

10 EAP Role Plays & Referral Scenarios



1. In the Dark

You succeed in referring an employee to the Employee Assistance Program. Later, the EA professional phones to say that the employee signed a release and has agreed to follow all recommendations. The EAP says it will keep you informed as to whether or not the employee follows the recommendations. When the employee returns from the EAP office, he tells you that the meeting went well, but that the EA professional didn't have any recommendations.

- What would you think in response to this scenario?
- What would you say to the employee?
- What would you do next with regard to communicating with the EAP?
- Would you want to accept the employee's statement and not communicate further with the EAP? Why? Or, why not?
- What possibly could explain this employee's statement to the supervisor?

2. Don't Do That Again

You have planned a constructive confrontation with your employee to address her irritability and the recent emotional outburst that severely upset the delivery worker. Many workers witnessed it. For good measure, you decide to include your immediate supervisor. The goal of the meeting is to motivate your employee to contact the EAP. No disciplinary action is planned, just a firm request to seek help.

- What would you do in advance to plan for this meeting with your immediate supervisor?
- How would you respond if the employee said that you yell more frequently than she does?
- What would you say if the employee said, "Thanks for your concern, but I don't need to go to the EAP," at the end of the meeting?
- What would you do or say to increase the likelihood that the employee would follow through if she agreed to meet with the EAP?

3. Relapse

You have an employee who has done a great job over the past two years. Two years ago he was referred to the EAP because of job performance problems. The employee drank on the job in the past. Today you smell alcohol after lunch. The employee is still doing a great job. There is no company policy that prohibits alcohol use off premises at lunch. Your concerns: Has this employee relapsed? And is your employee headed for performance problems again?

- How do you approach this employee about the smell of alcohol?
- What interaction with the EAP should you have in response to this discovery?
- How would you want the EAP to be involved? What kind of feedback would you expect from the EAP?
- How would you proceed if the employee refuses to sign a Release of Information so the EAP can provide feedback on the employee's compliance with recommendations?

4. Don't Need It Now

Your employee is coming in late, especially on Mondays, Fridays, and the day after pay day. You meet with her to make a supervisor referral to the Employee Assistance Program. You have decided that if she goes to the EAP you will not give her the written warning you have prepared in response to her tardiness. The employee says she does not need to go to the EAP because she already made an appointment with a psychiatrist. She says she has been depressed lately.

- What would you say to this employee in response to her planned appointment with a psychiatrist?
- Why would accepting the employee's plan and approving it be problematic from the standpoint of ADA?
- Would you give your employee the warning letter or postpone it for now? Why? Or, why not?



10 EAP Role Plays & Referral Scenarios (Continued...)



5. Can I Share?

Your employee tells you that her husband has just had an affair with another woman. He's left home. This employee has no history of job performance problems. She says that her husband has always been a "womanizer." She has an attorney. Your employee also says that she is seeing a mental health professional who is helping her tremendously. She has a prescription to help her sleep better.

- How should you respond to this report? Would you mention the EAP? Why? Why not?
- She is seeing a mental health professional, so what role should the EAP play?
- Why would it be a mistake to assume that the EAP is not needed, in light of the employee's report? What would you do if this employee had performance problems?
- What else could really be going on with this scenario? What are the implications?

6. Dual Relationships

You socialize frequently with your employee. Recently, job performance has deteriorated and your supervisor wants you to confront and refer him to the EAP. You are aware of the problems, but it's been tough to say much since you are friends and know each other's families. You were hoping things would get better. Your friend's wife complains about his drinking, and so you have a pretty good idea about the outcome of an EAP appointment. You have a formal meeting to call attention to the problems and urge an EAP referral.

- What difficult issues do you face as a supervisor?
- How would you respond if your employee said, "Come on Joe, let's cut to the chase, you think I have a drinking problem. You drink more than I do! Forget the EAP, I'll straighten up. I'm done drinking. That's it. Fine!"
- Can supervisors be friends with those they supervise? What impact does a paycheck have on friendships? Would most supervisors put a friendship ahead of their own job performance?

7. The 12th Step

You are a recovering alcoholic of seven years and are a regular member of the Alcoholics Anonymous fellowship. You know your employee is a heavy drinker and you suspect she could be an alcoholic because of the stories you have heard. Still, you have chosen to be only a supervisor and not initiate a discussion with her about her problem. One day your employee approaches you and admits she has an alcohol problem. She also wonders aloud if she should go to AA meetings.

- How would you respond to this question?
- Why could it be a problem if the employee went to an AA meeting with you instead of visiting the EAP for a referral to AA?
- Is there a conflict of interest if a supervisor invites such an employee to attend an AA meeting with him?
- What supportive role can you play and what could you say to encourage an EAP referral?

8. Nothing Changed

Your employee is cooperating fully with the EAP after being referred for job performance problems. However, his performance problems are worse than ever. You know he's following EAP recommendations because a release of information has been signed and the EAP has assured you that he has been compliant.

- How do you respond to this type of situation?
- Is the EAP a "safe harbor" or should you take the next administrative step without regard to progress on resolving personal problems?
- Would you feel frustrated with the EAP in this situation, or with the employee? Why? Does it feel like the EAP is getting in your way? Why/why not?
- What is your role at this point? What is the EAP's role?



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9. Just In Time?

You have an employee with a serious performance problem. He has been with the organization 28 years, and an up and down performance pattern is legendary. His recent forklift accident damaged \$17,000 worth of computer equipment. You and your division chief have decided to terminate him on Monday. The employee enters an addiction treatment program over the weekend and calls you at home from the hospital knowing that you will be happy about it.

- How would you respond while at home? What happens Monday?
- The company has a legitimate reason to terminate this employee, but what factors cloud this situation and make it difficult to manage?
- How do you use the EAP effectively in this type of situation? What can the EAP do?
- What would you do if the employee was resistant to an EAP referral saying, "I'm in treatment now, the EAP can't do anything for me." Is he right?

10. Does It Matter Now?

Your employee's tardiness is increasing. You decide to refer him to the EAP when you get back from vacation. While you're gone, your employee informs you that he made a decision to go to the EAP as a self-referral. Unfortunately, his tardiness problem remains.

- Since the employee is already going to the EAP, can you still make a supervisor referral?
- Why would it be useful to make a supervisor referral? How could this help your employee?
- Do you think an employee's motivation to solve certain personal problems increase with a supervisor referral?
- Can an employee address personal problems with the EAP even though the referral is for job performance problems?

