

# 10 things you need to know about EAPs

1. **Not all EAPs are created equal:** Your EAP should exist beyond a 1-800 number. Management and organizational support, critical incident services, employee wellness training, and substance abuse education for supervisors are just some of the services that should be *additional to* employee support services. Consult the EAP Buyers' Guide for more information on how to differentiate one EAP from the next.
2. **Increased Productivity:** Interpersonal problems, work/life balance, life stage problems, and/or substance abuse contribute to lost or decreased productivity in the workplace. Confidential, voluntary, and professional services provided to individual employees (and/or members of their household) can dramatically reduce or eliminate the impact these issues have on the employee and the company.
3. **Organizational Support:** EAP's can aid in management training and policy development for employers. They can provide consultation and support to HR as they develop or revise Drug-Free Workplace Policies (to include issues such as medical marijuana), Progressive Discipline Plan, "Return to Work" procedures, and others.
4. **Decreased Costs:** Problems which employees often seek help for through the EAP contribute to increased company costs in the forms of absenteeism, unproductive employees (presenteeism), high turnover rates (with subsequent recruitment and training costs), and high healthcare utilization (accompanied by increased insurance premiums). Increase your margins by having an EAP to support your employees proactively.
5. **Increased Workplace Safety:** Substance abuse and other behavioral health problems contribute to overall increased risk for and severity of workplace injuries and accidents. Your EAP can also provide emergency intervention/Critical Incident Response services in the case of an emergency, accident, or fatality.
6. **Management Support:** EAP professionals can provide support to management on a variety of topics including but not limited to: Increasing work performance, resolving workplace conflicts, dealing with "difficult" employees, management/leadership training, identifying and addressing performance problems, and labor relations.
7. **Support and Resources for Employees:** Confidential assessment, short term problem resolution, resources, and referrals are offered to all employees and their household members. This allows employees to seek assistance before their job performance deteriorates and their employment is in jeopardy. This will decrease the amount of "baggage" employees bring to the workplace that negatively impacts their job performance.
8. **An Alternative to Termination:** Mandated or suggested engagement with the EAP due to a documented performance problem can be an intermediary step prior to drastic disciplinary action (such as termination). As part of a Performance Improvement Plan, the EAP can assist the employee in effectively addressing personal issues that are impeding their ability to perform their job duties. In most cases, as the employee better manages their personal issue, the more their performance improves. Avoiding termination can save companies thousands.
9. **Low Cost Increases to the Employer:** Recent surveys have shown that the cost of employee health benefits typically increase by at least 10% year-over-year, while per-employee costs for EAP contracts tend to stay relatively stable. Considering the ROI of an EAP, this makes for a tremendous investment in your company's sustainability.
10. **Increased Morale and Job Satisfaction:** Employees and members of their household can manage their work and personal problems with an EAP professional rather than having their problems interfere with their work. This will lead to an increase in their satisfaction and ability to work efficiently. Happier, healthier employees make for a happier, healthier workplace with less turnover.

Information provided by:



Peer Assistance Services

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