



Ways to Refer Your Employee to the EAP

1 CASUALLY ENCOURAGED SELF-REFERRAL

DESCRIPTION: The supervisor mentions the EAP as a reminder in response to hearing about a personal problem first mentioned by the employee.

EXAMPLE: "Bill, don't forget we have an EAP. Think about giving them a call."

COMMENTS: Don't comment or analyze the employee's problem. Don't discuss the personal problem because this impedes motivation to seek help. Don't consider any mention of the EAP as a supervisor referral.

2 STRONGLY ENCOURAGED SELF-

DESCRIPTION: Sometimes called an informal supervisor referral. The supervisor suggests the EAP to the employee based on job performance problems hoping the employee will go. No disciplinary or formal corrective action is considered.

EXAMPLE: "Bill, I strongly recommend you visit the EAP. This performance problem is serious and must change."

COMMENTS: Be cautious. Sometimes supervisors think they have made a formal supervisor referral when only an informal referral has been made, thereby precluding a second, more formal attempt. It is a common mistake to think that a more formal attempt won't work later.

3 TYPE 1 - SUPERVISOR

DESCRIPTION: The supervisor notifies, consults, or provides written information to the EAP first. The supervisor then meets with the employee concerning performance issues and announces that he or she is making a "supervisor referral." The employee is asked if he or she will accept. The employee is asked to sign a release of information at the EAP appointment. The supervisor anticipates a call from the EAP and follows up.

EXAMPLE: Bill, I am making a supervisor referral due to your job performance problems. Will you accept? Please contact the EAP. Also, I would like you to sign a release so I can confirm your attendance."

COMMENTS: The "classic" supervisor referral. Like all referrals, attending the EAP is a choice, although it may be mandatory that the supervisor make a referral in response to a specific job issue. Performance problems are documented. Employee is motivated by concern over potential consequences for unsatisfactory performance. A disciplinary action is not mentioned or threatened.

4 TYPE 2 - SUPERVISOR

DESCRIPTION: The supervisor communicates with the EAP in advance. The supervisor requests performance changes, and explains that disciplinary action is possible if changes aren't forthcoming. The supervisor may give the employee the EAP phone number and (if appropriate, an appointment time obtained from the EAP. Supervisor asks the employee to sign a release of information at the EAP office. Follow-up is conducted.

EXAMPLE: "Bill, I am making a supervisor referral. I am planning a disciplinary action if problems continue. Will you accept? Here is the name of the EA professional I spoken to. S/he has this appointment time if you would like to use it. Please call to confirm or consider a more convenient time. Also, please sign a release so I can confirm your attendance and participation in the EAP's recommendations, if any."

COMMENTS: This referral uses the possibility of future adverse action as leverage to motivate the employee. Avoidance of certain disciplinary action in the future is the primary motivator. The employee decides what he or she will do.

5 TYPE 3 - SUPERVISOR REFERRAL (PERFORMANCE-BASED)

DESCRIPTION: Disciplinary action is warranted, known in advance, and administered if the employee does not accept the EAP referral as an alternative (accommodation) in the event the performance issue is influenced by a personal problem. (Most employees will go to the EAP.)

EXAMPLE: "Bill, a disciplinary action has been determined necessary. Would you be interested in visiting the EAP and following its recommendations as an accommodation in the event a personal problem is contributing to this performance issue? We could hold this adverse action in abeyance."

COMMENTS: A powerful approach, but easy to misapply. Uses disciplinary action as leverage. The employee has a choice to receive disciplinary action, or be *accommodated* with an EAP referral. Disciplinary action is not based upon failure to go to the EAP, but the performance issue. Effective when past EAP referrals have been refused or follow-through with EAP recommendations have not occurred. Power with termination as leverage.