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LifeWorks *Managers* is a publication of LifeWorks Employee Resource, a *free*, 24/7 confidential service provided for managers, their employees and their families.

LifeWorks provides solutions for today's workplace by offering **EXPERTISE** in:

- Employee Assistance Programs
- Organization Training and Development
- Wellness Education
- Critical Incident Stress Management

We can assist **EMPLOYEES** with:

- Relationship conflicts
- Parenting challenges
- Work-related problems
- Chemical dependency concerns
- Career concerns
- Financial and legal issues

We can assist **MANAGERS** with:

- Performance-related employee issues

Whether it is a work, family or personal issue, LifeWorks is here for you and your employees. **Call us.**

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YEAR END REVIEW:

It takes hard work to be a good manager. You feel confident that your department is under control and that everything is running smoothly. Now might be a good time to review your company's policies on: sexual harassment, performance review or workmen's comp procedures. Not being aware of updates or changes can catch you unprepared when an emergency arises. Take a few minutes to prepare for unplanned situations.

Managers



SUCCESSFUL *MANAGING*

Nudging good workers towards an even higher level of PERFORMANCE

You've built a high-performance staff, but that doesn't mean you should just kick back and enjoy the results. Good performers can always get better — to their benefit as well as yours. Try these tips to motivate them to new levels of excellence:

- **Discover** what drives your employees. As you develop stronger relationships with your staff, you'll gain more insight into what really matters to them -- and what motivates them. Use this knowledge to help them set goals that will fortify their strengths and compensate for their weaknesses.

- **Prompt** employees to assess their work. When things go wrong, you may be tempted to take the short route and point out the mistake. But it's better for employees to learn to critically analyze their own work product. Instead of saying, for instance, "This won't work," try asking employees to examine the situation and identify potential pitfalls.

- **Require** employees to solve their problems. When workers are struggling with projects and come to you for help, offer suggestions, but urge them to find their own answers. Express your confidence in their ability to work through problems and arrive at their own solutions.

- **Respond** to employees in a positive way. When discussing an employee's handling of a project, try to avoid words such as *can't*, *don't*, *should*, or *shouldn't*, which undermine empowerment. Instead, try "Let's consider some other alternatives," or similar phrasing that encourages workers to stretch their thinking.

- **Recognize** each of your employee's progress. It's human nature to heap more praise on the problem worker who makes a dramatic improvement than on the good worker who gets a tad better. But praise and recognition are the key ingredients in any recipe for improvement, large or small.

Adapted from "Quick tips on coaching employees for improved performance" by Karen S. Sieczka, as seen in "The Motivational Manager."

MAKING LIFE WORK FOR YOU & YOUR EMPLOYEES

Q & A

Q: *Next year, I want to improve the level of respect employees show each other in our company. Beyond policies and work rules, what is a key strategy to positively influence change in this area?*

A: Maintaining a respectful workplace is a growing concern for businesses, so they look for ways to nurture that respect and train people to be respectful.

Most workplace disrespect is not premeditated. Instead, it is spontaneous, and often reflective of a lack of self-control, lack of education, an abundance of fear, and the influence of personal biases.

One positive way of promoting respect amongst employees is to plan team workshops that identify individual talents and the expertise each employee can offer to the team. This encourages employees to recognize the unique and positive talents of others and themselves. This positive re-enforcement brings out the best in everyone.

Managers can bring about a positive work culture by actively discouraging and having zero tolerance towards employees exhibiting disrespectful behavior toward each other. Managers need to set an example and make everyone aware that maintaining a respectful workplace is everyone's responsibility.

LifeWorks offers training sessions on Respect in the Workplace for managers and employees. Call us.

1.800.577.4727



Don't let holiday festivities undermine productivity

When you think of the November-to-January holiday season, do you feel anticipation — or anxiety? Probably a little of both. As much as you enjoy the celebrations, you know the festivities may undermine productivity. To help keep employees on track — without turning into a scrooge — try these tips from the Marlin Company, a Connecticut-based provider of communication products:

- **Rethink scheduling.** Unfortunately for managers, year-end holidays often collide with year-end business obligations. Since you can't reschedule the holidays, consider how you might restructure workplace activities to relieve some of the pressure. Move performance reviews, stock inventories, product launches, project deadlines, training seminars, and conferences to a more accommodating season.
- **Have patience.** Surveys suggest that 80 percent of Americans become stressed during the holidays. (Yourself included!) Don't add to the tension by demanding laserlike focus. Be flexible if workers, say, take a little longer at lunch so they can get in some shopping. As long as they complete their assignments, try to give them some breathing room.

– Motivational Manager

EFFECTIVE MANAGING



Would you know if your employee is having financial problem's?

As a manager, you might think that an employee's financial troubles aren't your concern. But financial troubles can lead to work distraction, outbursts of anger, absenteeism, dishonesty and poor job performance in general. An employee's personal problem can affect your business operations in a negative manner.

What are some signs that an employee might be having financial troubles?

- Buying big ticket items when you know their salary couldn't support that kind of purchase
- Employee has a family member who has a costly medical expense
- Unusual bursts of anger and distraction during meetings or conversations
- You "hear talk" about the employee's gambling or that the family is having financial problems
- Employee receives calls from creditors at work
- Employee requests payroll advances
- Garnishment orders coming from debt collectors

Money problems for an employee can result from an illness, divorce, or just bad money management.

If you notice negative behavior in an employee, consider talking to your employee in private. State the behavior change you've seen and give examples. Ask if there is a reason for it.

They may or may not want to share any information with you, but you and the employee can come to an agreement on what changes you need to see. Give them a LifeWorks Employee Resource card and remind them that LifeWorks is a confidential, free, 24/7 service for dealing with financial problems. LifeWorks is a place you can confidently refer employees to for help.

For more information on how to address employee problems LifeWorks is here for you and your employees.