

October 2018

My employee has been treated by a psychiatrist for depression for many years. He's never been to the EAP, and I have not considered a referral until now. Currently he is often not coming to work, and yet the doctor keeps writing notes to excuse absences. Can the EAP help?

I want to do everything I can to help my employees perform well. What is the most important task to accomplish to make this possible?

What do supervisors and managers need to know about the "Generation Z"? I have been hearing more about them recently.

Consult with your organization's human resources advisor regarding sick leave issues and how to manage these absences and record the leave status. Realize that EAPs accept formal referrals from supervisors when employees have job performance issues, quality of work problems, conduct and behavioral issues, and attendance problems. So, consider making a formal referral and make note if your employee is unable to adequately perform his duties because of the absenteeism? It makes no difference whether the employee is being seen by a psychiatrist. This does not preclude a referral. Many issues could exist in this situation, including a problematic relationship with the doctor, sudden loss of medication effectiveness, and a host of other factors. The EAP will obtain a release to communicate directly with the doctor and assess what's going on. If the employee is reluctant to accept a referral, discuss next steps with the EAP.

Form good working relationships. Supervisors can learn many different skills and tactics, but few will be effective without positive relationships. Understand the concept of "essential attitudes" for a supervisor. Essential attitudes for success exist in every profession, whether you are a teacher, scientist, minister, pilot, or supervisor. Here's one: Assume your employees are doing the best job they can from their point of view. This attitude will affect the way you speak, act, nurture, and support them. It might even help you remember to use the EAP more often as a resource to improve performance. Another: Spell out for employees what they need to do in order to succeed and then give them the ability to do it.

You will hear a lot more about Generation Z as these employees enter the workforce. Gen Z are those born between approximately 1995-96 and 2010-14. (Sociologists disagree on the dates.) This is the group following the millennials. Generation Z is more influenced by concepts like "finding my true purpose" and "making an impact." They want to be independent and are highly attracted to learning new things. They are confident and respond positively to companies that are engaged in resolving social problems. They are entrepreneurial, realistic, and hungry for experiences. Gen Z employees want to be experts and may accept challenges more readily than prior generations. When writing the essential functions of job descriptions, consider the above values and employee traits to help you maximize productivity and employee job satisfaction. Gen Z employees are usually less put off by the idea of getting counseling and more likely to use supports like an EAP to improve their lives.