

# THE CONTINUUM **EDGE**

## INFORMATION FOR LEADERS

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**I encouraged one of my employees to contact the EAP for help with a performance problem. Although he initially agreed, he appears to have changed his mind, and the work issue remains unresolved.**



**The EAP is highly trusted, so what would be the most likely explanation?**

**A:** There could be many reasons for the employee's loss of motivation. It appears that your direct conversation sparked a willingness to act, but it is also possible that he agreed in the moment just to please you and to avoid any deeper confrontation — especially if he was feeling exposed or uncomfortable with a personal problem he did not want discovered. Once the meeting ends, the motivation to follow through often fades even if it was sincere. If the performance concerns have continued, it will be important to document them and, if appropriate, make a formal referral to Continuum EAP.

If you proceed with a formal referral, alert the employee that the EAP is aware of the referral and that they will ask the employee to sign a release of information so coordination can occur to make sure the employee is getting all of the support needed to help them make the necessary changes.

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- **An employee of mine is reportedly sabotaging others by withholding key info, giving vague instructions, or taking credit for others' work. I haven't witnessed this myself, so how should I address this situation?**

**A:** When you haven't personally observed the behavior, the key is to address the impact without framing it as an accusation. Focus on what you do know — specific outcomes or disruptions. Use neutral, factual language to open the conversation. *E.g.: "I've heard of a few situations where teammates weren't given complete information and it created delays. Can you help me understand what happened?"*

Notice how this approach keeps your tone professional and curious rather than confrontational. Your goal is to raise awareness and give the employee a chance to explain, correct or clarify. At the same time, take the opportunity to reinforce clear expectations around communication, collaboration and accountability with the entire team. This is important. If the pattern continues, escalate appropriately by involving HR in guiding your next steps or initiating a performance improvement process. This early intervention approach with its focus on outcomes, not accusations, involves communicating in a concerned tone that may prevent the behavior from continuing.



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**My employee asked to borrow \$500. I did not embarrass him or act shocked, but I was. I suggested he reach out to the EAP, but I also felt fearful about whatever the crisis was that would lead him to ask me for money. Knowing he was facing something horrendous almost made me give it to him.**

**A:** You made the right decision. Unfortunately, when an employee turns to their supervisor for a loan, it often means they've run out of others to turn to — family, friends, or even payday lenders. Merely asking signals a serious financial issue and is almost always related to another problem that is worse. This could be a substance use disorder, gambling, or threats from another lender to whom the employee owes money. The \$500 is also likely only a part of what the employee needs, and others may still be sought to help with the larger sum actually needed.

Suggesting he utilize the EAP, who knows how to properly assess and discover the latent problems your employee faces, is the right support that is needed in this situation. Apart from these problems, lending money risks blurring professional boundaries, complicates your leadership role, and, at worst, could pull you into the employee's serious personal struggles in other ways.

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**I sense my employee has relapsed after treatment for an alcohol use disorder. I suspect it because I have gut instincts about it. This is based on my long history with him, catching him drinking, and past confrontations. How do I proceed?**

**A:** The short answer is stay steady, neutral and focused on workplace impact. Given your knowledge of the relapse and your history with this employee, it's critical to take a professional approach with boundaries in mind. Even if your instincts are correct, focus only on what is verifiable. Do not confront the employee about the relapse

directly unless it has impacted performance or behavior, or violated a workplace policy. Instead, contact Continuum EAP and explain the situation. Even without an active release form, the EAP professional can advise you in general terms about how to proceed. If the suspected relapse has affected workplace conduct or performance,

document those changes and address them. Discuss your observations. The Continuum EAP professional will help you articulate what is quantifiable for documentation. Avoid personal commentary or raising past grievances with your employee. Let the EAP and your company policies guide your next steps.