

SUPERVISORY MANUAL



Company Name



First Advantage[™]

INTRODUCTION

First Advantage has been selected as your company's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provider. **FADV** provides confidential and professional assessment, referral and problem solving services to employees and eligible family members. **FADV** also serves as a resource for supervisors. Impaired job performance is costly, not only to the company, but also to the supervisor in terms of time and energy. The EAP offers assistance for employees who are experiencing personal problems that impair or have the potential to impair their work performance. The program offers services for alcohol and drug abuse; emotional/stress related problems; family/marital difficulties; and problems associated with balancing work and family. There are 4 ways that employees can obtain services from the EAP:

1. **Self Referral/Family Member Initiative** - This type of referral occurs at the employee's own initiative. The employee recognizes the need for assistance and consults with an EAP Professional. No feedback is given to the supervisor with this type of referral.
2. **Supervisor Suggestion** - The supervisor suggests use of the EAP to the employee due to observations of behavior or through discussions with the employee regarding a personal problem. In such circumstances, no pattern of deteriorating work performance has been established. No feedback is given to the supervisor with this type of referral.
3. **Supervisory Referral** - The supervisor refers the employee to the EAP due to a deteriorating pattern of work performance (e. g., attendance, relationships with co-workers, reliability, quality of work product, etc.). These patterns are established through observation and documentation. The supervisor is notified if the employee keeps the first appointment. The employee has the option of signing a Release of Information so that the supervisor can receive ongoing information about the employee's involvement in the EAP.
4. **Mandatory Referral** – The supervisor, often in consultation with Human Resources, refers the employee to the EAP due to performance or behavior that could constitute reason for termination. The employee must accept the referral and follow all recommendations made by the EAP as a condition of continued employment. As part of the agreement with the company, the employee signs a Release of Information so that the supervisor can be informed of the employee's compliance with the EAP recommendations.

One of the functions of a supervisor is to identify poor performance by employees and take appropriate actions. Early identification, documentation, and referral of troubled employees for help can result in improved job performance and employee morale. A referral to the EAP does not pre-empt a supervisor from taking disciplinary action when necessary. The EAP should not be viewed as a disciplinary measure, but as another option or tool for the employee to use in improving workplace performance.

DEFINITIONS AND TERMS

Employee Assistance Program

A service that is designed to provide assistance at an early stage to those employees who develop problems that contribute to unacceptable patterns of workplace behavior. Assistance includes problem identification, assessment, problem solving and referral for additional services when necessary.

Incidents of Unacceptable Job Performance

Instances in which an employee's work, attendance and/or conduct fail to meet job performance standards.

Troubled Employee

An employee who develops an unacceptable pattern of job performance.

Assessment

The process by which the **FADV** EAP Professional determines with the employee what kind of changes need to be made and how improvement can be achieved.

Referral

If an employee's problem cannot be resolved within the allotted EAP sessions, the employee is given a choice of referrals to professionals who would be able to continue working with the employee to resolve the outstanding issues.

Corrective Interview

A meeting between a supervisor and an employee who demonstrates a pattern of deteriorating work performance. The purpose of the meeting is to intervene and change performance problems through problem definition, discussion of appropriate standards for work performance, development of a time line for change and a plan for on-going review of performance.



ROLE OF THE SUPERVISOR

A supervisor is responsible for identifying unsatisfactory work performance, offering assistance to bring performance up to an acceptable level and taking remedial actions up to and including removal if appropriate. Management may provide the employee with the opportunity to acquire necessary help to resolve whatever is causing the unacceptable job performance. The supervisor is the **KEY** to informing the employee of performance or conduct deficiencies and encouraging him/her to do something to correct the problem(s) that may be manifested on the job. Management needs to be clear with the employee in informing him/her of job expectations when established standards of performance are not being met. **Supervisors are not to attempt to diagnose problems.**

The following steps should be initiated to assist the employee in resolving his/her problem:

PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

People experiencing personal problems are often distinguished by continued deterioration of job performance. In most instances, behavioral patterns can develop. Once you recognize that an employee's work performance is deteriorating, do not ignore it. Most likely, the situation will get worse, which will create additional problems (i.e., continued poor performance and lower morale among other employees.) Recognizing warning signs is the key to identification of problems in their early stages. Such signs include:

1. **Inconsistency in meeting standards of performance**
2. **Frequent mistakes**
3. **Carelessness**
4. **Unauthorized leave**
5. **Excessive absenteeism and lateness** (*particularly before and after weekends, holidays, and after paydays*)
6. **Leaving work early and taking extended lunch periods**
7. **Unexplained disappearances from the job**
8. **Peculiar and increasingly improbable excuses for absences**
9. **Difficulty in concentration**
10. **Difficulty in recalling instructions and details**
11. **Difficulty in recalling mistakes**
12. **Irregular work patterns** (*alternate periods of high and very low productivity*)
13. **Carelessness in handling equipment or supplies**
14. **Disregard for the safety of others**
15. **Resistance to change**
16. **Coming to or returning from work in an obviously abnormal condition**
17. **Overreacting to real or imagined criticism**
18. **Borrowing money from co-workers**
19. **Harboring unreasonable resentments**



DOCUMENTATION

When documenting work performance, keep an accurate and up-to-date file on all employees, especially those who display poor work performance. Without documentation, it can be difficult for the supervisor to recreate conversations or events that have occurred. In addition, an employee may actually be unaware that his/her performance is less than satisfactory. Providing "proof" helps him/her to recognize the particular problem as it really is. **Listed below are types of incidents that should be documented:**

- ◆ **Decreased production** (*quality and/or quantity*)
- ◆ **Violation of rules and regulations**
- ◆ **Poor decisions**
- ◆ **Missing details**
- ◆ **Mistakes**
- ◆ **Unexcused absences - no prior approval**
- ◆ **Consistent pattern of sick leave** (*i.e., Mondays, Fridays, days before and after holidays*)
- ◆ **On-the-job absenteeism** (*i.e., long lunches, extended breaks, increased time away from the workstation*)
- ◆ **Tardiness and early departures**
- ◆ **Conduct that disrupts the work of fellow employees**

DOCUMENTING POOR JOB PERFORMANCE AND CONDUCT

- 1) Determine if unsatisfactory job performance is the result of the following:
 - a) Employee not meeting established standards of performance; or
 - b) Lack of proper training.
- 2) Record incidents of poor job performance as they happen. Be clear and be objective. Cite actual performance problems only - NOT IMPRESSIONS, HEARSAY, OR OPINIONS.
- 3) Documentation should include acceptable as well as unacceptable performance.
- 4) All documented information should be confidential.



THE CORRECTIVE INTERVIEW

DO's and DON'Ts

DO

Focus solely on declining job performance and the offer of help.

Have written documentation about the declining job performance, so you can "let the record speak for itself."

Maintain a firm and formal, yet considerate, attitude. If the interview becomes a casual or intimate conversation, the impact of the message will be lessened.

Explain that a source of help is available through the company's EAP.

Emphasize that all aspects of the EAP are completely confidential.

Explain that the employee must decide on his or her own whether to seek assistance.

DON'T

Try to find out "what is wrong" with the employee or allow yourself to get involved in the employee's personal life.

Make generalizations or insinuations about the employee's performance.

Moralize. Restrict your criticism to job performance.

Be misled by sympathy-evoking tactics. Stay focused on your right to expect appropriate behavior and satisfactory job performance.

Threaten formal disciplinary action unless you are willing and able to carry it out.



THE CORRECTIVE INTERVIEW con't.

Confronting an employee whose job performance has deteriorated is never easy. It is especially hard when your previous efforts to handle the situation have not worked, tensions have built, and communications have become strained or blocked.

It is possible, however, to conduct a constructive corrective interview even when it is necessary to turn around a pattern of deteriorating interactions. The key lies in **being prepared**. This involves having a good idea of what to expect, knowing how to deal with whatever may occur during the interview, and motivating the employee towards a positive change in job performance.

Listed below are the steps to take in confronting an employee about job performance problems.

PREPARING FOR THE CORRECTIVE INTERVIEW

1. Document all occurrences of both unacceptable and acceptable job performance, including the specific incident and date.
2. Consult with Human Resources or the EAP to review documentation and rehearse the corrective interview, if needed.
3. Make an agenda.
4. List the expected performance changes.
5. Have a tentative plan for correcting performance before the interview.
6. Schedule a meeting with employee (make sure privacy is observed).

THE INITIAL INTERVIEW - SUPERVISORY SUGGESTION

1. Attempt to put the employee at ease; be open and considerate.
2. Begin with the employee's strengths related to job performance.
3. Review with the employee the level of performance that is unsatisfactory and explain precisely why it is considered unsatisfactory.
4. Focus on job performance only.
5. Review the employee's specific responsibilities, duties and standards that apply.
6. State specifically what the employee must do to improve his/her performance.
7. Develop a corrective action plan.
8. Inform the employee of the availability of the EAP.
9. Inform the employee that participating in the EAP is voluntary and will not jeopardize job security or promotional opportunities.
10. Notify the employee that his/her job performance is expected to improve and must be maintained at an acceptable level or disciplinary action may be necessary.
11. Be sure the employee is aware that you will continue to monitor job performance.
12. Schedule a follow-up meeting to evaluate progress (generally within 30-60 days).



THE CORRECTIVE INTERVIEW con't.

13. End the meeting on a positive note.
14. Record the highlights of the interview and retain in your working file for future reference.
15. Continue to monitor job performance, document as appropriate and conduct the follow-up interview.

FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEW – THE SUPERVISORY REFERRAL

If the employee's performance improves and is maintained tell him/her so. If there is no change or if performance continues to deteriorate, then make a formal, supervisory referral to the EAP. The format of the interview should be similar to the first interview.

1. Begin the interview by reviewing any positive gains that the employee may have made since the initial interview. Review the performance that is unsatisfactory and any further deterioration in performance that has occurred since the last meeting.
2. Advise the employee that failure to return his/her job performance to an acceptable level may result in disciplinary actions. At this stage, it is strongly recommended to provide the employee with a written reprimand, a copy of which must be placed in the employee's official personnel file as part of the progressive disciplinary process.
3. Conclude the session with a strong recommendation that the employee utilize the services of the EAP and inform the employee that you are making a supervisory referral. Explain to the employee that the EAP is a resource that offers assistance in resolving work performance issues.
4. It is important to emphasize that the EAP is an option to assist in improving job performance. Explain that you will be sharing with the EAP the performance problems.
5. Prepare a summary document for the employee and the EAP specifying the performance problems.
6. Inform the employee that the EAP will not share any personal information with the company. The supervisor will be notified of the initial appointment date/time and if the employee keeps this appointment. The employee has the option to sign a Release of Information for the EAP to provide the supervisor with ongoing compliance updates.
7. The supervisor must stay focused on job performance. If there is no change or there is ongoing deterioration in job performance, appropriate disciplinary and/or dismissal actions should be initiated, regardless of EAP involvement.



THE CORRECTIVE INTERVIEW con't.

THE MANDATORY REFERRAL

In situations in which the employee's performance or behavior could constitute reason for termination and the employee has in the past demonstrated acceptable performance, a mandatory referral may be appropriate in lieu of termination. The supervisor should consult with the Human Resource Department about the company's policy regarding mandatory referrals. The procedures for making a mandatory referral to the EAP are similar to those for a supervisory referral.

1. A "continued employment" or "last chance" agreement should be prepared, describing the job performance problems, the mandatory referral process and the ongoing expectations of the employee. The employee and supervisor should sign this agreement during the interview. A copy of the agreement should be placed in the employee's personnel file and a copy faxed to the EAP when the referral is made.
2. The employee should be informed that his/her ongoing employment is contingent upon following through on the referral to the EAP and following all recommendations made by the EAP.
3. The employee should be informed that he/she will be asked to sign a Release of Information so that the supervisor/human resources can be informed of the employee's compliance with the program.



THE EAP

The following steps occur in the EAP process:

1. The employee calls the EAP office to schedule an appointment.
2. During the first session, the employee will talk with the EAP professional and an assessment will be made of the personal problem.
3. The employee and the EAP Professional will develop a plan to resolve the personal problem.
4. If the problem can be resolved within the allotted sessions, the EAP Professional will continue to see the employee. If a referral is appropriate, the EAP Professional will facilitate a referral within the community that is either within the employee's financial means or insurance coverage.
5. Following termination with the EAP, the **FADV** EAP Professional initiates a follow-up call with the employee on a pre-determined frequency. **FADV** also maintains regular telephone contact with the supervisor for feedback on the employee's performance.

EAP CONFIDENTIALITY

The information provided to the supervisor varies with the type of referral as follows:

1. **Self Referral:** If the employee initiates contact with the EAP, no information will be shared with the company about the employee's participation in the program.
2. **Supervisory Suggestion:** If the supervisor recommends that the employee contact the EAP on his/her own but does not make a formal referral, no information will be shared with the company about the employee's participation in the EAP.
3. **Supervisory Referral:** If a formal supervisory referral is made, the supervisor is informed of the date the employee contacts the EAP, the initial appointment date and if the employee keeps this appointment. No other information is shared with the company. The employee has the option to sign a Release of Information for the EAP to provide the company with any follow-up information.
4. **Mandatory Referral:** If a mandatory referral is made, part of the employee's agreement with the company is that he/she will sign all required Release of Information forms so that the company can be informed about his/her compliance with the EAP. No personal information is shared with the company.



SUMMARY

Preparing and Conducting the Corrective Interview

I. IDENTIFICATION

- A. Recognize that there is a problem. Do not attempt to diagnose the problem.
- B. List problems regarding job performance.
- C. Note the length of time the problem has existed.

II. DOCUMENTATION

- A. Record incidents of observed poor performance and conduct. Include time, place, date, and circumstances in your documentation. Describe the incident, others involved, consequence, and action taken.
- B. Do not include rumors, speculation or assumptions.

III. CORRECTIVE INTERVIEW

- A. Plan your approach.
- B. Decide on a private place and time. Conduct the meeting when you are calm rather than angry, frustrated or tired.
- C. Outline the job performance problem(s).
- D. Focus on the job problem.
 - 1) Describe the problem. Do not judge or label.
 - 2) Do not make assumptions about the problem or its meaning.
 - 3) Focus on the employee; do not compare to others.
 - 4) Focus on the purpose of the meeting; avoid getting sidetracked by excuses, personal problems, promises, or emotions (tears, anger, etc.)
- E. Develop an action plan, including the type of referral to the EAP and the phone number (800.935.9551). Make sure to describe the:
 - 1) Voluntary nature of the EAP;
 - 2) EAP as a resource to improve job performance;
 - 3) Confidential nature of the EAP.

IV. FOLLOW-UP

- A. Contact the EAP to initiate a referral, if this is part of the action plan.
- B. Continue to monitor and document the employee's job performance.
- C. Take appropriate disciplinary action as necessary.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION,
PLEASE CONTACT:**

**FIRST ADVANTAGE WORKPLACE
SERVICES**

**1.800.935.9551
FAX: 301.571.0146**

<http://www.fadv.com/eapsap>