

We have an employee who gets very angry and exhibits rage. Thankfully, his performance is good, but I worry about having to fire him someday. What is the risk of violence if an employee like this is fired?

No one can predict an employee's reaction to termination. However, the less sudden and surprising it is to a potentially violent employee, in all probability, the lower the risk of a violent response. It is important to recognize that elevated anger on the job is a performance issue. Working closely with the employee to correct performance and behavioral issues can be beneficial. It may even prevent the dismissal of the employee. Use performance improvement plans and apply progressive disciplinary steps if needed, where each step is accompanied by a recommendation to attend the EAP. Using this structured approach, along with regular performance reviews providing feedback may help lessen the suddenness and potential reaction for violence.

Our work unit is participating in a three-part workshop on diversity awareness in a couple of weeks. A few employees are grumbling about being asked to participate, but isn't this training an appropriate business activity?

Your workforce is your organization's most valuable resource. Continuing education, awareness, and trainings all contribute to helping maintain its value. The 21st-century workplace is increasingly diverse, and when organizations or employees fail to appreciate diversity, they risk lower profits, conflicts, higher turnover, and loss of customer loyalty. Diversity awareness is not about making employees change their beliefs, which is what will make employees grumble. Instead, diversity awareness is about understanding the need for respect and how to value every worker and customer, even with their differences, so the organization's success is more likely.

I know the EAP is available to consult with me on troubled employees and how to effectively refer them to the EAP. What other types of consultative help are available to supervisors from the EAP?

Beyond consulting with the EAP about performance issues and referrals, consider the EAP as a valuable source of help and guidance in five additional areas: 1) Improving relationships you have with your employees by examining your leadership strengths, communication style, and any opportunities for improving these skills; 2) Discovering ways to engage individual employees and motivate them, thereby maximizing their productivity and job satisfaction; 3) Help for difficulties you face in communicating, engaging, and satisfying the needs of upper management; 4) Guidance in managing team communication and development, and resolving conflicts among employees; and 5) Assistance for yourself in understanding how to better manage stress. ERC is here to assist you in dealing with your employees: When in doubt, do not hesitate to contact us.