Introduction to ComPsych® GuidanceResources

Managing people in today’s workforce is not easy. Stress is a common issue. Balancing work and family obligations continue to put pressure on your staff. Perhaps you are managing a multi-generational or widely diverse group or even employees who work remotely.

Your ComPsych® GuidanceResources® program is made available at no cost to employees of your organization to provide them with confidential, professional assistance for resolving all types of personal concerns. As a Supervisor or Manager, ComPsych provides you with the support and consultation you might need as well, when these personal concerns spill into the workplace and begin to affect an employee’s behaviour and/or performance.

Organizational Benefits of Having GuidanceResources

- Increased productivity and reduced health care costs through early recognition, intervention and resolution of business and personal problems
- Retention of trained employees with valuable skills and experience
- Reduced absenteeism, accidents and grievances
- Improved employee morale

How to Utilize GuidanceResources

You or your employees can call the toll-free number: 306.966.4300
A GuidanceConsultant™ will assist in directing you to the services you request.
GuidanceResources® Online is also available for online assistance and information.
Go to www.guidanceresources.com and use Web ID: USASKEAP

Why People Should Use GuidanceResources

Parenting Needs
- Child care concerns
- Adoption questions
- Step-parenting issues
- Special needs children
- Choosing schools and universities
- Homework and study habits

Work-Life Balance
- Pet sitting services
- Vacation planning
- Construction and remodeling
- Moving arrangements

Legal Concerns
- Divorce and child custody
- Wills and estate planning
- Real estate/landlord-tenant relations
- Criminal issues

Older Adult Resources
- Caring for chronically ill parents
- Long-distance caregiving issues
- Assisted living/nursing home care

Financial Concerns
- Credit card debt
- Identity theft
- Retirement planning
- Income tax questions
- Budgeting help

Personal Issues
- Grief or depression
- Chronic illness
- Substance abuse/other addictions
- Eating disorders
- Domestic violence
- Marriage and relationship issues
Your Role as a Supervisor/Manager

Your role is to maintain the productivity and safety of the workplace. You should NOT be in the role of counsellor, parent or best friend. A good supervisor/manager is one who treats all employees in a fair, consistent and objective way. Yet there are times when you might need to see an employee through difficult times—either personal or work-related.

Think for a minute about how you handle performance issues. Be honest as you answer a few questions.

- How do you typically deal with performance issues?
- Ideally, how would you like to deal with them?
- Why do you think there is a discrepancy?

Everyone has a bad day, but whenever an employee’s performance takes a sudden turn or continues to decline, it could indicate something of importance has been occurring to alter his or her routine. Numerous signs may alert you to watch the employee’s performance more closely such as:

Eight Characteristics of Effective Managers and Supervisors

1. They take full responsibility for the productivity of the department and expect their employees to be fully accountable for their part in this productivity.
2. They like people and can communicate well.
3. They don’t mind giving criticism of a constructive nature.
4. They give praise freely and when it’s earned.
5. They are not intimidated by workers who tell them what they really think.
6. They seek new ideas and use them whenever possible.
7. They respect the knowledge and skill of the people who work for them.
8. They follow up to ensure goals, commitments and standards are being met.

Personality Changes
- Edgy and/or irritable
- Suspicious/intolerant of co-workers
- Bored and apathetic
- Attitude and mood changes

Work Behaviour Changes
- Decrease in productivity
- Misses deadlines
- Erratic work pace
- Avoids boss or team leaders
- Mistakes or errors in judgment
- Decrease in work quality
- Rigid and impaired judgment

Employee Relations On the Job
- Overreacts to criticism
- Borrows money from co-workers
- Complaints from co-workers
- Decrease in social involvements
- Steals from co-workers

Physical Changes
- Red or blurry eyes
- Hand tremors or nervousness
- Weight fluctuations
- Slurred speech
- Unusual cuts, bruises, scratches

Out of the Office/Away from Desk
- Excessive sick leave or tardiness
- Routinely leaves work early
- Peculiar excuses for absences
- Long coffee breaks
- Frequent trips to water fountain, bathroom

High Accident Rate
- Accidents on or off the job
- Frequent “near-misses"

Drinking/Drug Use
- Drinks before reporting to work
- Regular/periodic drinking at lunch
- Odour or scent of marijuana
- Fails to return from lunch
- Uses “mints” to cover alcohol odour
- Continued use of over-the-counter or prescription drugs
“An initial sign that the employee may be experiencing performance problems could take many forms—outbursts toward customers or co-workers, an unexplained or unexcused absence, poor attention to work details. Upon identifying inappropriate performance, it is important that you speak with the employee as soon as possible.”

Five Concepts for Managing Employee Performance

How does an employee use the EAP?

Self-Referral
Self-referrals occur at the employee’s own initiative. The employee, recognizing a need for assistance, calls ComPsych for a referral to an EAP counsellor. No one is notified of the employee’s participation in EAP services unless the employee indicates otherwise.

Informal Referral
Informal referrals occur as the result of the employee sharing personal problems with the supervisor or manager. The alerted supervisor or manager will use this as an opportunity to steer the employee in the direction of the EAP and avoid becoming involved in the employee’s personal problems. The key to successful early intervention of problems in the workplace is for the supervisor or manager to listen and to understand a request for help.

Remember, support the use of the ComPsych EAP by your employees. Don’t try to counsel the employee on personal problems yourself. The EAP counsellor is better equipped to help an employee who is experiencing personal problems.

Consider the following as you manage your employees’ performance.

1. Identify potential performance problems
Of the duties in a supervisory position, the most important is to ensure that your employees perform in a satisfactory manner. For many issues, training and coaching improves the employee’s skill level. For those experiencing stress, personal, medical or addiction problems, training or other supervisory techniques may not be enough. An initial sign that an employee may be experiencing performance problems could take many forms: outbursts toward customers or co-workers, an unexplained or unexcused absence, poor attention to work details. Upon identifying inappropriate performance, speak with the employee as soon as possible. By addressing the problem immediately, you and the employee have the opportunity to the issues. During your meeting, you may have an opportunity to informally refer the employee to the EAP if the employee shares any personal issues that may be affecting work performance.
2. Observe behaviour
Whenever an employee’s performance continues to decline, it may be indicative of the employee experiencing personal difficulties. Observe the employee’s behavioural changes and address them with the employee in a timely fashion.

3. Document facts
Good documentation can assist you in providing objective, factual information because it shows job performance over a period of time and can pinpoint emerging patterns of deteriorating performance. It is important that you document work-related issues only. Document attendance, conduct and the nature of work performance issues. Avoid personal opinions or third-party information. Finally, keep in mind that this information is private and should be handled with strict confidentiality.

4. Prepare for employee meeting
- The focus of the meeting should be restricted to the issues of job performance. Don’t diagnose. Confront the employee with performance deficiencies.
- Choose a private location for the employee meeting. Conduct the discussion at the end of the day, so the employee has the opportunity to leave, if he or she becomes upset, defensive or angered by your discussion.
- Realistically evaluate how the employee will react based on past history.
- Consider how you will react if the employee becomes aggressive/emotional.
- Address performance issues in a timely fashion.

- Acknowledge your comfort level with any type of constructive criticism. Build your skill level in this area, if necessary.
- Examine all past documentation on the employee.
- Work with your Human Resources representative to develop your thoughts, actions and consequences.
- Alert ComPsych prior to the employee meeting. The professionals at ComPsych serve as a sounding board, validating your next steps, providing new ideas and supporting you emotionally.

5. Take action
During the meeting, be prepared to address your concerns, work issues and possible solutions. Using the six steps listed below, you can develop an outline to aid you during this discussion:
- Clearly describe the performance deficiency you have identified.
- Outline behavioural changes on the job (if any) that you have observed; refer to your documentation.
- Explain why this problem concerns you.
- Inform the employee of the consequences if performance does not improve.
- Discuss the available services and suggest the employee make use of them.
- Express confidence in the employee and set a date for a follow-up discussion.

Formal Management Referrals
There may be an occasion when you require an employee to participate in the GuidanceResources program. This decision should be made in conjunction with your Human Resources department to ensure that your internal policies are followed. Under the formal referrals process, the employee will be required to sign a release of information (ROI) form to allow clinical staff to notify the referral contact (HR/management) that the employee has been compliant with the referral by participating in and completing all recommended services. No personal or diagnostic information will be provided to the referral contact. The authorization form can be supplied by the GuidanceResources program.
Additional Services

Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Services
Although we hope a supervisor/manager never has to face a serious illness or death of an employee, or a natural disaster or violent acts in the workplace, your GuidanceResources program is there to help manage through them. Our 24-hour Critical Incident Response Unit deals exclusively in these incidents. This specialized team will consult with the supervisor/manager about the most clinically appropriate option and assist in determining an action plan.

In the event of such an incident at your organization, expect that employees will experience many different responses. If any employees display some of the following signs, reassure them that their reactions are normal and encourage them to call GuidanceResources for confidential assistance at any time.

- Physical Responses
  - Rapid breathing
  - Increased heart rate
  - Stomach disorders
  - Sweating/dizzy spells
  - Homework and study habits

- Cognitive Responses
  - Difficulty making decisions
  - Disorientation
  - Real estate/landlord-tenant relations
  - Criminal issues

- Behavioural Responses
  - Crying/other outbursts
  - Change in hygiene
  - Behaviour changes
  - Becoming withdrawn

- Emotional Responses
  - Anger
  - Grief
  - Sadness
  - Anxiety

Management Consultation
ComPsych offers supervisors/managers the opportunity to speak with experts in substance abuse, workplace violence, organizational change issues and any other situation you might be encountering with your employee. If you need information and support when handling an employee issue, a ComPsych HR Specialist can provide it, drawing upon extensive knowledge and experience with workplace regulations, behavioural health issues and HR best practices. We offer this support and knowledge in conjunction with your organization’s HR staff to ensure all policies and procedures are followed.

Training and Consulting for Workplace Development
Over 100 workshops are available which can be a useful tool for developing employees, as well as supervisors/managers. We can arrange for on-site facilitation, e-learning or Webinars on a variety of personal, work-life and professional topics. In addition, we can provide orientations to introduce the GuidanceResources program and stress the confidential and professional nature of the benefit and how employees can access the service.

Here when you need us.
Call: 306.966.4300
TDD: 877.373.4763
Online: guidanceresources.com
App: GuidanceResources Now
Web ID: USASKEAP