

NEELY EAP NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2025



WELLNESS SEMINAR

Join us for our monthly seminar on

Breaking the Silence:
Supporting Mental
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SEPT. 11, 2025
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QUARTERLY WEBINAR SERIES

Why You Should Never Use
Active Listening And What
Truly Works Instead

SEPT. 25, 2025
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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.

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Why Leadership Should Rethink Active Listening and Embrace Reflective Techniques

By: Courtney G Echeverria

The Limitations of Active Listening

For years, leaders have been told that active listening is the gold standard of communication. The idea is simple: paraphrase what the other person says to show you're paying attention. Yet research has shown that this method often feels mechanical, repetitive, and even dismissive. Instead of deepening trust, it can make conversations feel staged, leaving employees feeling unheard (Weger, Castle Bell, Minei, & Robinson, 2014).

The Power of Reflective Listening

Reflective listening goes beyond repeating words. It is about listening with the intent to understand, not just respond. Leaders practicing reflective listening focus on both the meaning and the emotion behind an employee's words. By acknowledging concerns and clarifying emotions, leaders create an atmosphere of empathy and psychological safety (Goleman, 1995). This simple shift strengthens connection and builds genuine trust.



Emotional Intelligence and Workplace Impact

When leaders **demonstrate empathy and emotional intelligence** through reflective listening, the effects ripple across the workplace. Employees experience lower stress, team morale improves, and conflicts are resolved more constructively (Goleman, 1995). Leaders who listen reflectively not only gather better information but also model respect and compassion, qualities that foster a healthier organizational culture.



For more information, please tune into our upcoming leadership webinar “Why You Should Never Use Active Listening And What Truly Works Instead” on September 25th.

Practical Strategies for Leaders

- Pause before responding, allowing space for reflection.
- Ask clarifying questions that invite deeper sharing.
- Acknowledge both facts and feelings.
- Encourage employees to explore solutions rather than rushing to provide answers.

These strategies can transform difficult conversations into opportunities for growth and collaboration.

Encouraging Leaders to Leverage EAP Resources

Sometimes, employees need more than just a supportive conversation, they may benefit from professional guidance. By practicing reflective listening, leaders are better positioned to recognize when to encourage staff to connect with the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Referring employees to these resources reinforces the message that leadership values their well-being.

References

- Goleman, D. (1995). Emotional intelligence. Bantam Books.
- Weger, H., Castle Bell, G., Minei, E. M., & Robinson, M. C. (2014). The relative effectiveness of active listening in initial interactions. *International Journal of Listening*, 28(1), 13-31.

Insights: Leveraging EAP for Leadership Success

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: What if an employee shares something that feels bigger than I can handle as a leader?

A: That's where your EAP comes in. Reflective listening doesn't mean you have to solve every problem, it means showing empathy and then connecting employees with the right support. If someone expresses ongoing stress, family challenges, or emotional strain, acknowledge their feelings and remind them about the confidential counseling and resources available through the EAP.

Q: How do I bring up the EAP without making it feel like I'm brushing employees off?

A: Pair empathy with action. You might say, "It sounds like you've been carrying a lot. I want you to know we have resources to support you, including our Employee Assistance Program. They can provide counseling and tools that might help lighten the load." This shows you've heard them and that you're offering a path forward.



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:

- 24/7 Hotline, Access to Confidential Services
- Free Short-Term Counseling and 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

