



# THE SUPERVISOR/HR NEWSLETTER



HELPFUL RESOURCES FROM YOUR  
EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Dec.  
19

## December Online Seminar

### *Examining Relationships: Healthy vs. Unhealthy*

Examine different types of relationships – from family and friendship, to romantic and professional – while learning to recognize healthy and unhealthy relationships.

Available on-demand starting  
December 17th at  
[www.deeroakseap.com](http://www.deeroakseap.com)

Helpline: 866-327-2400  
Web: [www.deeroakseap.com](http://www.deeroakseap.com)  
Email: [eap@deeroaks.com](mailto:eap@deeroaks.com)

## Deer Oaks 2019 Supervisor Excellence Webinar Series

### *Employee Engagement*

*A series of practical educational programs designed to help supervisors and managers to build more engaged and productive work teams. This series is available to all supervisors, managers, and other interested employees and does not count toward your organization's training hour bank.*

#### **Webinar # 4: How to Motivate Your Employees to Be Engaged in Their Work**

Motivated employees are engaged and productive. This important session discusses research on employee motivation, identifies the three primary needs that employees seek to meet at work, and discusses management approaches to help create and maintain a motivated and engaged team.

Friday, December 6th, 1:00 – 2:00 PM CT

Register: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4945543224289664771>

Monday, December 9th, 1:00 – 2:00 PM CT

Register: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/774233603019167491>

# Anxiety Disorders at Work

Anxiety disorders are highly treatable, yet only one-third of those who suffer from an anxiety disorder receive treatment. Anxiety disorders are medical illnesses. They are chronic, relentless, and can grow if left untreated.

Most people feel a little anxious before a big speech, a job interview, or a visit to the doctor. Sweaty palms and butterflies in your stomach are normal reactions. Crippling fear, however, is not normal.

Having an anxiety disorder is not a sign of moral weakness. In fact, experts believe that anxiety disorders are caused by a combination of biological and environmental factors, much like physical disorders, such as heart disease or diabetes. The most common anxiety disorders are panic disorders, phobias, post-traumatic stress disorders, obsessive-compulsive disorders, and generalized anxiety disorders.

## Major Signs and Symptoms of an Anxiety Disorder

Although each anxiety disorder has its own distinct features, all include some degree of excessive, irrational, or ongoing anxiety or fear, and feelings of dread and terror. Specific symptoms can include

- Sweating, trembling, nausea, and difficulty talking
- Painful, intrusive memories, or recurring nightmares
- Fatigue, headaches, muscle tension, muscle aches, irritability, or difficulty swallowing
- Persistent obsessive thoughts
- Intense feelings of panic and fear

## Tips for Employers

**Educate employees and managers about mental health disorders, including anxiety disorders.** Encourage employees to seek care when they need it by educating the workforce that mental illnesses are real and can be effectively treated. Teach supervisors how to (and how not to) intervene appropriately by focusing on job performance.

**Promote the use of employee assistance and health programs.** Early intervention is key. Remind employees of the availability of resources for staying healthy and productive. Ensure that employees know how to access care confidentially and quickly by providing information on how to do so in multiple places and throughout the year. Heavily push these messages during times of stress, at the holidays, and so forth.

**Integrate mental health educational messages in health communication strategies.** Include content about anxiety disorders in company newsletters, on the intranet, and in other regular employee communication platforms.

*Source: Partnership for Workplace Mental Health. (n.d.). Anxiety disorders. Retrieved August 17, 2016, from <http://www.workplacementalhealth.org/>*

# Cultural Respect

## What is cultural respect?

Culture is often described as the combination of a body of knowledge, a body of belief, and a body of behavior. It involves a number of elements, including personal identification; language; thoughts; communications; actions; customs; beliefs; values; and institutions that are often specific to ethnic, racial, religious, geographic, or social groups. These elements influence personal beliefs and belief systems surrounding work, family, health, healing, finances, wellness, illness, and delivery of services. The concept of cultural respect has a positive effect on workplace delivery by enabling businesses and providers to deliver services that are respectful of and responsive to the beliefs, practices, and cultural and linguistic needs of diverse customers.

## Why is cultural respect important?

Cultural respect is critical to reducing disparities and improving access to services and products that are respectful of and responsive to the needs of diverse people. When developed and implemented as a framework, cultural respect enables systems, agencies, and groups of professionals to function effectively to understand the needs of groups accessing information, products, and services (such as health care)—or participating in research—in an inclusive partnership where the provider and the user of the information meet on common ground.

## Can cultural respect make a difference?

Cultural respect benefits consumers, stakeholders, and communities, and it supports positive outcomes. Because a number of elements can influence communication—including behaviors, language, customs, beliefs, and perspectives—cultural respect is also critical for achieving accuracy. Poor planning, or planning that does not take into account principles of cultural respect, may yield inaccurate results.

*Source: U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH). (Reviewed 2017, February 15). Cultural respect [Excerpt/Edit] (B. Schuette, Ed.). Retrieved October 19, 2018, from <https://www.nih.gov/>*

# Ask Your EAP!

The following are answers to common questions supervisors have regarding employee issues and making EAP referrals. As always, if you have specific questions about referring an employee or managing a workgroup issue, feel free to make a confidential call to the EAP for a management consultation.

*Q. When employees are in conflict, it can disrupt workflow and group harmony, but should supervisors intervene in every instance? Can you offer guidelines for deciding when to take control of a situation and step in?*

A. Most supervisors know conflict is normal in the workplace, and responding to conflict is part of a supervisor's job, but there are important guidelines. It is not necessary to intervene in every conflict; on the contrary, it is usually better to leave employees alone and let them work it out. If supervisors involved themselves in every conflict, they would likely create more of them because it would send a message that employees need not cooperate, compromise, or work out power struggles with each other and instead let you work it out. These are relationship skills that can be undermined by the authority possessed by a manager. A better tactic is monitoring what is taking place. So, when should you intervene? Intervene when the issues pose some sort of larger risk to the organization, as in the case of harassment, discrimination, or potential for violence. Hold employees responsible for resolving conflicts. Never let them perpetuate. The EAP can be a resource for supervisors when conflicts remain unresolved and you decide to speed up resolution by referring employees for additional help.

*Q. When counseling employees, what are the most common mistakes that supervisors make that undermine their goal of getting above-satisfactory performance from employees?*

A. Managers often forget the importance of effective communication and remaining proactive. These are the fundamental mistakes. This is the starting point for preventing performance problems. Poor communication typically leads to late interventions, after a crisis of performance already exists. Good communication means periodically reviewing and clarifying expectations and discussing performance problems. Beyond these things, many supervisors do not have employees communicate their own understanding of what precisely must be done to meet acceptable standards. And, supervisors often do not discuss what outstanding performance looks like and how it is measured. When outstanding performance is clearly outlined, most employees will keep it mind, and if they don't seek this level of performance, are inspired to perform well above standard. Busy supervisors sometimes step in too late, whereas acting early would save them enormous stress. Late intervention may find that the relationship with the employee has deteriorated, and this further compounds the difficulty of correcting performance.

*Q. I have an open-door policy. I let my employees know they can come to me at any time to share concerns or problems. I rarely get visitors; so, this is a sign everything is going well, correct?*

A. Well, maybe. An open-door policy encouraging workers to visit and discuss issues and concerns requires more than simply a door swung open. You must also have a psychologically safe workplace. A psychologically safe workplace naturally encourages employees to stick their necks out, approach you, and take advantage of what you are offering. They do so because they are confident they will not be rejected or punished for admitting a mistake, bringing a complaint, asking a question, or offering a new idea. Help employees feel respected, accepted, and comfortable at all times. Model this to others. The bottom line is: How you interact with employees outside your office will determine whether they will walk through your open door later.

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