

THE *Front-line Supervisor*

Presented by **DOR**

Helping you to manage your company's most valuable resource -- your employees.

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CASE 1 Know when to hold 'em...

➤ **Q. We had an employee who was a compulsive gambler and, unfortunately, he lost his job because of absenteeism. When confronted, he always appeared in control. However, he was only in control of his excuses. What more could I have done to help him?**

A. Although you can't diagnose a compulsive gambler, being aware of signs and symptoms of performance problems can help you determine whether referral to the EAP is necessary. Symptoms of compulsive gambling may include being chronically late for work, unexplained absences or disappearances from work, abusing sick leave, taking long lunch or phone breaks, leaving work early to gamble or meet a bookie, taking vacations at gambling destinations, borrowing money from coworkers and having conflicts with them about money owed to them, requesting salary advances, family members calling to inquire about the salary of the employee, using petty cash to float a loan, requesting pay instead of vacation time, stealing company-owned merchandise or property and falsifying expense accounts.

Many of the above symptoms would warrant a formal referral to the EAP. Call **DOR** if you want more information on this process.

CASE 2 Try something new

➤ **Q. I get visibly irritated when employees say one thing and do another. I'm not rude, but I make my feelings clear and I'm not very forgiving. I'm apparently disliked for being "mean." But how else am I supposed to handle substandard behavior?**

A. You may have heard the saying, "The meaning of your communication is the response you get." You may not think you are rude, but what matters is what others think. If you frequently seem irritated with your staff, you make it tougher to build trust with them. The next time you get angry, experiment with a different response. For example, you can summarize the situation in a pleasant but perplexed tone and ask, "Can you help me understand how this happened?" Another approach: Define what constitutes substandard performance and then ask, "Based on that definition, do you think what happened here qualifies as substandard?" The more you invite employees to take responsibility for their actions, the more you will invite them to take charge of personal change. And by speaking in a calm, non-accusatory voice, you avoid appearing "mean."

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