

# EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE REPORT

supporting EAP professionals

## The Fully Leveraged EAP – Part II

By Jeffrey Christie & Michelle Spearing

Part one of this two-part article discussed how definitions of EAP generally describe the client organization, whose employees receive EAP benefits, as a *singular* entity. This article strives to provide a different approach, one that emphasizes:

- ❖ Viewing the client organization not in the singular, but as a network of organizational functions, each with its own mission, goals, and objectives;

- ❖ Determining the ways that EAP can support each of these functions; and

- ❖ Delivering, communicating, and evaluating EA services based upon its ability to support each of the functions of the organization.

Of critical note, this concept should NOT be construed as intending to replace EAP's role of assisting individuals. Rather, it is an *and* concept, not an *instead of* concept. As EA professionals have learned, the better an EAP can provide its value in assisting organizational goals, the more likely it is to be retained, and in turn serve *individual* employees and their families.

In most organizations, the following functions typically exist, each with its own mission statement and objectives. They are:

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*“The value of an EAP can be measured in terms of the breadth (variety of roles) and depth (e.g. ability to set policy) it provides to an organization. Its breadth can be evaluated by examining the plurality of the internal organizational functions that it supports.”*

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- Human Resources;
- Legal;
- Health, Safety & Environment;
- Corporate Security;
- Community Relations; and
- Operations.

In examining these functions, it is not difficult to recognize how a well-integrated EAP – or *fully leveraged EAP* – can assist in supporting each of these areas.

Several of these functions were examined last month; the remainder will be discussed in the conclusion of this two-part article.

- ◆ **Corporate Security** – To a large extent, Corporate Security strives to provide services related to the protection of employees and organizational assets.

*EAP Relevance* – As a natural

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extension of Corporate Security, there are many instances where a strong relationship between the two can create an important synergy. For example, EAP consults and intervenes in cases where a potential threat of violence exists to co-workers, customers, community, and even family.

**\$ Benefit to Employer: Risk management.** Risks are reduced when EAP and security professionals cooperate to utilize the synergy of their combined skills. In one example, EAP was notified by a perpetrator's co-workers that an individual repeatedly threatened to bring a gun to work and shoot everyone. Further interviews revealed that one female employee had quit after a frightful business trip with the perpetrator.

Reportedly, while he was behind the wheel, he pulled the car into the lane of oncoming traffic and dryly stated, "I could kill us anytime I want."

Corporate Security and EAP worked together to design the interview of the perpetrator. The former possessed knowledge and skills on the management of threats of violence quite distinct from that of behavioral health experts, such as the positioning of furniture, the perpetrator, and individuals within the room to ensure maximum security. Conversely, the EAP brought separate expertise on assessing the individual's mental status and potential for mental health disorders, such as an anti-social personality or psychotic disorder. Such collaboration and can be essential in designing an effective intervention. Ultimately, a resolution occurred that allowed for the return of a safe work environment for these employees.

◆ **Community Relations** – This function often focuses on the organization's relationship to community health, the environment, education, the arts, and other social causes.

**EAP Relevance** – The potential of collaboration becomes most relevant in the aftermath of natural disasters, such as hurricanes, earthquakes, and floods. An organization may wish to provide support not only to its affected employees, but to also demonstrate its role as a conscientious corporate citizen. Various forms of disaster relief assistance may be initiated with EAP serving as the entity most familiar with assessing families for need – and Community Relations acting as the public communicator of the organization's efforts.

**\$ Benefit to Employer: The value of a positive reputation.** This includes portraying a positive image both within and outside of the company.

◆ **Operations** – The term "Operations" represents departmental functions that directly produce the goods or services dispensed by the company. This is true regardless of whether we're referring to automobiles, greeting cards, or scores of other goods or services. As such, the core mission of Operations is to create a profit from those endeavors.

**EAP Relevance** – Fundamentally, all EAP activities should be examined for their contribution to the overall success of the organization, whether it's by means of employee retention, maintained health, or risk management. If an activity cannot be defended as contributing to any of these organizational goals, its continuation should be questioned.

**\$ Benefit to Employer: a healthy and productive workforce.** Regardless of the industry, there is a corporate advantage in retaining valued talent, maintaining a workforce sufficiently healthy to produce the work, and in mitigating the losses frequently created when psychological conditions increase the prospect of either human error (accidents) or destructive behavior

## EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE REPORT

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(workplace violence). While the prioritization of these goals, such as retention, may vary across industries and through changes in business cycles, it is difficult to foresee the extinction of their relevance.

### Summary

The concepts presented in this two-part article are by no means an exhaustive compilation of the potential means by which properly

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leveraged EAPs can add significant value to an organization. Of course, there is ONE underlying premise that holds true: that EAP providers seek to sell and that educated EAP purchasers seek to buy *comprehensive* EA services – and not simply view EAP as another way to fund outpatient therapy or as a database that converts employee zip codes into therapist addresses.

The value of an EAP can be measured in terms of the breadth (variety of roles) and depth (e.g. ability to set policy) it provides to an organization. Its breadth can be evaluated by examining the plurality of the internal organizational functions that it supports.

In conclusion, EAPs are multifaceted resources capable of serving not only their respective work *organizations*, but also these *organizations' functions* through a variety of services, tasks, and roles. ■

*Jeff Christie, LCSW, CEAP, is the global manager; and Michelle Spearing, MA, CEAP, is supervisor, Halliburton Employee Assistance Program, Houston, TX.*



## Editor's Notebook

While readers will receive this newsletter much sooner, in terms of our production schedule we've completed our 14<sup>th</sup> year of publishing *Employee Assistance Report*.

As a result, I want to thank the key contributors to *EAR* this year: Jeff Christie, Michelle Spearing, Jeremy Stafford, Shelley Plemons, Dave Sharar, Rik Lennox, Deb Kosmer, Dave Worster, Rodney Haring, and Sally Spencer-Thomas. Since everyone is busy in today's fast-paced society, I truly appreciate the individuals that come forward to write articles for this publication. If we are successful in terms of helping the EAP profession, it is *mainly* due to those of you who take the time to write insightful articles.

I also wish to thank the public relations agencies that take the time to review our editorial calendar and follow up with contact information for individuals interested in submitting articles. Anyone, of course, can check it out: Go to the "EARN" and then "Editorial Calendar" links at

[www.impact-publications.com](http://www.impact-publications.com). If there's something of interest, shoot me an email!

Don't forget to regularly check out our blog that we started this year at <http://impactpublishing.wordpress.com>. It's a great way to learn about timely news and other information that we receive too late for a particular newsletter. (The EARF news brief in this month's *EAR* is an excellent example of what I'm talking about.)

But what good are useful articles if a publication is difficult to read? Consequently, I wish to thank Laura Miller and Clay Miller for their excellent work in designing and laying out *EAR* and its various inserts this year. If you like how articles in *EAR* are laid out, and our use of color – then tip your hat to Laura and Clay for their time and talent.

Until next time – oops, next year, I should say.

*Mike Jacquart*

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## Quick Ideas

# It's Vital to Value Differences

The phrase "workplace diversity" means different things to different people.

Some would say it means attracting employees of various racial or ethnic backgrounds; and/or hiring traditionally underserved groups, such as people with disabilities.

Still others would say workplace diversity refers to embracing the differences of people from different generations, more of whom are working side by side in the workplace than ever before.

None of these ideas are wrong,

but Barbara Walker, a human resource development professional, developed a broader concept known as "valuing differences."

Key points of Walker's model are as follows:

- ❖ People work best when they feel valued.
- ❖ People feel most valued when they believe that their individual and group differences have been taken into account.
- ❖ The ability to learn from people regarded as "different" is the

key to becoming fully empowered.

❖ When people feel valued and empowered, they are able to build relationships in which they work interdependently and synergistically.

A corporate culture that values the differences inherent in a diversified workforce will foster an environment that promotes increased profits and productivity. ■

*Additional source: "Workplace Diversity: Valuing Differences" by Terry Giles.*

# Technology Trends You Can't Ignore – Part II

By Daniel Burrus

Technology is evolving...fast. For that reason, it's imperative that you and your company clients are focusing not just on the changes that are happening today, but also on the technological trends that are emerging and shaping the future. Last month, we looked at one of these trends in part one of this two-part article. We'll examine the others in the conclusion of this article.

## Processing Power on Demand

The increased bandwidth that our mobile devices now receive enables us to connect to cloud-based technologies easier and faster than ever before. One thing we know about bandwidth is that it will continue to increase. Because of this, we'll soon be able to take advantage of another trend that I call processing power on demand—or virtualized processing power.

In other words, a mobile device only has a certain amount of processing power. But if you can tap into additional processing power via cloud-based technology, you can turn your mobile device into a super computer where you can do advanced simulations and crunch different data streams together to get real time analytics. Now your handheld device is as powerful and advanced as your desktop. Imagine the increase in productivity if each of a company's employees had the capability to do complex work that required advanced processing power while they were on the road, armed with nothing more than their mobile device. What would that shift do to your company's bottom line?

## Creative Application of Technology

Business leaders have to consider what their workers would *do* with this technology. It's no longer enough to just deploy technology; it's necessary to ask the employees of your corporate clients what they *want* technologically. Give them what they ask for, but realize that they will *under-ask* because they don't know what's technically possible.

The key is to go to the next level and give people the ability to do what they currently can't do, but *would want to do*, if they only knew they could! After all, people really didn't ask for an iPhone or a Blackberry. The hidden need was the ability to access email and the Internet without being tied to their desktop or laptop.

Therefore, the EA professional needs to implement a communication vehicle that engages the different groups you serve in the workplace — such as sales, accounting, etc. — and help them understand the full capabilities of these tools. One suggestion is to show them a “feature of the day”

and how it can make their life easier. This will provide information in a short, fun, engaging way rather than a 100-page document detailing all the features of the gadget — which no one will read anyway!

Some software programs already have features that offer tips. Try customizing this idea to some specific employees or managers and their unique needs.

## Summary

Many business leaders will say they are too busy to address these trends. But if you don't address them, who will? Ultimately, whoever drives these trends within an organization will be perceived as a significant contributor to the enterprise — someone worth keeping...and someone with a high value in the marketplace. When that someone is *you*, you can drive results and be a key contributor to the organization's success. ■

*Daniel Burrus is considered one of the world's leading technology forecasters and business strategists, and the founder and CEO of Burrus Research For more information, visit [www.burrus.com](http://www.burrus.com).*

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## EARF Sets Grant Deadline

The Employee Assistance Research Foundation (EARF) has announced preliminary plans for its 2011 call for research grant proposals, the organization's second grant cycle. This year's proposals will focus on workplace-related outcomes of EAP. Applicants have until **November 30** to submit their brief proposals.

For a copy of the call for proposals, go to this website: <http://www.eapfoundation.org/apply-for-grants/>

There are two stages in the proposal process: the submission of a brief proposal and, for those

approved for the second stage, a full proposal that may lead to an offer of a grant award. A committee consisting of Foundation board members will review grants. (The panel includes distinguished researchers and clinicians.)

In 2010 the Foundation issued its first call for proposals, focusing on the state of the EAP field. In May 2011 the Foundation awarded one-year grants of \$40,000 to two organizations to support their research.

The Foundation will accept applications from organizations such as tax-exempt educational

institutions, agencies, or for-profit business entities (such as an LLC) that have access to an Institutional Review Board. The process is also open to applicant organizations from countries outside the U.S. or Canada engaged in EAP research.

The Employee Assistance Research Foundation was formed to stimulate innovative, rigorous, and theory-based research activities – research designed to promote excellence in the delivery of employee assistance services. ■

*Editor's note: This article was posted on our blog – <http://impactpublishing.wordpress.com> – on October 3.*

### Clinical Perspective

## Are Good-Looking People More Employable?

“Good looks” are only sometimes a positive factor in consideration for a job, according to new research from Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (BGU). In the paper, *Are Good-Looking People More Employable?* Two economics researchers from BGU prove that a double standard exists between good looks as a positive factor in men and women.

The research involved sending 5,312 CVs (résumés) in pairs to 2,656 advertised job openings in Israel. In each pair, one CV did not contain a picture while the second, otherwise almost identical CV, contained a picture of either an attractive male/female or a plain-looking male/female. The dependent measure was whether the

employer e-mails or calls back the candidate for an interview.

“Unlike Anglo-Saxon countries such as the U.S., Canada, Australia and the U.K, it isn't taboo in Israel to embed a headshot of oneself in the top corner of one's job résumé,” explains BGU researcher and lecturer Bradley Ruffle. “Rather, the choice to include a photograph on one's job résumé is left to the candidate with the result that some do, while others don't. This fact makes Israel an opportune location to explore the effect of a picture and its attractiveness, or lack thereof, on the likelihood of being invited for a job interview.”

The résumés of “attractive” males received a 19.9% response rate, nearly 50% higher than the 13.7% response rate for “plain” males and more than twice the

9.2% response rate of no-picture males. Among female candidates, no-picture females had the highest response rate, 22% higher than plain females and 30% higher than attractive females.

As a result, attractive and plain women alike are better off omitting their photograph from a résumé since it decreases their chances of a callback by 20 to 30%.

“Our findings on the penalization of attractive women contradict current literature on beauty that associates attractiveness, male and female alike, with almost every conceivable positive trait and disposition,” explain the authors. “Evidence points to female jealousy of attractive women in the workplace as a primary reason for their penalization in recruitment,” Ruffle concludes. ■

# Implementing a Sales Culture within the EAP – Part I

By Shelley Plemons

Most EAPs would acknowledge that winning business in today's economy is tougher than ever. Many are losing their strong customer base to "free" EAPs, a lack of marketing funds and trouble winning bids from brokers/consultants. In spite of it all, many EAPs have made the decision not to have a sales force or hire a dedicated person solely responsible for bringing in new revenue to the organization. Whether you have a sales force or not, building relationships with potential clients is imperative to growing your business. Selling can no longer be the function of one person or one department, *all* individual business functions need to support the company mission by embedding a sales culture within your organization.



of these questions, it's likely that sales responsibilities are not incorporated throughout the organization. The sales cycle can drag on in key functional areas – such as sales and underwriting – don't communicate to set pricing guidelines. A message that is inconsistent with the company's mission can result in promises that might not be fulfilled.

## Implement the Seven Business Functions

Without the right tools, processes, and support structure in place, sales success is likely to be intermittent and unpredictable. To make sales systematic, the sales function must be fully integrated into the organization and supported by every department and business unit. In other words, it is about creating a sales culture that permeates every layer and aspect of the business operation – from product development to customer service.

## Here are two of the seven functions

❖ **Product development:** It is important to be a trendsetter and add to your product line continuously. Before developing a new product or making enhancements to an existing one, product development needs to be in close communications with sales, account management, and customer service, to determine market needs – i.e. what customers want and most important, what they *don't* want or need.

❖ **Marketing:** As a first step, marketing works with product development to develop product

sell sheets and other collaterals that are used to support the sales process. Marketing typically coordinates activities that essentially help get the word out – public relations (via a press release), advertising, and trade shows. However, the marketing department also needs to put a marketing calendar together to ensure that every potential and existing client gets information about your organization on a routine basis. Conducting marketing campaigns is a good way to catch the attention of a particular industry or market – i.e. energy companies, financial institutions, health care, retail, etc. The goal is to inform prospects of your EA services and up sell current clients to add more services to their plan.

Next month the remaining five functions: proposals, pricing, lead generation, sales, and account management will be discussed in detail. ■

*Shelley Plemons has more than 25 years' experience in the behavioral health industry. During that time she worked for several successful companies such as Charter Medical, MHN and Life Care. She founded Strategic Sales Solutions in 2003, and assists clients with strategy and training. Her website can be found at [www.strategicsalesolutions.com](http://www.strategicsalesolutions.com).*

**Editor's note:** This story is the second in a series that will discuss business solutions for EAPs. If you have a topic you would like covered send an email to [Shelley@strategicsalesolutions.com](mailto:Shelley@strategicsalesolutions.com) or call (817) 946-5334.

## Assess Your Current Sales Culture

To determine whether you have a sales culture, answer the following questions:

- Is bringing in new business the sole responsibility of a sales person?
- Is your sales cycle too long?
- Is your sales pipeline running low?
- Is your ROI from sales low?
- Is your sales message inconsistent with your company's mission and vision?
- Is your organization – perhaps even the CEO – limited in product knowledge?

If you answered, "yes" to any

# Can YOU See the Forest for the Trees?

By Gary Foreman

Most of us have probably been inspired by a distant view – of the mountains, seashore or a forested valley. The panorama can be awesome! Sometimes that perspective can help us see things that we couldn't see up close. That's probably true of life as well – including our financial affairs. Sometimes when we're debating about making a major purchase, we "*can't see the forest for the trees.*" In other words, we can't see the whole situation clearly because we're looking too closely at small details, or because we're too closely involved in a given situation.

But if we step back and look at the forest we may notice a pattern that can be helpful in making decisions today – and it's not just the big-ticket items like cars and houses. As you contemplate that new big-screen TV or the upgraded cable/Internet package think about your history with similar items. What does the pattern look like? For some it will typically be a patient time with lots of shopping and research. Others, however, will have an almost irresistible urge to buy that item today!

If you engage in a little personal reflection, other patterns may emerge:

- ❖ Do your possessions reflect a need to have the best of everything?
- ❖ Do you own a lot of high-end merchandise?

If so, you may want to consider why your decisions have that common theme.

Of course, the flip side could be true as well. Do you notice a history of buying *less* than you need? It could be that you're confusing buying the least expensive item with frugality. It is possible to be too cheap for your own good.

## The Little Things Add Up

Remember, it isn't just the big-ticket items – don't forget the little things that, when added up, can also lead to a lot of money over time. What daily spending habits have you picked up? What do they tell you about yourself? Look for tendencies. You may often pay for convenience – or to calm a need for caffeine or sweets. Recognizing those habits could tell you a great deal about both your finances and yourself.

## Examine Emotional Reactions to Spending

By stepping back you may also notice things about your emotional reactions to money. Look for emotions that tend to commonly occur before or after a purchase. Those patterns may help you understand *why you buy*.

For instance, you might discover patterns that shed light on how you relate to others and their money. Keeping up with the Joneses could be an emotional reaction that you need to understand if you want to change your purchasing habits.

## Celebrate Success

Finally, don't just look for patterns that need to be fixed. There's a high likelihood that you'll see some areas where you typically *do well*. Celebrate those areas! Use them to encourage yourself to get better in areas that can use improvement. Hopefully each time you step back to get the scenic perspective you'll find an even prettier picture than the time before. ■

*Gary Foreman is the editor of the Dollar Stretcher website (www.stretcher.com) and various e-newsletters. The Dollar Stretcher is dedicated to helping people live better on the money they already have.*

## Resources

📖 **The Exchange: A Bold and Proven Approach to Resolving Workplace Conflict**, by Steven Dinkin, Barbara Filner, and Lisa Maxwell (CRC Press, 2011, www.ncrconline.com). The authors supply readers with proven tools for resolving emotionally charged disputes.

📖 **The Seed: Finding Purpose and Happiness in Life and Work**, by Jon Gordon (Wiley, 2011, www.jongordon.com). Since a "perfect" world of work and home balance generally does not exist, the author claims the key is to love what you do — "you'll thrive during the busy seasons and fully appreciate the down time," Gordon says.

📖 **The Benevolent Dictator: Empower Your Employees, Build Your Business, and Outwit the Competition**, by Michael Feuer (Wiley, 2011, www.benevolentdictator.biz). In a world of communication overload, Feuer (pronounced foyer) presents tips for more concise and effective communication in your organization. ■

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# Mentoring: The Gift that Keeps Giving

Having the guidance of a great mentor can help build your career and keep it on track, even in uncertain times. And mentors themselves see benefits in the relationship – half of executives surveyed by Robert Half Management Resources (RHMR) say the greatest benefit to mentoring is the satisfaction they gain from helping someone else.

Still, many *aren't* reaping the benefits of these professional relationships: as the remaining half of executives responded that they've never been mentors.

"Today's workplace poses a number of challenges that even the most talented professionals struggle to address," said Paul McDonald, senior executive director of RHMR. "Mentors provide valuable guidance on decision-making and career management that mentees may not be able to obtain from other sources."



McDonald offers four tips to get the most out of a mentoring experience:

❖ **Consider your strengths.** What are the most valuable things you've learned over the course of your career? Think about what you have to offer someone just starting out.

❖ **Don't rely on a formal program.** Many companies don't have established mentoring programs, and those that do may still

be ramping up after scaling back during the downturn. If you identify someone you think you can help, extend the offer.

❖ **Look beyond new grads.** Professionals at all levels can benefit from having a mentor. Those trying to advance to the next level or looking to make a change might particularly welcome your advice.

❖ **Listen.** The best mentors are often the best listeners. Understand your mentee's situation and his or her greatest needs before you offer guidance. Sometimes the most valuable role you can play is that of sounding board. (EAPs might even fill a niche role as mentors of sorts for a corporate client – or help start a mentoring program in the organization.) ■

*Source: Robert Half Management Resources (www.roberthalfmr.com).*

## Quick Ideas

# Change can be Liberating

Whatever it is yourself, a colleague, or the employee of a corporate client that is trying to change in the workforce, change is seldom easy. The acronym "LIBERATE" may help:

**L**ook – Determine what needs to change. Start small. What is ONE behavior or action that can be made?

**I**mportance – Consider the value of the change. Recognizing that future value will outweigh the status quo can make people more receptive to change.

**B**locks – What are the perceived barriers? Change is often difficult because of obstacles. Identify what they are and take action.

**E**liminate – Believing that obstacles are insurmountable can bring organizational change efforts to a grinding halt. Brainstorm with someone that isn't "stuck" in this mindset. Entertain all suggestions to see if any are viable.

**R**einforce – Making big changes is easier when we have support. Whether in the form of the EAP, co-worker, etc., support

can clarify what's needed and motivate employees to take action.

**A**ssess – This step could be compared to taking a car for a test drive to see what it can do.

**T**weak – Next, fine-tune your approach and try again.

**E**ngage – When you make strides toward goals, you'll become your own best agent for change. ■

*Source: Connie Butler, an author and personal and professional coach. Visit [www.conniebutler.biz](http://www.conniebutler.biz).*