

# 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

➤ **Q. What is “on-the-job absenteeism” when the term is used to describe the behavior of a troubled employee?**

**A.** On-the-job absenteeism describes the inability of a troubled employee to respond adequately to the demands of the job because of personal problems that cause distraction and absentmindedness, or complete absence from the job site or position, despite being officially present, or earlier seen at work. Lack of attention causing diminished capacity to respond to important key elements of the position are also sometimes considered on-the-job absenteeism. If on-the-job absenteeism exists, be sure to include it in your documentation when making a supervisor referral to the EAP. It has significant importance in the EAP assessment interview, can give the EA professional important clues and can prompt key questions that point to the nature of personal problems affecting an employee. Remember that you can consult with a DOR counselor simply by picking up the phone and calling. We can assist you in developing an action plan to address all levels of on-the-job absenteeism.

## CASE 2

➤ **Q. I supervise about 100 employees. I don't have time to listen to all the interpersonal and relationship squabbles and problems they experience. Would it be better to refer complainers to the EAP, and not get involved in any of it?**

**A.** Although the EAP is capable of helping employees troubled by job-related problems and conflicts, it can't substitute for your role as a manager in the problem-solving process. When you proactively manage employees, you identify and intervene with inappropriate and offensive behavior, reduce behavioral risk to the organization and use your authority to influence standards of behavior needed to conform to performance expectations. When you don't get involved in managing employee conflict, you fail to use your authority constructively, and therefore problems grow worse. Employees have a strong need to interact with a supervisor concerning their on-the-job difficulties. This includes “venting” concerns and gaining assurances that the supervisor is a partner in resolving issues presented by employees. Only a supervisor can make decisions, offer these assurances, and make commitments that might be necessary to help resolve issues presented by employees. All of these things are outside the EAP's ability to influence.

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