

Manager Assist

What is Manager Assist?

Managers today face complex situations and demands that impact their ability to manage their staff effectively. Line Managers know that people management is a critically important part of their role, along with managing workplace environments that are often in a constant state of change. Managers have greater responsibilities to accomplish more with less. As a result, many are challenged to maintain team morale and sustain productivity. To support Managers and Supervisors in their proactive management of staff, EAP Services offers a telephone-based 'helpline' called Manager Assist. Managers can contact our Manager Assist 'helpline' for confidential advice regarding their endeavours to enhance positive working relationships which will subsequently achieve improved team performance and productivity.

Consider the following two scenarios:



A staff member is displaying erratic behaviour which is impacting on the rest of the team. She is regularly absent from work, and her colleagues are often contacting her to see if she will be at work. Colleagues have frequently complained to their Manager and feel unsupported as the situation never seems to get resolved.

Colleagues are conflicted, as they are both concerned for her health yet resentful that their workload is increased by her regular absences. Over time the staff member has become isolated from the team and the team is frustrated and unhappy.



A manager needs to have a performance management discussion with an employee. The employee is constantly late to work, despite having given a number of assurances to the Manager that they will arrive at work on time. Colleagues are becoming irritated by the employee's constant tardiness, as they feel they too would like to regularly work less hours for the same pay. The manager commences the discussion with the employee, who becomes very aggressive and states "My GP has diagnosed me with depression".

In both the above scenarios there are consequences for the employee, the team members and the organisation.





Employee

- Feels increasingly isolated from the rest of the team
- Fears being labelled
- Feels their work performance deteriorating further
- Feels further erosion of their self-esteem and confidence

Team members

- Feel unable to help their colleague, as not qualified to deal with the issues
- Feel resentment for both their colleague and the manager that they are regularly required to absorb the extra workload
- Feel frustrated and unsupported by the lack of acknowledgement the impact their colleague's actions have on them

Organisation

- Increased absenteeism
- More mistakes and accidents
- Negative impact on staff engagement, morale, creativity, innovation and productivity
- Hidden costs of manager's time in resolving issues
- Negative public image

Manager Hotline - how does it work?

How will EAP Manager Assist improve manager performance? Advice and professional support accessed from the Helpline service will assist managers to:

- Gain a clearer understanding of how to resolve or overcome issues resulting from challenging situations
- Form stronger professional relationships with direct reports and directors/managers
- Develop improved assertiveness, self-assurance and leadership strength

Accessing Manager Assist

EAP Services operates a 24/7 Manager Assist service. Managers call our free-phone number - 0800 327 669 (NZ) 1800 726 474 (AU), where they will be asked for details of the issue. For most scenarios, the manager will be scheduled a 30 minute consultation at a date/time that suits. The service is confidential, so no identifying information regarding a manager's use of the service will be provided. If the issue is urgent and/or an employee is at risk, the manager will be immediately transferred to our Clinical Duty Manager who will assess the situation, give support and advice to the manager and to the employee, and identify action that needs to be taken.

Note: The Manager Assist helpline is not intended to take the place of Human Resources (HR) advice or internal consulting services, but to be an additional resource for Managers when dealing with people issues.