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EAP SUPERVISOR ENHANCEMENT NEWSLETTER



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**DEER OAKS EAP PRESENTS:
Supervisor Excellence Webinar Series**

*How to Maintain a
Mentally Healthy
Workplace Environment*

Date: January 23, 2023

Time: 1:00-2:00 PM CT **REGISTER**

ADHD in the Workplace

Contrary to popular belief, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) does not just occur in children. ADHD can affect adults too. While some children seem to outgrow the disorder or learn to compensate for the symptoms, others do not. Many adults with ADHD do not realize they have the disorder. Common symptoms in adults include difficulty following directions, remembering information, concentrating, organizing tasks, or completing work within time limits.

ADHD affects workplace performance. Research indicates that adults with ADHD put in 22.1 fewer days at work per year than people without the condition—nearly a month's worth of workdays.¹ The good news is that effective treatment is available. Adults with ADHD are treated with medication, psychotherapy, or a combination. Behavior management strategies, such as ways to minimize distractions and improve organization, can also be helpful.

Tips for Employers

- **Educate employees and managers about mental health disorders, including ADHD.** Encourage employees to seek care when they need it by educating the workforce that mental illnesses are real and can be effectively treated. Teach supervisors how to (and how not to) intervene appropriately by focusing on job performance.
- **Promote the use of employee assistance and health programs.** Early intervention is key. Remind employees of the availability of resources for staying healthy and productive. Ensure that employees know how to access care confidentially and quickly by providing information on how to do so in multiple places and throughout the year. Heavily push these messages during times of stress, at the holidays, and so forth.
- **Integrate mental health educational messages in health communication strategies.** Include content about ADHD in company newsletters, on the intranet, and in other regular employee communication platforms.



References

1. De Graaf, R., Kessler, R. C., Fayyad, J., Have, M. ten, Alonso, J., Angermeyer, M., Borges, G., Demyttenaere, K., Gasquet, I., De Girolamo, G., Haro, J. M., Jin, R., Karam, E. G., Ormel, J., & Posada-Villa, J. (2008). The prevalence and effects of adult attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) on the performance of workers: Results from the WHO World Mental Health Survey Initiative. *Journal of Occupational Environmental Medicine*, 65, 835-842.

Source: Partnership for Workplace Mental Health. (n.d.). AD/HD in adults. Retrieved August 17, 2016, from <http://www.workplacementalhealth.org/>

Creative Ways to Motivate Employees

How do you motivate your staff when you can't afford to give them a raise? Use a different kind of currency. Contrary to popular belief, money is not the best motivator because it sends the message that nothing is worth doing unless you get paid extra. This can develop a sense of entitlement that quickly becomes a bottomless pit and does nothing to increase job satisfaction.

A 2005 study by psychologist Adam Grant of the University of Michigan suggests that a better performance booster is when workers have personal contact with beneficiaries of their work. For example, cafeteria line workers are significantly happier than those who work back in the kitchen, because line workers are able to see the happy customers. An employee's morale is positively influenced by knowing his or her work is meaningful.

Employees want to be recognized as individuals, shown appreciation, and be given opportunities to grow. This requires bosses to manage one-on-one rather than treating every employee alike. Here are some low-cost ideas for motivating your staff that can have a big return on investment.

- Encourage comments from external and internal customers. Post praise.
- Remind staff how their work matters to customers and encourage some level of customer interaction for everyone.
- Call an employee into your office just to say thank you without discussing any other issue.
- Write a thank you card or e-mail.
- Send a card to the employee's spouse/family thanking them for their support.
- Create an employee newsletter to share updates and recognition.
- Post a bulletin board for employees to share news, hobbies, and recognition.
- Celebrate birthdays, anniversaries, and special achievements.
- Reserve the best parking spot for an employee-of-the-month. Let staff decide how the spot is earned.
- Add a note to an employee's paycheck highlighting something great he/she did that week.
- Join in and help an employee who is under pressure. Ask what can be done and help complete the task side-by-side.
- Create a change of pace by giving employees a chance to work on exciting projects or learn new skills.
- Delegate worthy projects, not just menial tasks, to increase feelings of trust and pride.
- Create light-hearted awards that recognize something unique about each person like, "Best Screen-Saver," or "Best Joke Teller," and present them at a potluck lunch.
- Pass on helpful articles that could benefit employees and attach a note that says, "Saw this and thought of you."
- Learn about their hobbies, families, children, pets, etc. showing interest in what matters most to them.
- Ask an employee who is proficient in a certain area to train others, or make a presentation at a staff meeting.
- Book a community speaker to speak on subjects of interest to employees like personal finance, stress management, or improving relationships.
- Help build skills with a training library filled with books, tapes, and other resources that employees can check out.
- Allow employees to attend seminars and ask them to make a presentation to others sharing what they learned.

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Source: Fee, S. (n.d.). Creative ways to motivate employees. Retrieved November 30, 2016, from the Health Advocate website: <http://healthadvocate.com>

Ask Your EAP!

The following are answers to common questions supervisors have regarding employee issues and making EAP referrals. As always, if you have specific questions about referring an employee or managing a workgroup issue, feel free to make a confidential call to the EAP for a management consultation.

Q. Can the EAP help me stop worrying about whether others are judging me as a new supervisor? I don't want to go through a big therapy process. I just want to stop being so self-conscious so I can engage with my peers, be more relaxed, and stop worrying about whether others are judging me.

A. Discuss your goals with the EAP. The program can help you by giving you a plan to practice, monitor, and gauge progress in overcoming these habits of thinking so you feel more confident. Your struggle is a common one many people are hesitant to admit, but you can learn social and engagement skills that will help. You will discover positive self-talk affirmations, how to avoid becoming preoccupied with these thoughts, how to focus on others rather than yourself, and how to overcome false beliefs about what people are thinking in social settings. You will learn to stop thinking about making an impression and instead concentrate on engaging effectively. After an assessment, or later on, you might become interested in exploring other challenges related to your immediate goals. If so, the EAP can offer ideas or other sources of assistance.

Q. How can I be less stressed out as a supervisor? Yes, I know about work-life balance, finding a mentor, and even relaxation exercises, but there must be more generally helpful ways to cope. Perhaps other supervisors who are less stressed than I am have some tips they can share? How can the EAP help?

A. Unfortunately, many supervisors are stressed, and it might be getting worse. A Gallup survey last year found that 35% of supervisors report being extremely stressed out. Being stressed and experiencing burnout grew after 2020 and was worse in 2021. With the EAP's help, examine your stress more closely. Often, stress management requires a closer look at a person's unique circumstances. For example, you know you are overworked, but is being bullied on the job making it worse? You are overworked, but is feeling you don't measure up to the job making it worse? You are waking at night with work worries on your mind, but is drinking heavily before bed a contributing factor to sleep disturbance? A discussion with the EAP can help you see the bigger picture so that you can employ proper strategies that are more likely to be effective. Later, the EAP can help monitor your progress.



Source: www.gallup.com/workplace/357404/manager-burnout-getting-worse.aspx

Q. Did the COVID-19 pandemic influence the way workplaces run besides the remote and hybrid models we have seen emerge? Specifically, I am talking about the supervisor-employee relationship, communication, and supervision models?

A. One study examined the impact of the pandemic on employee and supervisor relationships. In June 2022, a survey group found that employees are more desirous of, and more productive with, a boss who is empathic, authentic, emotionally available, and willing to be flexible in responding to the needs of workers. Forbes has also written about this topic, labeling it “human leadership.” Has the pandemic contributed to a desire for employees to experience this type of leadership, or has it always been present? That question isn't answered. Today's employees might be more responsive to authority figures who are less aloof. We know supervisors play significant roles in facilitating employee engagement and that engaged employees are more productive—research shows them to be up to 27% more productive. Whether supervisors can learn to be more “humanistic” in their supervision style may be discovered in the future. Right now, only 29% of employees report having a humanistic supervisor. Source: www.gartner.com [search “identifies human leadership evolution”]

Information contained in this newsletter is for general information purposes only and is not intended to be specific guidance for any particular supervisor or human resource management concern. Some of it might not apply to your particular company policies and available programs. This information is proprietary and intended only for eligible EAP members. For specific guidance on handling individual employee problems, consult with Deer Oaks by calling the Helpline.

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