

# THE CONTINUUM **EDGE**

## INFORMATION FOR LEADERS



- **Continuum EAP allows family members to use its services at no cost. Isn't this exceeding the company's responsibility since these individuals aren't employees?**

**A:** Allowing immediate family members to access the EAP is a common practice and offers significant benefits for both employees and the company. Issues impacting other individuals in the home often affect an employee's job performance, attendance or behavior. By having the opportunity to address these challenges through Continuum EAP, companies help employees maintain focus and productivity. While EAPs are typically presented as an employee benefit, management also recognizes

their cost-avoidance and loss-prevention value. Allowing family members to reach out fits this model. Family members may seek Continuum EAP support for personal issues that, in turn, help resolve serious challenges affecting the employee — challenges the employee may not acknowledge on their own.

*Providing this access creates a win-win situation, enhancing employee well-being and workplace stability.*

**One of our senior managers once said the best way to treat employees is to always assume they have the best intentions, no matter what. This stuck with me as an interesting piece of advice. What does it mean?**

**A:** Always treating employees as though they have good intentions is a strategy for managing workers that produces many payoffs for you and your organization. If you always assume that your employees have good intentions, it will be reflected in your tone of voice, your attitude, and how you interact with them. It builds trust, makes it easier for employees to come to you with concerns, and lets them feel valued and respected. This, in turn, enables them to have higher morale, making them more motivated and engaged with the organization.



Your employees will view you as a supervisor who seeks to discover the root causes of problems rather than assigning blame. They will be more receptive to feedback as a result, and you will witness fewer conflicts among them. Best of all, your team will begin to model this positive approach in their interactions with each other.

**My employee has a tardiness problem that I verbally addressed in a casual setting during her lunch hour. The tardiness has continued, so I've written a warning.**

**She's protesting my disciplinary letter claiming our discussion was a chat, not a verbal warning. What should I do now?**

The initial discussion does not appear to have been an official verbal warning because you did not declare it as such. The fact that it was during her lunch break supports this view since such discussion should be in private. She likely felt it was also intrusive, which supports the idea of the discussion being "off the record."

Check your company's policy. It likely says that all disciplinary actions should be documented. Be explicit when a conversation constitutes a formal step in progressive discipline, such as saying, "This is a verbal warning about your tardiness." If the verbal warning wasn't affirmed following the discussion, for example, by saying so in an email, then no record exists to demonstrate it occurred. Maintain focus on resolving the employee's problem at this stage and avoid allowing a larger issue to develop over this disagreement.



- **What is the "standard practice" in communicating with a supervisor or HR rep. when an employee signs a release after being referred to Continuum EAP for Work Performance Improvement Coaching?**

**A:** Continuum believes that a referral for Work Performance Improvement Coaching is a partnership between the EAP and the organization to assist the employee in making needed behavioral changes.

Examples of information typically communicated include:



That the employee has initiated involvement with Continuum EAP.



Whether the employee is actively participating in the coaching process.



Information related to the work performance concerns and expectations of the employee.



No details of the employee's personal concerns are shared.

These elements support good communication and help protect confidentiality, which is critical to the integrity and success of the program.