

APRIL

WORKPLACE  
SOLUTIONS, LLC

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# Frontline Supervisor

EMPLOYEES - YOUR MOST VALUABLE RESOURCE

## TOPICS COVERED THIS MONTH:

- Performance Reviews
- Supervisor Referral
- When to Speak Up
- Traits of the Best Managers
- Performance Evaluation

**Q:** I am not the only supervisor who dreads performance reviews, but is there a way I can make better use of them during the year rather than simply churning them out annually and saying good-bye to the employee until the next year?

Frequent, regular communication with employees will make annual reviews easier to write and deliver. Your employee should not be surprised by anything in the performance appraisal. Praise for a job well done, initiative, going above and beyond the job description, as well as corrective feedback, should come to the employee as soon as possible after an event. Set the review meeting in advance, and suggest that the employee come prepared with a list of accomplishments from last year and goals for the next year. Determine whether or not those goals will help the employee, the work group and the organization. Use agreed-upon goals as a basis for regular exchange in the future. If there are problems, ask your employee what is needed to do the job well, and what she/he is willing to do to

improve performance. Keep the conversation focused and listen as carefully as you speak.



**Q:** My employee is very smart and capable, but this person is not producing the quality of work I expect. I'm starting to feel a little like a broken record harping on productivity. Completed projects continue to disappoint me. Is it time for a supervisor referral?

A referral to EAP can be made at any time. Be cautious to frame EAP as a resource to help with performance issues rather than as part of the disciplinary system. Accountability can be enforced at regular, on-going meetings. Ask for an explanation for goals not met. Are deadlines reasonable? Are extra resources needed? At what point should the employee be informing you of progress and obstacles? When reasonable attempts to correct performance are not working, work with HR to initiate discipline.



### ***Did You Know?***

*Supervisors, managers, HR professionals can contact Workplace Solutions® for consultation on difficult workplace situations.*

*Call 800.327.5071 today!*

**Q:** On break, I saw my employee come out of a package store. I did not see a purchase. My understanding is that this employee is in recovery from alcoholism since his referral to the EAP several months ago. Should I say something to him or the EAP?

You should remain focused on the employee's attendance, performance and behavior on the job, as you would with any other employee. When you note behavior that puts the employee, co-workers, operations or customers at risk, you should remove from duty, obtain medical care and follow your organization's policies related to Alcohol/Drug Free Workplace, Fitness for Duty, and corrective action.

You may consult with the EAP as a supervisor regarding individual employees or the work group. EAP confidentiality protects an individual's personal information unless there is a release to you regarding work-related information.

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**Q:** What makes a good manager of employees? What common traits do the best managers possess?

The Gallop Organization has examined this issue thoroughly with in-depth research based on interviews and studies they conducted with about 80,000 managers. Four characteristics are especially worth consideration:

- ~wanting to see employees grow and succeed;
- ~matching the right people with the right roles;
- ~defining desired outcomes while being willing to

give people the latitude to accomplish them in their own ways;

~focusing on what's best in people, not what's worst. (M. Buckingham and C. Coffman, 1999, *First, Break All the Rules: What the World's Greatest Managers Do Differently.*)

Call your Workplace Solutions account manager for assistance in improving your management skills.

**Q:** I didn't get a very good rating on my performance evaluation as a supervisor. I don't think I need to get help, but can the EAP discuss my supervision issues, style, and how I come across with employees? Is this appropriate, or is the EAP for bigger problems?

EAP helps with a wide-range of job-related concerns in addition to personal counseling. Your style as a supervisor, communication issues and performance management are within the expertise of EA professionals. If further assistance is required, Workplace Solutions can provide resources to you. Your contact, like all with the EAP, is confidential according to state and federal laws.



### **FRONTLINE SUPERVISOR**