

# FRONTLINE SUPERVISOR

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## MIIA Employee Assistance Program

800.451.1834

## Grief Support

**Q. We experienced a death at one of our industrial plants. The EAP came out to meet with employees and to offer support, but some close coworkers didn't show. I was surprised. Should I be concerned?**

A. It is difficult to know why some of your employees did not show up, but meetings of this type may initially be avoided by those directly affected by the death. They simply may not yet be ready to share their reactions with others. These employees may demonstrate their grief later, and each potentially in a different way. Let the EAP offer guidance on steps you can take to help your employees respond to their grief reactions. Don't rule out having more than one meeting where employees can come together and share and talk with each other. These meetings are valuable, and almost invariably become collaborative planning sessions where coworkers take charge of logistics, communication, funeral assistance, supporting the family, honoring the worker's memory, planning meals, tending to household chores, dealing with pets, managing the employee's belongings, and more. Be attuned to the productivity levels of your employees in the coming months, and suggest the EAP to those who struggle to return to a desired level of productivity.

## Separating Home Life From Work Life

**Q. How can supervisors play a role in helping employees not bring their problems to work, and separating their home life from their work life so productivity is not affected?**

A. The EAP adage that employees do not leave their problems at the front door when they come to work is a rallying cry for the growth of EAPs, but another part of this reality is that employees must be appropriately confronted when personal problems interfere with their productivity, attendance, quality of work, availability, and attitude. No supervisor will be able to prevent an employee from bringing his or her personal problems to work, but supervisors can play a powerful role in helping employees seek help before interference occurs. This is what drives EAP utilization up. The promotion of the EAP to supervisors is crucial, allowing these managers to feel empowered when confronting employees, and confident that the EAP is a valuable resource. Avoiding any delay in supervisor referrals is also key.

## Management Consultation Services

- Employee Performance
- Change Management
- Workplace Trauma
- Conflict Resolution
- Layoff Support
- Lunch & Learn Seminars
- Management Trainings
- Organizational Stress

## Employee Services

### Confidential Counseling

- Addiction
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Family Issues
- Stress Management
- Work Concerns

### Resources & Referrals

- Legal
- Financial
- Child Care
- Elder Care

## Anxiety Over World Events



**Q. I have sensed a lot of anxiety among employees over the past couple of months associated with world events, politics, terrorism threats, and economic insecurity.**

**Everyone knows about the EAP, but can the EAP do presentations for us, and what might such a presentation include?**

A. When EAPs help employees with anxiety or other concerns, they carefully rule out other conditions that may mimic anxiety or make anxiety worse. Although your employees know about the EAP, make sure to suggest the program to those you recognize as having more obvious needs. To classify everyone's reactions to events as "anxiety" could mean that employees with more urgent needs are being overlooked. Talk to the EAP about a presentation. An EAP presentation might include reinterpreting and reacting more effectively to hyped news, especially changing one's habitual reactions to it. This might include teaching strategies for countering negativity; interrupting negative feedback loops; avoiding catastrophic thinking that stirs anxiety and panic; learning strategies for limiting exposure; learning relaxation techniques; learning to keep motivational, spiritual, and affirming literature handy; and using strategies for instantly countering doomsday thinking. The goal is to help employees do their own "reality check" using cognitive/behavioral strategies, and to guide them in countering worry and redirecting personal energy to more desirable pursuits.

## Clarity & Purpose

**Q. How to engage employees is important, but I think the missing piece is making sure they know what they are doing, how they will be measured, and how they fit into the grand scheme of things. In other words, clarity and purpose. Am I right?**

A. Yes. To highlight your point, Jim Moran, professor of Business Administration at Florida State University's College of Business, studied the issue of employees who are kept in the dark about their full purpose and what they are accountable for doing. Incredibly, less than 20 percent of the study's 750 white- and blue-collar workers really felt certain that they knew what was expected of them each day at work. Employees who were uncertain about their jobs showed 60 percent less trust of leadership. They also experienced 50 percent more frustration overall. They had 40 percent higher workloads. And 33 percent of these employees with ambiguous understandings of their jobs were more likely to look for another job and slack off. Obviously, these issues point to significant engagement problems.

Source: <http://news.fsu.edu>  
(Search: "Left in dark")



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Employee  
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Available 24/7