

THE *Front-line Supervisor*

Presented by your EAP *dor and associates, inc.*

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

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CASE 1. Lowering defensiveness of employees

➤ **Q.** I have noticed that employees frequently react defensively when they are referred to the EAP as a result of job performance problems. It is as though they feel they are being punished. How can supervisors change this perception?

A. Here's how to help instill a proper attitude among your employees toward EAP referrals so that they are less likely to act defensively when referred. 1) Orient your employees to your work style when you first hire them and explain that the EAP exists so that employees, supervisors, and the organization can promote a healthy, happy, and productive workforce. Set the tone by explaining that **dor and associates, inc.** is a non-punitive resource. 2) Refer early while your relationship with the employee is still good. If problems between you and your employee fester, your employee is not likely to have the proper attitude toward an EAP referral later. 3) Don't wait for a problem to reach the crisis point. Refer long before, as you would to any other resource that could improve performance. 4) Demonstrate a positive attitude when you make a referral. Don't appear apologetic.

A consultation over the phone with a **dor and associates, inc.** counselor can help you plan how you will present the formal referral to your employee. How you present the formal referral can make all the difference in the employee's perception of the referral.

CASE 2. Confidentiality and e-mail

➤ **Q.** What are the experts saying about the level of confidentiality the Internet affords, particularly as it relates to e-mail with the EAP?

A. Internet e-mail is not considered confidential because it can conceivably be read by computer staff managing e-mail pathways, or it can be retrieved after it is deleted. Even Bill Gates of Microsoft Corporation during a series of recent anti-trust hearings was confronted with "deleted" e-mail messages he sent 5 years earlier. Obviously, this has implications for how supervisors communicate with the EAP. Here are three rules to follow:

1. Think of e-mail as public information when you are deciding whether or not to send it
2. Remember that e-mail is not temporary; deleted e-mail can be retrieved.
3. Always consider the implications of forwarded messages.

Remember that confidentiality assurances by the EAP also cover supervisor consultations. So, if you want the most secure form of confidentiality, consult with **dor and associates, inc.** by phone or in person. Also, keep in mind that as a supervisor, you have unlimited supervisory consultations with **dor and associates, inc.**

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Employee Assistance Services

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