

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 He's a good employee, but...

➤ **Q. My employee is chronically late. I have confronted him several times, but it hasn't helped. Coworkers are complaining and it reflects badly on me. His high productivity and willingness to make up any time have kept me from being more assertive. What should I do?**

A. The problem you face is indecisiveness. Your employee will probably change when you decide he must change. His high productivity no longer outweighs the negative effects of the tardiness because it is affecting coworker morale and weighs negatively on your performance. Concern about alienating your employee combined with long-term permissiveness make it difficult to act, but view this problem from a different perspective and consider the issues; Unwillingness to change, broken promises, disregard for your needs, impact on others' productivity, and willingness to ignore a legitimate request to come to work on time. Bring these issues to your employee's attention and use a progressive approach of corrective interviews, EAP referral and, if needed, disciplinary action. For help planning your interviews with the employee, call DOR for a supervisory consultation.

CASE 2 What about if there are no job performance problems?

➤ **Q. How can a supervisor referral be based only on job performance? Would it not be irresponsible to ignore an employee with an obvious personal problem, and not refer, even if performance problems didn't exist?**

A. Sometimes employees come to the EAP after being encouraged by the supervisor, even when no performance problems exist. But they are not formal supervisor referrals based on job performance problems and are not the result of probing the employee or "armchair" diagnosis by the supervisor. Instead, such referrals follow disclosures of personal problems by employees or visible signs of problems that are self-evident. Sometimes these referrals are considered "informal" supervisor referrals to distinguish them from formal supervisory referrals and self-referrals initiated solely by employee clients. You do not have to preclude suggesting a visit to the EAP when talking with an employee who has acknowledged personal problems, but a supervisor referral is based on job performance problems.

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Employee Assistance Program
1-800-367-3271 * (612) 332-4805
www.doreap.com

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