

Workplace Supervisor

April 2018

Testimonials

Here are some quotes from HR Managers who recently called on CONCERN for a Management Consultation:

"The onsite counselor was amazing and a great leader for this discussion. She was thoughtful and provided us a safe atmosphere to talk about the situation. I had numerous employees come up after the meeting to tell me how much the counselor and the experience meant to them."

"The clinical manager was great. He was not only extremely responsive and helpful with our employee matter, but he also followed up with me a few days later. I am thrilled that our organization invests in this helpful resource."

"I heard back from our manager that the onsite counselor was excellent and the team really appreciated the support. The follow up material was also very professional and helpful. Thank you everyone."



FAQs for Managing Employees

April is Stress Awareness Month: A good time to put stress in its place

Everyone feels stressed from time to time – it's a normal part of life. Sometimes it can help motivate us and fuel resilience, and other times it can lead to overload and reactions like burnout, trouble sleeping and depression. Left unchecked, constant or extreme stress can lead to a number of serious health problems such as high blood pressure and heart disease. As a supervisor, it can be hard enough dealing with your own stress. But how can you help your employees deal with their feelings of stress and anxiety? The good news is there are many proven ways to minimize stress. A good first step is to learn as much as possible about it. Encourage your employees to check out CONCERN's **Mental Wellness Resource Center** at <https://employees.concern-eap.com/mentalhealth> where they'll find confidential assessment tools, informative videos, and practical evidence-based strategies on how to "put stress in its place."

Q. I read that rude behavior at work is getting worse. Is this overblown? Haven't employees always shown a bit of rudeness periodically? What can supervisors do, and is there a role for the EAP to help overcome this sort of problem?

A. Rude behavior is incivility at work, a topic that has received increased attention because surveys show it has grown worse. Approximately twice as many employees complain about rudeness today than 20 years ago. One poll showed that nearly half of employees intentionally decreased their work effort in response to rudeness, intentionally decreased time spent at work, intentionally decreased quality of work, lost time worrying about and stewing over incidents, avoided the rude person, and admitted declines in commitment to the organization. Twenty-five percent said they took out their frustrations on customers! Obviously, rudeness takes a toll on the bottom line. A positive workplace that reduces rudeness is not an accident. A strategic approach that includes education, awareness, and proactive and supportive policies, like those that address other organizational risks, is worth considering. And, of course, connecting with CONCERN is always an option. An EAP clinical manager is available to consult with you to design a customized approach that fits with your work culture. Learn more: <https://hbr.org/2013/01/the-price-of-incivility>.

Q. I should be more decisive, but I like to seek the opinions of my team. Secretly, I fear being wrong, so gathering opinions is a way to procrastinate making some difficult decisions. How can I develop better, faster, and more confident decision-making skills?

A. There are many reasons people hesitate to make decisions. Fear of being wrong is one, but what drives this fear? This question is one CONCERN can help you understand more clearly. Your anxiety around making difficult decisions translates into stalling techniques with the information-seeking, which is a legitimate and responsible step that covers for your hesitancy. You are using it as a crutch. The rest of the problem about making decisions—the mechanics of the process—can be found in hundreds of resources. In your journey of discovery, examine whether any of these decision-killers affect you: 1) perfectionism (it slows progress), 2) fear of disapproval, and 3) over-analyzing. Great decision makers have a history of overcoming mistakes. It is these mistakes that turn them into leaders who can trust their gut—an art that gets better over time. This is your goal: to be a great gut-level decision maker who is often right, but not perfect.

Q. The EAP phoned to say my employee was self-referred but wanted to sign a release so I could learn of his participation. Nothing else was permitted. I am glad he self-referred because I was considering a formal referral for attendance issues. Should I still make one?

A. You could still make a formal supervisor referral, but you can also wait to see if the attendance issues clear up. Consider letting the EAP know about attendance issues, however. The release signed by your employee is obviously limited, so do not expect follow-up reports, etc. Note that the release may be rescinded at any time, leaving the EAP without the ability to communicate

with you. It will not be able to acknowledge follow-through with recommendations or share status of participation. Still, none of this will interfere with your ability to manage performance. If attendance issues continue, decide whether to initiate a formal supervisor referral, in which you can request more structured communication (but not clinical information) or take corrective action, as you and your advisers deem appropriate.

Q. An employee recently called me on the carpet for checking my phone during a meeting. It's a bad habit, I know! I'm trying to stop, but find that I sense anxiety if I'm not checking in. I'm amazed. Can CONCERN help?

A. The behavior you are describing is referred to as “boss phone snubbing” in one research study, and is also known as “phubbing” (phone + snubbing). Anyone can be guilty of this off-putting behavior and earn the ire of meeting participants. When bosses do it, it can have an especially negative impact, undermining their status and authority with their subordinates, and diminish the power of being a role model others want to admire. Research on this topic discovered that supervisors who cannot resist looking repeatedly at their smartphones while meeting with employees risk losing their employees’ trust. The productivity cost is loss of engagement. Smartphone addiction is not a recognized disorder, at least not yet, but the problem can create distress. Consider whether your use of a smartphone causes problems but, despite your best efforts, you can’t stop. If that is true, contact CONCERN. Check out this less-than-scientific, but humorous quiz on smartphone addiction: <http://www.quizony.com> (search “smartphone”). It is at least a good awareness builder. Also, see the study: www.baylor.edu (search “boss phone snub”).

CONCERN: EAP teams with Human Resources to provide another resource for managers and supervisors to consult about how to manage issues with individuals, within and between work groups, and across departments. When you call CONCERN: EAP, ask for a Management Consultant or request to speak to a Clinical Manager.

Call: 800.344.4222
employees.concern-eap.com