

FrontLine Leader

Employees — Your most valuable asset

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 Continuum

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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. **Continuum came on-site** to provide a refresher orientation and offer stress management tips. I encouraged employees to use the program, of course, but are there two or three things supervisors should generally say about the EAP to encourage its use?

A. **Emphasizing the confidential nature of EAP** is one of the most important things supervisors can say. Don't get bogged down in the nuances of confidentiality laws or try to offer explanations about the few extraordinary legal exceptions all confidentiality laws share. An EAP professional can address these issues as and when needed. Employees worry about co-workers and managers discovering the nature of their personal problem or about effects on their job security, reputation or promotional opportunities if they use the program. Offer reassurance and say Continuum will not be phoning you to ever share the nature of an employee's personal problems or concerns. Also emphasize that no problem is off-limits. EAPs have no "problem exclusions." Sometimes, an employee will dismiss the EAP as a resource because they believe their unique problem is not appropriate to bring to the EAP.

What is "purposeful leadership" and is it something that can help me in my job?

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A

"Purposeful leadership" is a model of supervisor/manager behavior that has recently gained traction in literature and research. Its focus is on manager behaviors that best help lower turnover, create happier employees, permit more job satisfaction, and produce a more engaged workforce. Research shows that supervisors personally grow to influence these outcomes by **becoming leaders who employees want to follow**. This goal is accomplished by examining personal ethics, being a role model, communicating well, being dedicated to self-growth, and learning to genuinely inspire employees with a unifying goal for the work unit that they can't help but covet. Continuum EAP can help you get there. Grab a copy of the book *Purposeful Leadership for a Total Engagement Culture: Master the Six Most Important Leadership Habits in Six Months*, by Michael J Pearsall. Do an honest self-assessment and work with the EAP to see how you can elevate and improve upon skills you'll discover in this landmark contribution to management science.

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Qualities of great LEADERS

Check back next month for another featured quality.

#2 humility

You should act with humility by seeking out feedback and focusing on the needs of others.



Find time for personal reflection and observation.



Admit mistakes and admit when you need to improve.



Be open to criticism, it will help you become a better leader.

Source: Eliv8

Q: Is there a limit to the number of times a supervisor can refer an employee to Continuum for the same performance problems that may be affected by the employee's personal life? At what point would it be considered enabling?

Continuum EAP does not place a limit on the number of times a supervisor can refer an employee to the program either for the same reason or an entirely different one. Ultimately, the manager, in consultation with the EAP and his or her advisors, must determine what value is forthcoming from referring an employee to the EAP. If referring to the EAP re-establishes the productivity of the worker, make your decision based upon this outcome. If inconvenience, loss of productivity and sacrifice of management time are judged to be too burdensome, then repeatedly referring the same employee to Continuum as a way of managing performance problems needs to be examined. By one definition, sacrificing the well-being of the organization for the sake of the worker without seeing change would be a form of enabling.

Q: No one wants a cranky supervisor. Sometimes my mood is not the most pleasant. Are there any tricks or techniques for improving my mood so I can enjoy work more and engage with employees more effectively?

Here are some quick tips for changing your mood:

1) Exercise regularly. It will influence your mood to keep it more positive. **2)** Feel an undesirable mood coming on? Go for a 10-to-15-minute walk outside or in a new environment. **3)** Sit quietly, and for five minutes, imagine some activity you experience great pleasure in doing, such as fishing, gardening, hiking, or playing with children/grandchildren. This will influence a more positive mood, and it helps you keep life in perspective. Moods are related to subtle negative "self-talk." The mood can change as you change this inner voice script. You will notice an improved effect with practice. Visit with Continuum if you remain concerned about the need to alter your mood, chronic feelings of irritability, or a communication style that does not facilitate a positive relationship with your employees.