirm:

    a) Your employee contacted the EAP

    b) Dates of kept/missed sessions

    c) Treating provider's recommendations

    d) Compliance with the treatment plan

*Note: The treatment plan outlined by our counselors may or may not be covered under the EAP or the employee's medical benefit plan. If it's covered by your EAP, your employee can attend up to the specified number of counseling sessions. Anything beyond that would have to be certified through your employee's medical insurance plan, if covered, or may be the responsibility of the employee if not covered in his or her benefit plan.

Termination as an option

The decision to terminate is never an easy one. Consult your Human Resources representative before proceeding with this step. You can also contact us and speak with a Management Consultant for additional assistance and resources.

Resources you can use

Here is a list of books you may find useful in your role as manager:

Block, Peter. Flawless Consulting: A Guide to Getting Your Expertise Used. San Francisco: Pfeiffer; 2011
• Provides a terrific consulting model that is easy to understand and usable for all levels of Human Resources consultants.

Ulrich, David. Human Resource Champions. Boston: Harvard Business Review; 1997
• Explores what roles, skills and focus Human Resources professionals must have in order to be successful.

Collins, Jim. Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap...And Others Don't. New York: HarperCollins Publishers; 2001
• An excellent book to help Human Resources professionals understand what's important for businesses to have to be successful.

Johnson, Spencer. Who Moved My Cheese?. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons; 1998
• A motivational book offering the message that "while change is inevitable, growth is optional."

Covey, Stephen R. Seven Habits of Highly Effective People: Restoring the Character Ethic. New York: Free Press; 1989
• A best-seller that helps people to achieve greater fulfillment in all areas of their lives.

Confidential services are
available 24 hours a day,
7 days a week.

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