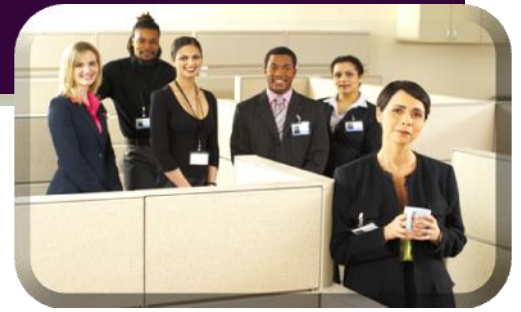


MANAGEMENT PARTNERS

Navigating Work...Life...Health

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My employee does not appear to be a good fit for the position. I don't want to drag things out if we decide to dismiss this person, but should I make a referral to the EAP? I am 100% certain this is a skill and abilities issue.

Make a referral for performance issues. If problems are strictly skills related, your employee will have the benefit of meeting with the employee assistance professional and establishing a working relationship. This could be a source of support later if an adverse action is pursued. The EAP can assess the employee's career fitness, interests, personal finances, and motivation for the current position. A discussion could lead to a job or career change, a stronger feeling of control in the face of job loss, or a reduced likelihood of a legal challenge to dismissal — or even a disturbing personal reaction to dismissal. Many supervisors are surprised to learn in similar situations that personal problems played a role in performance struggles. Think of the EAP as a "productivity improvement program" rather than just a "personal problem-solving program." You will refer and help more employees and also achieve higher levels of productivity and a better return on your organization's investment in the EAP.

How can I help employees experience less stress regarding change in our organization? "Managing change" seems to be a buzzword phrase these days. Can you discuss a practical strategy to help us feel more in control over what feels uncontrollable?

Whether it's an organization or an individual employee facing change, stress can be reduced by remaining proactive in the face of certain or unknown change rather than reacting after the fact. Experiment with the following proactive model: Meet with employees if significant change is pending. Have a frank discussion about resistance to change — how resistance is normal (but undesirable) and how it could undermine the work group. Discuss both what is feared about the change and what new opportunities or rewards are presented. Next, discuss strategy. How does your group "get ahead" of the impact and prepare to exploit the positive aspects of the change? Finally, in the face of stress, how will your group support individual members who may experience more stress from the change than others do? Consider how the EAP can serve as a facilitator for such a discussion.

For more information or consultation regarding a management issue, call us at 800-327-7272. www.lytleeap.com


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