

THE FRONTLINE EMPLOYEE

Wellness, Productivity & You!

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Supporting Victims of Trauma

The survivor of trauma or workplace violence may face life-changing experiences that can affect everything from the ability to sleep to his or her ability to concentrate on work. All survivors manage trauma and its effects on them in different ways. Assuming a survivor gets help from resource experts and mental health counselors, what should your role be as a coworker?

1) Recognize that each individual's experience with victimization and recovery is unique. 2) Listen when the survivor is ready to talk. Avoid too many questions or comments early on. 3) Provide reassurance. Trauma survivors often wonder, "Was it my fault?" They benefit from being told not to blame themselves. 4) Be patient. Every individual's journey through the healing process is different and there is no predetermined timeline for completing it.

Tips for Building Team Trust

How's your team doing? Does everyone feel a close sense of trust? If your team struggles with trust issues, your most important asset is in trouble. Here are a few tips to protect and nurture trust: 1) Deliver on your promises. 2) Avoid "talking about each other" outside team meetings. 3) Examine whether you are motivated by a hidden agenda to control or manipulate your team. 4) Don't hold back on information other team members need. 5) Avoid cliques and subgroups within the team.

Perfect Ending to Perfectionism

Although perfectionism is often viewed as a praise-worthy, social asset by many people, the truth is perfectionists often feel more like victims than heroes. Perfectionism is driven by anxiety and fear of disappointment, and self-defeating thoughts about excessively high or unrealistic goals. Perfectionists sometimes struggle to have satisfactory relationships because of the difficulty in showing their faults and being vulnerable. There is a way out of perfectionism and its cycle of never feeling satisfied despite one's achievements. The EAP can help with an assessment and referral to the right resource.

Don't Suffer with Shyness

If you suffer from shyness, you know it. You lack confidence in social situations, feel nervous around those you don't know (especially someone you want to date), and may get angry with yourself after social engagements wishing you had said something you didn't think of at the time. Shyness is extreme self-consciousness with a focus on why you are feeling shy. Shyness does not have to interfere with achieving professional and interpersonal goals. Relief is found by challenging habits of thinking and believing, and learning new behaviors that focus externally on the social environment rather than internally on your fear, anxiety, and social performance. Helpful resources exist, and the EAP can refer you to them so you can have a happier social life.

Helping Aging Parents Stay Independent

As people grow older, the last thing they want to do is to give up their home, even if they are no longer able to care for themselves. Here are five tips to help seniors stay in their own homes longer:

- 1) Have meals delivered through a senior meal delivery program. It not only provides nutrition, but also social contact for seniors who are not able to leave the house.
- 2) Hire a home-care aid to help with housework or lawn work a few hours a day.
- 3) Obtain products that make life and mobility easier, such as being able to get out of a chair, turning a doorknob, or having a motorized scooter.
- 4) Enroll in an emergency alert system, not just for slips and falls but also in case of fire or other emergencies.
- 5) Make the home a safer place by adding ramps, grab bars in the tub or shower, and non-skid floor mats. While some resources may not be cheap, financial assistance may be an option. More than 30,000 assisted-technology products, information resources, and consultative help can be found at www.abledata.com or by phone at (800) 227-0216. More information is available from your local area agency on aging, or talk to the EAP.

Source: National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research of the U.S. Department of Education

Personal Lessons from Product Leaders

Lining the shelves of stores are products, some of which clearly stand out as time-tested leaders in their industry. Millions of dollars have been spent on what works to make them stand out. Can you learn any lessons from leading products in the marketplace that can improve your own leadership skills? Leading products, whether soap or soda, project a clear and focused message. They also communicate with authority and conviction. Product leaders avoid appearing defensive or cautious. Some product leaders maintain an image of innovation, which ultimately inspires others to think creatively and embrace change. Others are willing to take a stand on social or business issues that make them stand out. By listening to the needs of the customer or consumer, companies of product leaders discover what is important and act accordingly. Well-known products and corporations wrap all of these traits into their image. Striving to do the same will make you stand out, too.

EMPLOYEES ASK ABOUT THE EAP:

Going It Alone

Q. My supervisor has referred me to the EAP, but I think I can handle my problems on my own. Should I accept if I don't think I need to go? I was not referred for violating an organizational policy or anything else serious.

A. Accept the referral with the idea that you are more likely to resolve your problem with EAP support, even if you have an idea about how to go about it. You naturally feel capable of resolving problems on your own, but it is also natural to resist accepting professional help. Meeting with someone you don't know, concern about confidentiality, resistance to hearing a solution you don't want to accept, or feeling vulnerable at an assessment is understandable; however, EAPs resolve these concerns with their professionalism and experience. Accept the free help from the EAP rather than going it alone and risking the consequences of not resolving the problem.

Searching for . . . Cheap Health Insurance

Twenty-five to 34-year-olds are the largest segment of the uninsured, representing 10 million, or 23 percent of the total uninsured population. This group is more likely to believe that health insurance is either too expensive or not an option, or that it is not needed at all. If you live in a metropolitan area, health insurance companies will compete for your business. This usually means cheaper rates. Long Beach, California, for instance (reportedly America's best city to find low-cost health insurance), has 66 competing quality insurance plans, driving rates down to as little as \$55 per month. A quick search of health plans in the phone book or online will lead you to one that you may be able to afford.