

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 Not too sure about this...

➤ **Q. I'm not sure that I am cut out to supervise people. I hesitate to confront my employees, and I dread meeting with them in a group. Sometimes I delegate supervision to others, and I avoid meeting with complainers. Should I look for another job or use the EAP help me?**

A. Before you conclude that you're not equipped to manage people, discuss your concerns with an EA professional. Each of the issues you've mentioned is a common challenge that supervisors face. Many supervisors dislike confrontation and take pains to avoid it. You may never learn to enjoy it, but you can develop strategies to communicate clearly and diplomatically in potentially adversarial situations. Dreading team meetings may stem from shyness, discomfort with group dynamics, or other factors. The EAP can help you develop strategies to assert yourself in groups and become more comfortable leading discussions and giving presentations. Delegation is actually learned skill. Effective supervisors usually learn that in order to gain power, they have to give up some of it. So the fact that you allow others to step into your role may actually work to your advantage, as long as you remain accountable for the results.

CASE 2 What does the EAP think of me?

➤ **Q. My employee returned after a supervisor referral and stated, "Yeah, I went to the EAP, and now they know the whole story, not just yours." I'm a bit concerned about whether the EAP heard a bunch of distortions and what they may think of me and my company.**

A. It is not unusual for employees to visit the EAP and vent their frustrations about supervisor in a confidential setting. Do not be concerned. This is a positive step that will facilitate a helping relationship between the EAP and the employee. EA professionals regularly anticipate that employees will impart their side of the story, but the focus of the EAP interview will be on corrective performance issues, identifying personal problems and making recommendations about areas over which the employee has control. Reports of your personality issues and supervision practices are not the focus of change in and EAP interview with your employee. Sharing as much information about the job performance issues of your employee with the EAP prior to a supervisor referral will assist the EA professional in putting such reports in perspective. The EAP can then prompt employees to examine their feelings and take steps towards change.

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Employee Assistance Program
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