

Your Employee Assistance Program is a support service that can help you take the first step toward change.

Getting the Support You Need to Do a Good Job at Work

Today's workplace is an intricate network of people who are all interdependent to some degree. Very few achievements or failures are solo affairs. Even when one individual is producing the work, the efforts of those around them often play a significant role in the final outcome.

If you are to do a good job, support from within your company is critical. Practical support is required in the form of budgets, staffing, realistic timelines and administrative assistance. Emotional support from both co-workers and superiors is also important. Let's look at some of the ways to ensure you receive the support that you need.

Tips and Tools You Can Use

Remember that support can and should go both ways. The more support you give to superiors and co-workers, the more you will receive when you need it. Here are some great tips to keep in mind:

Why People Give Support

Colleagues and supervisors alike are more motivated to provide support when they feel it is in their best interest. Keep the following in mind:

- Supervisors support employees they believe in. This means knowing the employee and recognizing their talents.
- Supervisors are more inclined to support employees who are themselves supportive and committed to the company's success. If a project is helping to move the organization forward, supervisors will be more likely to want to lend a hand.
- Co-workers support people whom they respect.
- They support co-workers who themselves give support to others.
- Support is more likely to be forthcoming when people know that their efforts will be acknowledged and appreciated.
- People are more likely to support superiors who take the time to get to know them and communicate that their contribution is valued.

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Getting Support from Above

It's been said before but it can't be said enough—networking is critical. People have to be aware of you before they can support you. No one mentors employees whom they don't know. Here are some tips towards gaining the support of superiors:

- Work to gain the trust of your superiors. Deliver on assignments, keep communication open and display a positive, committed attitude to the company.
- Support your supervisor. Make it clear that you are prepared to help out if problems arise with other projects. Your supervisor isn't a mind reader though. Be honest about what works for you and what doesn't. Keep communication open.
- When practical support is required for an initiative, prepare a proposal that clearly shows the benefits to the company and the support that will be required in terms of budget, staffing etc.
- Provide frequent progress reports. This assures supervisors that their support is well placed. Don't suffer in silence though. They also need to trust that you will report when problems arise. They can't help if they don't know that it’s needed.

Getting Support from Colleagues

Don’t forget the vast pool of knowledge and experience you have to draw from in your co-workers. Their support can be invaluable. Here are some ideas to help gain positive support from colleagues:

Gaining the ongoing support of those around you can often mean the difference between the success or failure of a project. Not only that, it can even mean the difference between your own success or failure in the workplace. Start with this advice and work on becoming the kind of worker that colleagues and supervisors alike will take notice of and enjoy supporting.

- Be clear about what support is required. Give clear directions and expectations.
- Help people to understand how their support will contribute to the final success.
- Develop effective ways to request support: "Do this…now" will elicit a less positive response than "Could you help me…. "
- Show respect and genuine interest in your co-workers and take the time to get to know people in support positions. Building a relationship with the receptionist will pay off when an urgent courier is required.
- Be generous with thanks when people support you and acknowledge their support to others. Making people feel good about themselves and the work they do for you will make them want to work with you again.
- Go out of your way to support colleagues when they are overloaded.
- If conflicts do arise, be sure to resolve them in a calm and professional matter.