

# FrontLineSupervisor

## Employees — Your most valuable asset

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In case you  
missed it

This information is  
provided by  
Continuum EAP. If  
you would like more  
information on these  
or other topics,  
please don't hesitate  
to contact us.

**Q:** I am feeling burned out. I am exhausted, apathetic and frustrated. Should I go to my boss first or reach out to Continuum EAP for answers on how to get out of this state of mind?

**Whether you approach** your boss or the EAP is your decision, but here are some ways your EAP can help:

- Assess the degree to which burnout is physically affecting you.
- Identify the ways in which burnout has affected your work-life balance, with the goal of planning a return-to-wellness strategy, particularly with regard to depression.
- Offer suggestions for intervention strategies outside of work that can help you return to a more fully functioning state of engagement with your organization.
- Help you examine on-the-job interventions, some of which may require discussion with your boss in order to implement them.
- Follow up with you to facilitate, monitor and help you implement your return-to-wellness plan.

**Q:** The spouse of an employee phoned me on Sunday night to say his wife would not be at work the next day because of car trouble. It all seemed rather odd. I recommended this employee visit the EAP in the past for being absent on Mondays. What's my next step to intervene? I think I am done with excuses.

**A:** Many employees will visit the EAP based on a supervisor's recommendation. This usually happens for two reasons: They really have a personal problem and the prompt by the supervisor does the trick to motivate them to get help, or they don't have a problem at all, but they go to the EAP to explore the possibility of such or to alleviate the supervisor's concern. The question for the supervisor is always how long to tolerate repeated performance problems before deciding upon an action that can leverage an employee's desire to seek help. As a supervisor, if you identify that the performance concerns meet your organizations guidelines for taking corrective action then contact Continuum EAP and we can help you sort out if a management referral to EAP would be helpful.

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**Q:** Continuum notified me that an employee I referred for performance issues is not following through with its recommendations. The employee signed a release, but there are no disciplinary actions at this time. Is there any reason to meet with the employee?

**Yes.** Whenever you refer an employee to EAP you should continue to meet with the employee on a regular basis to discuss the performance concerns that initiated the referral. These meetings allow you to follow up with your employee and to reinforce any successful work performance or address any return to the performance issue. Your expectation is the resolution of the problem or concern regardless of follow-through at the EAP.

If your employee's performance is not improving let your employee know what the consequences are for a continuation of the problem, and encourage him or her to reconsider participation in the EAP program along with its recommendations. Whether you refer to the EAP again (if problems return) would be up to you, but make sure to consult with Continuum EAP prior to re-referring the employee for services.

**Q:** We hired an employee who was recently paroled from prison after being incarcerated for a few years. Can I refer the employee to the EAP to be interviewed and assessed for any risk issues?

**Continuum would not** meet with an employee for this purpose because it is beyond the scope of EAP practice. The employee could self-refer to the EAP for any reason, of course, and you could refer the employee (like any other employee) for performance issues, but meeting with the EAP to help management better gauge the employment decision would be impermissible.

Your new employee has a parole officer, and the court should have a discharge plan. The court takes responsibility for a parolee's assessment, release and suitability for work. This often includes communication with the employer.

## JOHN HARRIS

“

*What is life if not a gift, and what good is a gift if you don't give it away?*

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Interested in learning more about this Continuum training partner? Read his entire spotlight on Continuum EAP's blog at [4continuum.com](http://4continuum.com) — search, “John Harris.”

