

Signs Your Boss is a Coward

By Rob Wyse

1. He has others fire employees who report directly to him. This probably is the most cowardly act of a cowardly boss. I've seen this first hand, and probably so have you. If your boss does this, he likes having the authority of his position, but not the responsibility. And, he does not deserve you.

2. He will make a decision in private, and then fail to protect his people in public if it does not work. This is the classic behavior of someone who lacks confidence and is afraid of making mistakes. And, this is someone you cannot trust.

3. He tells each person in private what the person "wants to hear," which means he's delivering different messages to each. This is referred to as "divide and conquer." Rather than having a consistent message and leading by

example, he tries to control everyone around him. And, he is a truly terrible leader.

4. He will not have face-to-face meetings to resolve conflicts. This behavior goes hand in hand with delivering different messages to each person. If he gets everyone in the same room to resolve differences, or expose and deal with problems, he can't divide and conquer. And, he has blown his cover.

5. He slips in a negative comment about one of your colleagues in every conversation. You may think he's complimenting you by confiding in you. But you can bet he does the same when speaking about you. And, he is a jerk.

6. He really never says anything personal about himself. He does not make personal connections with people, putting himself above all else – even the company.

He is someone who doesn't really want you to get to know him. And, if you think about it, why would you want to?

Summary

In my decades as a communications consultant, I have worked directly with, and observed, hundreds of people who are bosses. The best are genuine, expose their own weaknesses, deal with controversy directly, and do not sweep issues under the rug so they become larger problems.

The worst are cowards – and the way they go about trying to hide their insecurities have just the opposite effect. You can see their fear a mile away.

The question is: Do you have the strength to leave that cowardly boss and find a new one who is a true leader? ■

Rob Wyse is a communications advisor, strategist and writer for Global Executives.

Quick Ideas

Stress or Anxiety Overload?

Some degree of anxiety and stress on the job is normal, but when it becomes excessive, employees start operating on a "fight or flight" instinct rather than thinking clearly and rationally.

Are the employees of any of your corporate clients experiencing anxiety overload? Consider the following questions:

❖ Are feuding, backstabbing, and turf wars a way of life?

❖ Are particular individuals or departments blamed for organizational problems?

❖ Is there a problem with employee turnover? Are people constantly quitting due to job stress or dissatisfaction with the organization?

❖ When conflicts and problems arise, are people told to show more "team spirit"?

❖ Is "improved communication" considered the solution to all

problems and conflicts rather than making sound decisions based on solid principles?

❖ Do people avoid conflict by avoiding each other altogether?

If the answer to most of these questions was an emphatic, "Yes," the level of anxiety is likely too high – for employees or the company. ■

Source: "The Anxious Organization, 2nd Edition," by Jeffrey A. Miller.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE REPORT

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Volume 17, No. 10
October 2014

State of EAPs and EAPA



Employee Assistance Report (EAR) had the opportunity recently to interview Lucy Henry, LPC, CEAP, Vice President of Stakeholder Relations with First Sun EAP in Columbia, S.C. and President Elect of the Employee Assistance Professionals Association (EAPA). Lucy discussed important issues affecting employee assistance professionals and EAPA initiatives. The following is an edited summary of that conversation.

EAR: Some EA professionals believe that too many EAPs are trying to be too many things to too many people and are losing their identity in the process. Would you agree this is a problem, and if so what might be some solutions to this quandary?

LH: The field of employee assistance has evolved over the years,

and many EAPs are currently offering more than the original core technology. In saying that, I think that added services such as wellness, legal, financial, work/life, coaching and the partnerships with these vendors augment the value of employee assistance. The goal of any EAP should be to enhance and maintain the productivity and healthy functioning of the workplace. By offering a variety of services it is a means to an end.

On the other hand, I do believe that some EAPs have gotten away from the core component of workplace consultation with business leaders. Most EAPs still offer this service, but the question remains as to how they are consulting with management and helping the employees be more productive: Are the managers being trained to recognize the signs of a "troubled

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If You're Planning on Going...

What: 2014 World EAP Conference
Where: Orlando, FL
When: Sept. 29 - Oct. 2

Keynote speakers:

- Wolfgang Seidl
- David Mineta
- Neal McCord

For more information:
Debbie Mori
(703) 387-1000, ext. 310, or visit www.eapassn.org. ■

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employee” and do they really know how to consult with an employee assistance professional to learn how to best confront the employee and make a referral to the EAP?

I think one goal of all EAPs should be to provide basic management training skills to their customers and in so doing teach them how to best utilize their EAP to provide help to their workers so they can be successful in the workplace. Another component is to make sure that managers are aware of the ancillary offerings of their EAP and the ways these services can help improve an employee’s job productivity.

EAR: *Is the EAP profession overlooking some areas in which it can make itself indispensable to corporate clients and other organizations? If so what might some of these areas be?*

LH: There are a number of areas where EAPs need to focus to be indispensable to work organizations. The first is in the area of behavioral risk management. EAPs need to be aligning themselves with labor and employment attorneys who recognize that making an early referral to an EAP will mitigate risk. An employee who is distracted at work may create quality, safety, behavioral and legal problems for the workplace. Involving the EAP and promoting risk management to the workplace means the organization may not have to face the increased liability that comes from an employee who is preoccupied with life management issues.

EAPs also need to form partnerships with insurance broker agencies and individual agents. In this day and age of bundling benefits, EAPs are often thrown in but not understood.

We as EA professionals have a responsibility to educate brokers and agents about how the EAP can work with the organization to reduce liability and healthcare costs. The agents need to understand that it is core technology that drives quality EAPs and in the end it saves companies money, regardless of whether it is from turnover, disability or workers’ compensation. EAP involves more than just counseling sessions and its purpose in an organization should be workplace driven.

EAR: *What do you see as the impact of the recent mental health parity legislation on the EAP field? Similarly what about the effect of the Affordable Care Act (ACA)? And are these laws interrelated?*

LH: Parity brought improved coverage for behavioral health for existing and new plans. ACA enables more people to gain coverage for all health services. Both bring attention to the fact that mental and behavioral health merit attention and enhance the resources that our employee and family clients have beyond EAP. For our employer clients, it has brought more complexity into the benefits arena, some of which we can help them sort through.

Additionally, in December 2013 the Department of Labor (DOL) invited individuals and groups to respond to proposed legislation regarding the definition under which EAPs would be excepted benefits. EAPA along with many other EA groups and individuals responded to this call for comments. This was a time for many different EA groups to come together and collaborate on EAP and the separation of EA from healthcare. Mental health parity and ACA will continue to impact

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE REPORT

Editor - Mike Jacquart
 Publisher - Scott Kolpien
 Designer - Laura J. Miller
 Circulation - Kim Bartel

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EAPs and this is the time for us to focus on our roots of workplace services and consultation to HR and management. We are in a good place to help work organizations navigate the confusing waters that lie ahead.

EAR: *Could you briefly discuss the current state of EAPA? What have been a few successes this past year that EA professionals should*

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Millennial-friendly Wellness – Part II

Millennials, those born between 1980 and 1995, want to help manage their own health, according to Dr. Carmella Sebastian, an expert in workplace wellness.

Last month “Dr. Carm” shared four recommendations to include as either your company or a corporate client develops a workplace wellness program. The remainder is presented below in the conclusion of this article:

❖ **Go for the low-hanging fruit.** As you begin to look at the data, a picture of your company’s wellness challenges will start to form. Your biggest problems will stand out. For instance, maybe 25% of your employees smoke, or there’s a high rate of obesity in your workforce. These numbers might actually be the easiest to move, so focus on the issues they represent first.

“At one company I worked with, smoking numbers were very high, and the rate of bronchitis and lung cancers were also higher than average,” recalls Dr. Carm. “So, there was no more smoking in front of the building or on any company property. This was a good strategy because studies have shown that going smoke-free can decrease smoking rates in a company by 6%. People who are smoking socially or for stress relief won’t put up with the hassle of having to walk off the property or giving up their lunch hour to find a

suitable place to light up. We had 10 people quit smoking in the first month!”

❖ **Don’t be afraid to ask for freebies.** Paying for a wellness program can be costly, but not if you know where to go for discounted services and freebies. First, make sure that you are getting all the help you possibly can from your health insurance carrier. It is in their best interest to keep your employees healthy and you happy, and that means low claim costs.

At the very least, your insurer should be able to provide a health risk assessment, and beyond that, most will cover the cost of having a health fair with biometrics. The labs can run through the medical claims so that should not be an extra charge.

“If your insurer isn’t willing to help with a health fair, or if you are a small employer, health risk assessments are available free of charge online — and you can colate the information yourself,” points out Dr. Carm.

❖ **Be sure to offer incentives.** It’s important to start your workplace wellness program slowly and to reward employees for participating. You want people to understand that this is not a heavy-handed company and that your first priority is their health. So to start, Dr. Carm simply recommends making participation in the program your goal. Be sure to communicate that personal

information will be kept in the strictest confidence no matter the size of your company. As employees get used to the program, you can move to outcomes as a barometer of success. And in the meantime, offer incentivizes early and often! And remember, Millennials cite tangible benefits as a big motivator.

“The good news is, incentives don’t have to break the bank,” she assures. “You can get employees to participate in a walking program for as little as the cost of a pedometer and a water bottle. A T-shirt can also be a great motivator. And nothing beats a plum parking space for a month to get someone thinking about good health habits!”

❖ **Celebrate your successes.** As your workplace wellness program advances, transparency is important. Your employees need to know about setbacks and challenges, certainly...and they definitely need to celebrate successes! Whenever your organization focuses on and eventually reaches a goal, make a big deal about the achievement in order to maintain and increase morale.

“Take every opportunity to share participation numbers, statistics on progress, or best of all, human interest stories,” advises Dr. Carm. ■

Additional source: HR and Employment Law News.

Employee Assistance Report is published monthly. For subscription information contact: Employee Assistance Report, P.O. Box 322, Waupaca, WI 54981. This publication is designed to provide accurate and authoritative information in regard to the subject matter covered. It is sold with the understanding that the publisher is not engaged in rendering legal, accounting, or other professional services. If legal advice or other expert assistance is required, the services of a competent professional should be sought. (From a Declaration of Principles jointly adopted by a committee of the American Bar Association and a Committee of Publishers.) *Employee Assistance Report* does not necessarily endorse any products or services mentioned. No part of this newsletter may be reproduced in any form or by any means without written permission from the publisher, except for the inclusion of brief quotations in a review which must credit *Employee Assistance Report* as the source, and include the publisher’s phone number, address, and subscription rate.

VA Structure and Benefits

EAPs have an opportunity to play an important role in the support of our nation's veterans. A key aspect of support will often be referral for information and services regarding the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA; www.va.gov).

It's helpful to know that the VA consists of three different administrations:

1) The **Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA;** benefits.va.gov/benefits) oversees compensation, education, home loan guaranty, and many other benefits;

2) The **Veterans Health Administration (VHA;** www.va.gov/health) provides physical and mental health care services at over 1700 sites, including VA Medical Centers (hospitals), ambulatory care clinics, and community-based outpatient clinics and

3) The **National Cemetery Administration (NCA;** www.cem.va.gov) provides national and state Veterans cemeteries and offers burial benefits, headstones, markers, and Presidential

Memorial Certificates for those who qualify.

EAPs can get an overview of benefits and services at www.va.gov/opa/newtova.asp and www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-21-0760-ARE.pdf.

Additional information for EAPs can be found in the **Veterans Employment Toolkit** www.va.gov/vetsinworkplace and the **VA Community Provider Toolkit** www.mentalhealth.va.gov/communityproviders. ■

Clinical Perspective

Dual Diagnosis: Underserved & Underrepresented

Mental health treatment has greatly improved over the past century. It has moved away from exiling patients to mental "hospitals" and instead offers inpatient, outpatient, partial hospitalization, individual therapy, group therapy and several other options.

There is, however, one specific mental health population that remains underserved and underrepresented time—the *mental health population with co-occurring substance use addictions*. Substance use and abuse is on the rise all over the country. Why is it then that these individuals with a commonly co-occurring disorder are so infrequently treated by mental health professionals outside of the drug and alcohol community?

I believe that mental health disorders are often the root cause for addiction. Oftentimes, in my opinion, mental health disorders are pushed aside when an addiction or substance use/abuse disorder comes to light. We often ignore what I consider the main cause for an addiction in these cases and attempt to approach the substance use/abuse disorder as the sole issue. I believe that by treating an addiction without assessing the full needs of the client and diminishing his or her mental health treatment, we are only covering the wound with a bandage. Instead, we need to get to the root of the problem.

Yes, addiction is an issue that needs to be dealt with appropriately.

However, by diminishing the client's other issues, we may be dealing with an issue (addiction) that will simply return once treatment has ceased. An Australian study by Wenbin Liang, Tanya Chikritzhs and Simon Lenton in 2011 points out that treatment of mental health disorders and substance use disorders has poor outcomes in cases in which one of the disorders is not diagnosed.

If we focused on the other co-occurring issue as well as the substance use issue, I believe we would see a dramatic rise in success rates for these individuals. ■

Source: Collin Nordby, "Counseling Today," a publication of the American Counseling Association.

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be aware of? What are some goals or other challenges that lie ahead for the organization?

LH: EAPA is in a good position going into the end of this year. Last year's conference in Phoenix was a huge success and attendees loved the venue. This year's Orlando location will allow members to bring their families and enjoy time at some of the Disney parks.

The implementation of the Employee Assistance Specialist Clinical Certificate has met with overwhelming satisfaction and many EA affiliate providers are being trained in the foundations of providing EA work and wearing an EA hat versus a clinical hat.

I would like to see all EAP networks requiring this training of their affiliate providers and encouraging many of those providers to go on and get their CEAP. EAPA continues to work closely with the different international EAP groups.

There has been an EAPA presence at the Employee Assistance European Forum (EAEF), the Asia Pacific Employee Assistance Roundtable (APEAR) and the China Employee Assistance Professionals Association (CEAPA) conferences this year. China is working with EAPA to take over the diploma training that EAPA has provided over the past ten years.

I believe EAPA is in a good position to continue to develop internationally as EAP is growing in many countries, and we have the tools to help encourage and maintain this growth with our international partners.

I also think we are at a good position to begin making changes domestically. The field of EA has changed through the years. Some have opposed these changes, but



Editor's Notebook

I wish to thank Lucy Henry for her time in providing some thoughtful

answers and insights for this month's cover article.

While I understand that travel expenses can be tough to swing in today's budget-strapped economic climate, I hope that any readers "on the bubble" about attending the upcoming World EAP Conference will consider going. I have found the events extremely informative overall as well as useful in networking with contributors for articles for both *Employee Assistance Report (EAR)* and the *Journal of Employee Assistance*, which I also edit for EAPA.

While there's never anything quite like being there in person, for *EAR* readers who aren't

planning on going to Orlando, we hope Lucy's article offers useful information about what's going on in both EAPA and in the EAP field.

Much has been written in this newsletter about bridging the generation gap between the retiring Baby Boomers and the up-and-coming Millennials. Nowhere is that more important than how crucial it is for young professionals to have a great boss starting out! Be sure to read the "Advice for Young Professionals" article in this issue. Until next time.

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if we remain stagnant then we will fail. We have to find new ways to communicate our values and our purpose.

The EAPA board began moving away from a representational board some years ago and we are now focused on being a strategic high-functioning board with expertise to meet the needs of all members. This does not mean we are excluding any particular group but instead are trying to be *more inclusive*.

Representational boards become divisive as each board member seeks to meet the needs of its constituency. With this new board structure we *all* represent the needs of the members and we work together for the good of the Association.

EAR: What is some final advice that you have for your peers in the EAP field?

LH: As I stated, I truly believe we are on the precipice of many changes in the field. We have to look forward while also embracing our history. We have a small number of younger professionals entering the field and these individuals need support and mentoring as *we* were all mentored when we started out. I challenge each person to find a young person and be that mentor. Teach them your passion and help them to pass it on.

We also need to embrace the changes that technology brings and allow it to help us reach our customers. Technology is not something to be afraid of and in the long run it can prove to be very beneficial. ■

Advice for Young Professionals – Part I

By Josh Bersin

During the first 5-10 years of your working life you have a lot to learn: *How do I get things done? What will satisfy my boss? How do I compare with other people?* And so on and so on.

Early in your career this is all very stressful. Of course you want to succeed – but a young person starting out isn't always sure *how*. My advice is to be yourself. But in the meantime, success often comes down to having a great boss.

I've had a bunch of "bosses" but my very first one was by far the best. He was an old-fashioned IBM manager who played golf, shmoozed with clients, and was generally a formal but very nice guy. His name was Bob, and here is what he did.

❖ **He always listened and always had time for me.** It didn't matter how busy he was, Bob would always stop what he was

doing when I walked in his office. Somehow he knew that when I took the time to come in, it was worth his time to listen.

❖ **He rarely gave criticism but always helped.** His philosophy was to give great advice, help us succeed, and always work as a team. I looked up to him and always "copied" what he did to make myself better. The few times he gave me specific advice, I really listened.

❖ **He would take an arrow for the team.** In those days IBM was a very successful company (IBM in the 1970s and 80s was the Google of today). His job, as a sales executive, was to battle other IBM managers for our quota, territory, bonuses, and many other things. He always put us and our customer first, often being the "bad guy" and pushing management to make changes we needed. I remember walking into his office one day and I could see he was

really exhausted and dejected. Many in the organization considered him a bit of a "pain in the rear" because he pushed so hard. I knew he was arguing with management to do what was right for us and our customer, and I never forgot that vision of him sweating away worrying about what he needed to accomplish for us.

❖ **He always put customers first.** Bob was best friends with all our customer executives and they adored him. He would always push us to get out of the office and meet with people before we made any decisions about anything. That "customer first" culture I learned at IBM made me successful in every job I had over the last 35 years. ■

NEXT MONTH: More tips are presented.

Josh Bersin is the founder and Principal of Bersin by Deloitte, Deloitte Consulting LLP (home.bersin.com), a leading research and advisory firm.

Resources

📖 **Dealing With and Eliminating Unacceptable Behavior**, \$99, PDF download, PBP Executive Reports, (800) 220-5000, www.pbpexecutive-reports.com. It's often the same group of difficult employees with the same problems that pose the most difficulties for managers. This report describes proven strategies for resolving these issues. ■

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EEOC May Require Changes to Wellness Incentives

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has revealed some potentially disturbing developments for those with company sponsored wellness programs. The agenda revealed that the EEOC intends to issue two proposed rules in the coming months. *How do the ADA and wellness incentives/penalties mix?*

The first rule, referred to as "Amendments to Regulations under the Americans with Disabilities Act", was due out in the summer.

What this means: At the heart of the problem is the fact that while many employers would love to be able to offer financial incentives or penalties to drive employees to

meet certain health goals in wellness programs, setting blanket health goals isn't fair. The reason is because disabled individuals may not be able to meet those goals.

As a result, there are questions surrounding what kinds of goals are legal and how employers can safely establish alternative goals for disabled individuals. What employers don't want to see is an expansion of the ADA that would make it even more difficult to design effective wellness programs, penalties and incentives.

Based on the EEOC's vague description of the rulemaking process, it hard to say which form the regulations will take.

The second proposed rule is entitled "Amendments to

Regulations under the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008."

What this means: This one seems to indicate the EEOC simply wants to clear the air about the kinds of questions employers can ask in health risk assessments that have financial incentives tied to them.

The hope, at least among employers with wellness programs, is the EEOC will allow them to continue to offer financial incentives to encourage employees and their family members to take such assessments — but again, you never know where the feds' heads are at. ■

Additional source: HR Morning (http://www.hrmorning.com/wellness-incentives-fixed-firmly-in-eecocs-crosshairs-2-rules-to-watch/).

Medical Pot Covered by Workers' Comp

The New Mexico Court of Appeals recently ruled that an employer must pay for an injured worker's medical marijuana. This appears to be the nation's first appellate court ruling in a workers' compensation case in which an employer has been ordered to pay for medical marijuana prescribed by an employee's healthcare provider to treat a workplace injury, according to HR.BLR.com.

Upon obtaining certification for the New Mexico medical marijuana program, George Vialpando

applied for approval from a workers' compensation judge to have the marijuana paid for by his former employer. Vialpando injured his back in a workplace accident in 2000 while he was employed by Ben's Automotive Services in Santa Fe. For years, he was unable to find pain relief through conventional drugs and treatment.

The workers' compensation judge approved the application, found the requested treatment was "reasonable and necessary," and ordered Ben's Automotive to pay

for the marijuana. The company appealed to the New Mexico Court of Appeals.

Ben's Automotive argued that requiring it to reimburse Vialpando for the cost of his medical marijuana meant it was essentially being required to violate federal drug laws. However, the appeals court found no direct conflict between federal law and the Compassionate Use Act. It further noted that Ben's Automotive failed to cite any specific federal law it was being forced to violate. ■