

NEELY EAP

Letter for Leaders

HELPFUL RESOURCES FROM YOUR EAP



WELCOME

The leadership newsletter is designed to provide EAP support to supervisors and managers. Making an informal referral (friendly referral) or formal referral can be challenging without training. In addition, the content will educate and promote program features that help leaders focus on the well-being of their employees. EAP services are free and readily accessible to the entire company and their family members.



Toll-Free, 24/7 Helpline:
866-212-6096
800-735-2989 TDD
neelyeap.com

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Quarterly Leadership Webinar Series

Respect in the
Workplace

➤ To be decided

Registration opening soon

Monthly Wellness Seminar

Please join us for our
live seminar

"Laugh and Learn
about Personal
Finance"

➤ October 13th @3PM

REGISTER

Leadership and Mental Health

By Lisa Merritt

While employees increasingly want open conversations around mental health and workplaces are becoming more open to them, how to recognize and respond to employees dealing with mental health issues can still be a bit of a minefield. Understanding the problem is one thing, but knowing how to promote positive wellbeing and support those experiencing mental health issues is another.

Educate yourself and your team

Before you can open the conversation, you need to know what you're talking about. What do depression and anxiety look like in the workplace? What resources are available to you as a supervisor and your employees? What accommodations are allowed, and how much flexibility do you have in arranging them? Once you have a handle on the discussion, ensure your team members do well. Perhaps Human Resources or your EAP have programming that could benefit the whole office.

Warning signs

Mental health issues affect everyone differently. While there is no one-size-fits-all solution, some broad warning signs can indicate a deeper problem. Sudden changes in personality or established behavior are often the initial red flags – your reliable second-in-command is suddenly missing deadlines and not returning emails. The team member who usually organizes lunchtime power walks spends lunch by themselves with the door closed. The normally unflappable office veteran is overreacting to every comment. Any or all of these situations might be a symptom of a bigger issue.

Be a role model

As a leader, the best thing you can do regarding mental health is set a good example. Being open and transparent about the issue destigmatizes it and encourages employees to think about their mental health. Don't just encourage your employees to maintain a good work/life balance, do so yourself! Supervisors are susceptible to the same challenges as everyone else.

Reach out

If someone on your team has you concerned, reach out. Begin from a place of concern and be specific about changes in behavior or personality that worry you. Be compassionate, and don't assume you know what they're going through or that you have the answers. As a supervisor, it's not your responsibility to solve their problems. However, you are responsible for knowing what resources are available to your employees so they can help themselves.

Create an action plan

Once you've started the discussion and connected your team member to the right resources, it's crucial to address how you can support them in getting back on track. Collaborate on what they need to stay engaged and productive – accommodations regarding work hours or location, project assignments, and even colleagues could be crucial to helping them turn the corner.



EAP that's here for you

Here are some answers to common questions supervisors and managers have regarding employee issues and making EAP referrals. If you need more assistance, feel free to email us at admin@neelyeap.com.

Q. My team is short-staffed and carries a heavy workload. Yet, I manage my stress on the job well and have established healthy habits that help keep me on track. So how do I support my employees and help them manage their stress better?

A. As a leader, you can start by opening the conversation about managing stress. Be open about how you handle it, and be conscious of modeling good habits. Next, encourage your team to develop their techniques to build resilience and mitigate stress individually and as a team. You should also contact your EAP to see what support or group programming might be available.

Q. I have a normally punctual employee that began regularly showing up late to work. When I spoke with her about it, she mentioned that family issues were causing her lateness. She added that she would be contacting the EAP. I look forward to positive changes, but should I have done anything more?

A. Beyond following up later and affirming the positive changes in her attendance, the situation with this employee seems to have been handled well. This is a self-referral and a great example of how EAP's perform, but there are a couple of tips worth considering. First, depending on the seriousness of this attendance issue, offering the employee the opportunity to use your phone or to call the EAP "now" from your office might be effective in helping ensure she does use the EAP. It's the employee's choice, of course. The second is to be firm and supportive but clear that if the attendance problem does not change, you will consider the next steps in correcting the problem. This will also facilitate follow-through because a disciplinary step is implied without it being committed to it yet.

Q. In the 23 years that I have been a supervisor, I have never seen an employee with depression. Aren't they supposed to look sad, dejected, down in the dumps? Yet, I've read there are millions of adults with depression. So, what am I missing?

About 17 million adults nationwide suffer with major depression. You are describing symptoms of sadness or the blues, but not necessarily what you would witness at work. Depressed employees can remain hidden because stereotypical views of depression don't match what most people see. Depressed persons are not necessarily sad, weepy, slumped at a desk, or looking down in the dumps. More typically, those with major depression experience feelings of emptiness that don't go away. They may exhibit extreme irritability over seemingly minor things, suffer with anxiety, restlessness, or anger management issues, or may simply not want to participate in activities they used to enjoy.

The good news is that major depression is highly treatable. The medical community has worked hard to help the general public understand that depression is not something people can snap out of with encouragement from friends who tell them to cheer up. We all experience sadness, but major depression is a mood disorder, often a question of brain chemistry.

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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 may 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 specialists by calling the Helpline.



WHAT CAN MY EAP DO FOR ME?



About our logo

For decades, enslaved African Americans looked to the North Star for hope, inspiration, and freedom. Neely EAP (NEAP) provides the **hope** that your situation will improve, the **inspiration** to move you in the right direction, and the **freedom** to live your best life.

Being in a leadership role can be challenging. Having the correct tools and resources can make a difference. The **Manager Assistance Program** offers support to resolve personal or professional issues that can negatively impact the workplace. We also offer a:

- 24/7 Hotline, Access to Confidential Services
- Short-Term Counseling Couch Time Check-In (preventive annual counseling session)
- Legal and Financial Assistance
- Work-life referrals for adult care, childcare, pet care and more
- Wellness Trainings & Online Employee Training Vault
- Critical Incident Stress Debriefing

