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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
- Supervisory referrals

1.800.577.4727

Whether it is a work, family, or personal issue, we're here for you.

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Helping Managers *Manage People*

In business, managing people involves being an expert in your field plus having, or developing, effective people skills. How to motivate others so they can be productive while keeping business objectives in mind is not easy. Your company recognizes the special challenges you face. That's where LifeWorks can help. When faced with employee or management issues LifeWorks is here to help you and your employees. ■

Managers



SUCCESSFUL MANAGING

Depression in the Workplace: *A costly illness.*

"I'm a manager, not a counselor. How am I supposed to know if one of my employees is depressed?"

While it is true that as a manager you want to avoid getting involved in your employee's health issues, depression has become a significant issue in today's workplace. Depression has become one of America's most costly illnesses. Untreated depression costs billions of dollars due to excessive absenteeism and lost productivity. According to findings, over 200 million work days are lost each year due to employee depression.

A report conducted by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) found that a significant number of HR professionals (80%) saw depression in the workplace as a problem but that same report cautioned managers not to try to diagnose the illness. Instead, managers should continue to focus on work performance and productivity and to learn to recognize some signs indicating the possible need for outside assistance.

The following are some signs that might indicate an employee is struggling with depression:

- ⊙ *Decreased* interest or motivation in usual work activities
- ⊙ *Increased* absences or tardiness
- ⊙ *Crying* episodes at work
- ⊙ *Increased* conflict with co-workers including anger outbursts
- ⊙ *Mood* swings
- ⊙ *Difficulty* concentrating or focusing on usual tasks
- ⊙ *Obvious* changes in appetite – noticeable weight loss or gain
- ⊙ *Changes* in appearance or hygiene
- ⊙ *Remarks* about life not being worth living or even threats to commit suicide

As a manager, it is important to remain observant regarding all behaviors in the workplace so you can address changes immediately.

As soon as a behavior pattern emerges, create a plan for how to address your

DEPRESSION continued ►

MAKING LIFE WORK FOR YOU & YOUR EMPLOYEES

WE'RE HERE FOR YOU

Q & A

Q: "I know how important it is to promote diversity in the workplace but as a manager I am afraid to admit that I don't have much knowledge in this area. Can you help?"

A: First of all, good for you for not only recognizing the importance diversity plays in any organization but also that you need help in developing your "Cultural Competence." Organizations that make a concerted effort to promote diversity within their organization are healthier and more successful. A diverse workforce fosters creativity, innovation, and enthusiasm.

We suggest that you take a few tips from *The Diversity Action Book* by Janet Crenshaw Smith.

- Review company policies to insure they align with your desired diversity outcomes.
- Develop an organizational diversity vision, goals, objectives and measures.
- Assess the impact of diversity on customer service – Are all customers treated with respect?
- Walk the walk...refuse to join in the laughter when a joke is disrespectful of an individual or group of people.
- Study what other companies are doing in the area of diversity. Borrow what applies.
- Recruit NEW talent from NEW places to realize NEW benefits.

Implementing a diversity action plan is not only good for business. It is good for staff retention and increasing staff morale. It is good for attracting new customers and retaining your current ones. If you have questions about how to develop your Cultural Competence, LifeWorks Employee Resource can help.



Bullying in the Workplace

You can be a supervisor with high expectations, but could you also be called a bully? Is there an officially recognized definition of bullying in the workplace?

There is no official definition of bullying, although there is an on-going legal and legislative movement toward establishing one. Most well-honed definitions include a variation of "repeated health-harming mistreatment toward one or more employees by one or more perpetrators that undermines the normal flow of productive work."

Bullying behavior can be actual or perceived. Either way, it can have a negative effect on someone's performance and level of engagement at work. If you see it happening as a supervisor (from one employee to another) you need to address it immediately. Bullying behavior can quickly turn into harassment and that is not good for employees or your company's image.

If you have gotten feedback as a manager that YOU might be a bully, get some assistance from your employee assistance program or your immediate supervisor. You don't need to be a bully to get results from your direct reports. In fact, behavior toward employees that is persistently troublesome will adversely affect their well-being and work situation. Bullying can create feelings of insecurity and incompetence. It can even create serious problems such as stress disorders or depression. A fair supervisor applies all company policies and procedures equally and consistently to all direct reports. If you do that, you will be less likely to create a perception of having "favorites."

If you have questions about how to help motivate employees in a positive and affirming way, consult your human resources representative or a consultant at LifeWorks Employee Resource. We can help you be a "good guy" who still gets results. ■

DEPRESSION continued ...

concerns with that employee. You might first want to consult with a Human Resource representative or your direct manager before discussing your observations and concerns with the employee. You can also contact LifeWorks Employee Resource to discuss the situation with a management consultant who has experience in the mental health field.

Once you have a plan in place, share your observations and concerns with the employee and be prepared to offer resource information such as how to access EAP or other relevant company benefits. As a manager, it will be important to know about any company policies that might be relevant such as how to utilize sick time or other leave options, if necessary.



One of the most important management skills is being able to pay attention to employee behaviors and addressing changes as soon as possible. Delaying addressing tardiness or mistakes on the job does not help the employee improve. In the case with possible depression or other underlying health issues, it could also cause a delay in getting someone the help he or she might need to feel better and get back on track. ■