

Workers can get help for problems

Continued from Page 1

expected of an employee. These standards help later on to evaluate the EAP as well as employee's progress, Comstock said.

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS can also serve as a method of determining declining job performance, often an indication of an employee problem, she said.

"EAP's cannot be superimposed unless there are some standards," Comstock said.

Also important for company officials to remember, Comstock said, is that even with an EAP in place, a troubled employee who, for example, has a high absenteeism rate, should still be put through the company discipline procedures.

"They should follow the discipline system to try to correct the problem in conjunction with the system (EAP)," she said. "In many company's, help is offered in return for discipline. That's not appropriate. The EAP in no way should interfere with discipline policies."

In most work settings, both employees and employees become involved in a person's problems, sometimes covering up for the employee, other times attempting to help solve a problem, Comstock said.

"Their intentions are good. But they aren't effectively doing the employee any good," Comstock added.

A friend or employer can't treat the alcoholic or the drug abuser, or the person with marriage, family, financial, legal or health problems, she said.

While both employer and employees are trying to help the person or cover up the problem, true professional help is long-incoming for the troubled employee, she said. In most cases, it takes a company an average of 14 years to get the employee some help, Comstock added.

Through an EAP employees can confidentially request assistance, and there's a good chance the troubled employee can receive help before a severe problem develops.

"If we can systematically approach these problems, pick up people earlier, do a better job of intervention and great treatment earlier, there'll be less treatment and it will be less costly," Comstock said.

Under an EAP, there are three methods in which an employee can be referred for help, she said.

THE FIRST and the one that's most preferred, is for employees to refer themselves to an EAP service center for help, Comstock said.

The second is the "peer-based referral" in which a fellow employee refers

the troubled person.

The third is a disciplinary referral, usually made by an employer.

Once company officials decide they want to institute an EAP system, a set of procedures are put into effect, Comstock said. It's up to the company how extensive the EAP will be.

Although most companies in the past usually started with an alcohol and/or drug program, companies today are referring for help by the employee the service center can acknowledge the employee is seeking help but no other information is provided.

Essentially a company buys an EAP which includes what problems will be covered, how an employee can use the program, promotion, training of personnel, education and evaluation of the program.

In companies of 2,000 employees, Comstock said, setting up the program generally takes about 100 hours.

Company officials can decide what parts of the EAP package they wish to buy. Many companies, she said, don't buy the educational part of the program, for example.

Comstock, however, considers the educational and promotional parts of the program to be important and necessary to an EAP's success.

"We need to build confidentiality. It's a credibility problem," she said, adding employees need to know they can seek help in confidence without retribution

from the company.

Confidentiality is a key factor in the success of an EAP, Comstock said. Without it, employees might be too embarrassed to seek help or fear for their jobs.

That's why a company will not know of an employee's referral for help unless the employee has been referred to a service center by an employer. When referred for help by the employee the service center can acknowledge the employee is seeking help but no other information is provided.

The employee, however, must authorize the service center to inform the employer he or she is seeking help, Comstock said.

"We can acknowledge his involvement and treatment," she said. "But we like to avoid it. Confidentiality is important."

When an employer makes a referral, the employee must still adhere to the company's discipline policies, Comstock said. In no way does seeking help exempt an employee from being disciplined for tardiness, absenteeism, or whatever the job performance problem might be, she added.

"It should not be interfered with at all," Comstock said, about discipline policies.

How GM does it

By Joanne Mallazewski
staff writer

It's been 13 years since General Motors Corp. first started helping employees with alcohol abuse.

Changing with the times, the international company later included treatment for drug abuse as part of the original program. Today, GM offers employees a comprehensive Employee Assistance Program (EAP) covering a spectrum of problems that affect an employee in the workplace.

And there seems to be little doubt about the program's success.

"It's extremely successful and widely acclaimed," said John Mueller, a GM spokesman. "We're internationally talked about regarding this."

Since the establishment of a comprehensive EAP at GM, the company has witnessed a decrease in some of its employee-related costs, said Daniel Lanier Jr., who works with GM's EAP.

For example, GM employees with alcohol problems who seek help through the EAP have a 60-65-percent recovery rate, Lanier said. GM has also witnessed a 40-percent decrease in employee lost time on the job and a 60-percent decrease in job-related accidents.

Union grievances against the company have been cut in half and medical costs are down, Lanier said.

A STUDY of full-time GM employees conducted by the University of Michigan also shows that over a three-year period, GM receives an average \$3 return for every dollar it puts into the EAP, Lanier said.

Unlike the consortium-type of EAP suggested for the Farmington-area business community, GM has an individual program, administered by GM staff.

The EAP is in GM's 135 plants throughout the country and is managed through a "joint union-management team approach," Lanier said. The teams are located in each plant and are operated through the plant's medical department, he said.

A GM employee who seeks help goes to the plant's walk-in service where he or she receives an assessment of the problem. Once the employee's problem has been diagnosed, the employee is referred to local agencies and services for treatment rather than having all the needed professionals on staff, Lanier said.

Sometimes it's necessary for an employee to be off work during the treatment period, Lanier said. In those cases, the union-management team will conduct a follow-up when the employee returns to work. The team also works as a liaison between the supervisor and employee, he said.

Program eyed for employees

Continued from Page 1

"I'd say right now it's more a cost-effective thing," she said.

"The humane side is on its way out. Companies quite frankly are frustrated," Comstock continued. "The more severe the employee's problem, the more it affects their ability to do their job."

WHILE THE LARGER Fortune 500 companies can afford to have in-house EAP's, complete with staff, the smaller companies are hard pressed to follow suit, Comstock said.

But the situation isn't hopeless. An EAP can be set up according to several models within and outside of a company, she said.

One such method, called the external or consortium model, has been suggested by FAAC in the Farmington-Farmington Hills business community.

To bolster the EAP idea, Arnold and Comstock met last week with the Farmington Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors to consider establishing an EAP consortium in the community. The possibility of establishing a consortium EAP will be discussed again at the regular chamber meeting in June, Arnold said.

"Because of the numerous small businesses and industries here,

this may well be a viable option for our community," Arnold said. "A consortium can offer a cost-effective method for companies interested in implementing EAP's."

If an EAP consortium were to be established in the Farmington area, FAAC would function as a service center to the local businesses, Arnold said.

"People at the service center are qualified counselors," she said. What would happen is that employees in companies who participate in the EAP could seek help for a problem by contacting FAAC, she said.

FAAC staff would conduct the initial assessment of the employee's problem and refer the employee to local outside agencies for actual treatment and help, Arnold said.

Outside agencies include drug and alcohol treatment centers, psychologists, marriage counselors, financial and legal counselors and physicians, Arnold said.

The plus for starting with the service center, Arnold said, is that the trained counselors can seek professional help for an employee. This is instead of an employee taking a chance of determining the problem and seeking his or her own treatment.



CANVAS SCROLL

MAKE A NEEDLEPOINT BAG...BOLD, SOPHISTICATED

A beautiful hand-painted canvas of vibrant colors...in an exquisite scroll design...make this needlepoint bag a truly ornamental work of stitchery and a fashion accessory of interest. Matching laminated handle coordinates with needlework pattern, style and color scheme of bag. Size 13x13". \$112. Price does not include wool or other fibers. Other styles also available.

Jacobson's
Birmingham

We welcome Jacobson's Charge Card or The American Express® Card.

Shop until 9 p.m. on Thursday and Friday
Until 6 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday.

PEPSI SPECIALS

BASELINE DISCOUNT DRUGS, INC.
33479 8 Mile Rd. • Livonia
• Package Liquor..... **474-2700**

GODMAR REXAL PHARMACY
23665 Farmington Rd. • Farmington
• Package Liquor..... **474-3123**

8 PK. \$199 + DEP.
NO LIMIT

THE VIDEO CONNECTION
We Make Video Simple!

THIS WEEK'S SPECIAL

GE5002X
\$349.99

FREE HEADCLENED
FREE MOVIE OF THE MONTH FOR 12 MONTHS
FREE BLANK TAPES
FREE DUST COVER

THE VIDEO CONNECTION
25899 Middlebelt Road
Farmington Hills in the Cranham Square Mall
M-F 10:30-6 p.m., Sat. 10:30-6 p.m., Open Sun. 12-4
474-5020

Perry's Clock Shop
OF FARMINGTON
20 YEARS EXPERIENCE

Antique & New Clocks
Expert Clock, Watch & Jewelry Repair

Remember Mom with a music box. We carry a large variety of musical ornaments and jewel boxes, including ivory, etched, and lacquered boxes. Also, some novelty musical dust pans and beer cans.

3335 Grand River at Farmington Rd.
VILLAGE MALL • 478-6108
PARKING IN THE REAR LOT

HOURS:
Mon.-Sat. 10-5:30

PROCESSING SPECIALS
print film 135, 110, 126 or disc.

38 Exp.....\$6.49
24 Exp.....\$5.99
20 Exp.....\$4.99
15 Disc Exp.....\$4.99
12 Exp.....\$3.99

EXTRA SET OF PRINTS AT 1/2 PRICE
PROCESSING 10¢ ea.
• REPRINT SPECIAL 20¢ ea.
• Sell from 15¢ and only 9¢ ea.
• Present coupon with film.
• Next Day Service
Not valid with other offers.
Expires 5-15-85

Action
22250 W. EIGHT MILE • FARMINGTON HILLS
• Between Orchard Lake Rd. & Farmington Rd.

See us and save \$5.00 on the bigger look of personal poster prints from Kodak.

Your favorite 35 mm color photos will look great in a gorgeous 20" x 30" personal poster print from Kodak's own lab. Just bring us your 35 mm color negatives or slides. Offer good April 15-May 15, 1985. See us today for details.

Reg. \$17.95 Special \$12.95

KIS PHOTO
1 HOUR LABS
Open Mon.-Fri. 9-4, Sat. 9-4
477-5300

TENT & CANOE SALE

TENTS - Diamond Brand - Northface - Marmot
Wairus - Sierra West - Eureka

CANOES - Mad River - Sawyer - Perception
Aquaterra - New Wave - Hydra

Save 20-40%

Sale Fri., Sat. & Sun. - April 26, 27 & 28
Michigan's Largest Selection of Tents and Canoes
OVER 50 MODELS OF TENTS ON DISPLAY

Benchmark
32715 GRAND RIVER, FARMINGTON
Between Farmington Rd. & Orchard Lake
477-8118
Open Noon-9 pm M-F • 10-5 pm Sat. • Noon-5 pm Sun.

Slice into pizza! pizza!

At Little Caesars® when you buy one of our cheesy, delicious 100% natural pizzas, you get another one to slice into, free. We call that **pizzapizza!** What a great way to save money.

LITTLE CAESARS SPECIAL \$9.75 plus tax
A medium special Pizza! Pizza! with pepperoni, ham, mushrooms, green pepper and onions.

No substitutions, offer valid with coupon at participating Little Caesars® U.S. restaurants.
One coupon per customer. Not valid with other offers.

FARMINGTON
3105 Grand River/Dixie
476-7025

NORTHVILLE
41117 Mile Rd.
549-0156

FARMINGTON HILLS
11400 Middlebelt
477-7500

33200 11 Mile at Farmington Rd.
478-2424

Northwest/4 Mile
851-2212

WESTLAND
8291 Northline Rd. at Ann Arbor Trail
423-1450

Cherry Hill/7 Mile
723-0799

37951 Warm Ave. at Veeney
421-4100

LIVONIA
Nashville & E. 6 Mile
422-8200

5 Mile/Lenox
464-6000

30606 W. 7 Mile W. of Farmington
476-4435

Expires 5/4/85

Little Caesars Pizza