My employee says she is thinking about quitting because she can't get along with her coworker. Should I send her (or them) to the EAP, or should I first try to resolve this problem myself? I don't want to lose her.

Managers should first attempt to resolve conflicts between employees. Here's one approach: Ask the employee to share the history of the conflict, how it began, and what prompted her to come to you now. Ask what steps she has taken to resolve the conflict and why she believes this has not worked. Ask how she would like to proceed with a resolution, but anticipate making a decision to meet with both employees and play a leading role. This is necessary because for some, remaining in conflict is easier than the compromises required to resolve them. If a resolution does not appear forthcoming or you prefer not to address it yourself, consider contacting ERC to identify some options in how to proceed with the matter and how the EAP may assist.

How can the EAP help me as a supervisor in developing and improving my relationships with employees?

The success of the supervisory role is impacted by the effectiveness of good relationships with employees. An effective relationship allows you to play an influential role in maximizing the job satisfaction and productivity of your workers. EAPs can consult on determining how to motivate employees, utilize their talents better, help them feel rewarded, and listen to and understand their needs. You want employees to be open and honest with you and to share their workplace struggles and their ideas. ERC can help you enhance your ability to be your authentic self, to open up, to exercise patience, and demonstrate vulnerability, thereby developing your own emotional intelligence and mutually satisfying relationships.

What can I do about an employee who is spending a lot of time online and seems to have an Internet addiction?

First, do not attempt to diagnose your employee's issues. While Internet addiction is not yet recognized as a psychiatric disorder, compulsive use of the Internet can be a major issue that consumes time and attention. This means other tasks and responsibilities may be left undone. The first step is to review the company policy on internet usage. Next identify more specifically your concerns and what responsibilities are left undone related to his or her job performance. Then proceed with addressing those concerns with your employee to develop a plan to improve these performance issues. Avoid the temptation to identify for them why you believe these issues are happening or associate these problems with an Internet addiction. If your employee shares concerns or voices a desire for help with managing time, managing compulsive behaviors or discloses any other addictive type behaviors, you should consider making a referral to the EAP for help.