

Guiding Employees Through a Crisis.

Employee's unresolved personal problems can walk with them into work on a daily basis. What impact it has on other's in a company depends largely on supervisors/managers and the Human Resource Department.

Before you can deal with a problem you have to know one exists. Supervisors should be aware of employee's personalities, work load capability and what signs to look for if an employee is under work-related or non-work related stress. If the employee feels connected to the supervisor, they may come forward and confide the situation. However, most of the time an employee may feel that the problem is too personal or they can handle the situation on their own. The employee may be distracted to the point that they don't see it affecting their work level. Signs a supervisor should look for: Sudden lack of ability; for the employee to do their job, sudden mood swings, lack of concentration, large amount of incoming\outgoing phone calls, long breaks, continuous tardiness, missing days or non-compliance with safety rules. The supervisor may want to modify the employee work load for a short time until the issue is resolved. However, the situation may be considered a crisis and at that time the supervisor should schedule a meeting with the employee and HR manager.



The Human Resource Department plays an important part in redirecting an employee towards success. HR can communicate with the employee in a crisis, directing them toward an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) that will help smooth their problems and help to return the employee as a productive team member as soon as possible.

Tips for the HR Guiding Employees through a Crisis:

1. Find out what the employee may need from the company. Ask if they may need time off, flexible scheduling or reduced workload if available.
2. Offer the employee EAP brochures as well as information for their vacation time, sick time, FMLA or leave of absence that may be available.
3. With the utmost confidentiality, act as an intermediary between the employee and their direct supervisor.
4. Try to make clear what accommodations can be made by the company, considering the employee's role with the company and management's ability to temporarily shift his workload.
5. Reassure the employee, supervisor and coworkers that the employee is just going through a temporary situation and encourage understanding.
6. Assist the employee in creating a transition plan that will enable them to gradually return to a productive work load.
7. Monitor the employee as well as the supervisor to see if everyone's needs and expectations are being met.
8. Try to make all transitions smooth and gradual for everyone. This could involve giving some words of encouragement or even a card with thoughtful insights.

By guiding both affected employees and their supervisors through the crisis process, HR will help get the employee back to work and productivity. Many employees grow to appreciate the kindness and compassion shown to them by their company and become more loyal employees as a result.