



- My employee is not self-motivated.

 This person is slow to act on assignments and does not show initiative. After the employee has demonstrated this type of work style for 25 years, can I expect this person to change?
- A. Yes. It begins with looking at the job expectations for every employee and developing a management style that promotes accountability. There may be many reasons why an employee under performs, and change can be challenging when behaviors have been tolerated over a period of time. However, if the job expectations are communicated clearly and adequate resources provided, change can and should be required. Often employees are not fully aware of how their behavior is impacting their productivity until a meaningful conversation takes place. After the conversation, if an employee still has difficulty meeting job expectations, a referral to the EAP can be very helpful. The EAP can look at other contributing factors that may be influencing the employee's approach to their work and can help them develop strategies and coping skills, along with providing them with additional resources outside of what the job can offer.
- Every good leader I've had in my past jobs, I have also liked. They have operated in ways that seemed to draw people to them. Managers or leaders who want to be liked are often criticized, however. I don't think this is a bad thing, though. Am I right?
- A. Good leaders operate with a lot of self-awareness. They possess a balanced and honest view of their own personality. Because of this awareness, they have the ability to interact with others frankly, confidently, and with empathy. Employees feel safe in the presence of a leader who also knows how to be genuine and vulnerable. Good leaders know how to understand another person's point of view, come across with patience and empathy for that opinion, and allow others to feel valued even if they choose a different direction. This is what attracts subordinates to their leadership style. However, if the desire to be liked is the only goal,

- their actions become self-serving and not in the best interest of the employee and organization. Some managers erroneously believe that giving others what they want is the shortest distance to acceptance and likability. Unfortunately, they quickly lose the respect of those around them.
- The EAP provided a critical incident stress debriefing six months ago after an employee was killed. Everyone thought it was helpful. Many of us still complain of vague worries about life and death. Does this mean that the debriefing did not work? Should we call the EAP again?
- A. A critical incident stress debriefing (CISD) is an intervention tool to help mitigate stress reactions resulting from exposure to a traumatic event. Stress reactions are normal physiological responses which are short term in nature and for many will diminish over time. Debriefings allow us to understand our reactions and guide us to reduce the stress we may be currently experiencing. The fact that everyone thought it was helpful is evidence that relief was experienced and healthy coping skills were engaged. Traumatic events, however, are very powerful and it is not unusual that feelings associated with the event are later triggered and resurface — even after a significant period of time. Other losses in our life or the anniversary of the event, for example, are very common occurrences that can bring back feelings we thought we resolved. Sometimes, just acknowledging and talking with a supportive person will help reduce the current discomfort. Your EAP can provide you with a complete list of stress reactions, and support for these recurring feelings. If these reactions persist or interfere with social and/or occupational functioning, the EAP can connect you to additional resources.



- What can supervisors do to help ensure that corrective interviews with employees will not become emotional, confrontational, and ineffective?
- A. Although nothing guarantees a corrective interview without employee reactions, there are things you can do to keep you on the task of the interview. Always demonstrate respect for your employee with language and tone, and choose an appropriate private, meeting place. Focus your discussion on the performance issues, not the personality or character of your employee. Check your emotions to prevent using language designed to elicit guilt or shame that can provoke reactions. If your employee does have a reaction, give them some time to express themselves, but refer back to the performance related concerns and the goals moving forward. Help your employee see that correcting his or her performance is a goal you share together. Example: "Sam, how can we work together to get your weekly auditing reports to me on time?"
- What can I expect from the EAP when I seek help as a supervisor in managing an employee?
- A. Expect the following from the EAP: 1) a patient, understanding, and professional consultation of your problems and concerns about your employee; 2) a discussion about key performance issues, with the goal being to help you decide on a plan and approach to managing your employee; 3) a review of EAP referral options and how to use the referral as a management tool when implementing corrective action; 4) guidance in effective documentation of performance and behavior problems; 5) guidance and support in addressing your employee about his or her performance and behavior problems; 6) follow-up support to help you encourage an improved, productive relationship with your employee.

APS Healthcare's Employee Assistance Program. The EAP program through APS Healthcare assists organizations and their workforce in managing the personal challenges that impact employee well-being, performance and effectiveness. APS' life management consultants employ a comprehensive approach that identifies issues impacting the employee and assists them in developing meaningful solutions.

Please call the phone number below for more information about APS Healthcare and the services available to you.



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