

The Voice of Employee Assistance Programs

Fall 2006

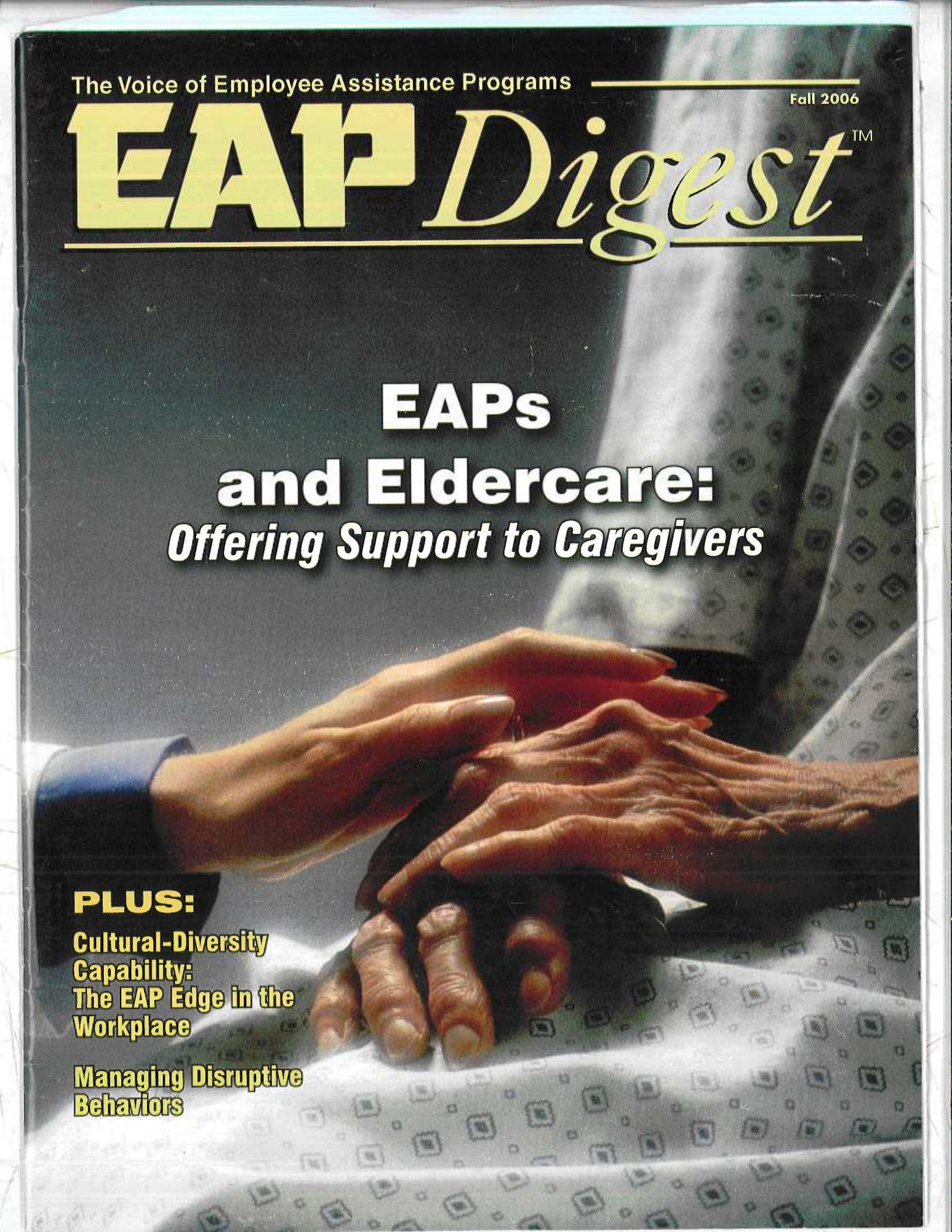
EAP *Digest*TM

EAPs and Eldercare: *Offering Support to Caregivers*

PLUS:

**Cultural-Diversity
Capability:
The EAP Edge in the
Workplace**

**Managing Disruptive
Behaviors**



Demand Grows for Older Workers

With the prospect of shortfalls in funding for Social Security and the potential for a real labor shortage when the economy expands, employment forecasters say the country can't afford to lose older workers in the years ahead.

In the '80s, it was MBAs. In the '90s, it was entrepreneurial "dot-commers." In this decade, the hottest trend to watch in employment is older workers: hiring them, keeping them and bringing them back from retirement. Why? A big part of it boils down to two words: baby boomers. As far back as 1960, the economy has benefited from strong growth of the 20-to-64 age group, historically considered the primary source of the labor force. However, starting around 2010, a demographic shift will begin, resulting in a large increase in the 65-and-over age group and a decline in the 20-to-64 age group.

Large corporations are starting to feel the pinch of millions of baby boomers leaving the workforce — and taking their valuable expertise with them. Society's view of older workers is changing, and older workers are seen as having attractive qualities. How ironic that a generation that once had to fight in the courts for age discrimination protection now has Fortune 500 companies trying to lure it back to work!

Since the time that Social Security established the "normal" retirement age at 65, life expectancy for a 65-year-old has increased by over seven years and continues to lengthen. As a result of living longer, baby boomers plan to be "younger" longer and to work longer.

Many companies are offering enticements to the boomers to keep them on the payroll, such as extra benefits and flextime.

Many people still have financial obligations they don't want to carry into retirement. Others just feel they aren't ready to retire or believe they have a lot to offer their employers. Large employers are looking for ways to prevent a wholesale departure of employees. They are becoming very creative in this area; they are making jobs more interesting and imaginative for boomers.



George T. Watkins
Publisher
EAP Digest

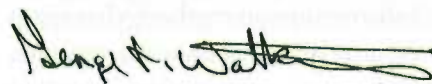
Many organizations are using paid family leave for all employees so they can keep their jobs and care for a family member or ill spouse. This issue of *EAP Digest* features an article on the urgent need for eldercare assistance in our workforce.

Some HR professionals believe that being more generous and understanding will benefit the company in the long run, with loyalty from the employees as well as curbing the problem of presenteeism in the workplace.

Flextime is another way to foster good feelings. Many companies feel it is a mistake to have people with 30 or more years of experience and knowledge retire if they want to continue working, but don't want to do it full-time. Boomers are known for their work ethic and integrity, and retaining baby boomers is good for everyone.

Other benefits that may be of interest to baby boomers include employee assistance programs, work/life services, and health coaching. These programs promote the better work/life balance desired by baby boomers. They also work to the employer's benefit, helping to lower costs by producing a healthier workforce.

The employee assistance program can help baby boomers manage stress, depression and overall mental health. The EAP can help boomers deal with and manage the feelings and challenges they come across as they age, making them happier, more confident, and more productive. ■



George T. Watkins
Publisher

Pay, Benefits Top List of Satisfaction Generators

The top drivers of employee satisfaction are pay, benefits, job security, flexibility to balance work and life, and feeling safe in the work environment, according to the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), which polled more than 600 workers.

Pay is becoming more influential, cited as a very important factor in job satisfaction by 70% of workers this year, up from 61% last year. Benefits were the No. 1 driver last year (at 63%), but fell to second place this year (at 66%).

SHRM examined 21 aspects of work environment. The factors that least influenced job satisfaction were networking, career advancement and relationship with coworkers.

Younger workers are more likely than older workers to appreciate health benefits, paid time off and the flexibility to balance work and life. Older workers attach importance to qualities of the work itself and making a meaningful contribution to society. Women are more likely than men to value health benefits, retirement benefits, job security, the chance to make a meaningful contribution to society, and feeling safe in the work environment, SHRM reports.

About 80% of workers reported overall satisfaction with their jobs this year, up from 77% last year. The most common methods businesses use to gauge employee satisfaction are exit interviews (69%), performance reviews (63%) and individual discussions (62%).

(Source: www.BenefitNews.com)

Internet Provides Prescription Drug Abusers Information on Tampering Methods

Prescription drug abusers often attempt to physically or chemically change a drug to enhance the drug's effects and to increase the speed of the onset of effects. The internet is a prime source of information on drug tampering and offers a broad sweep of information on methods that spans from vague to highly descriptive, inaccurate to accurate, and scattered to organized.

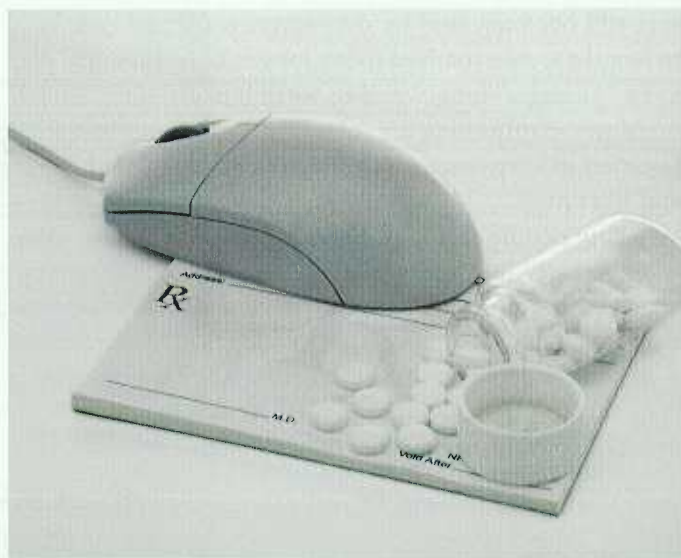
According to CESAR (Center for Substance Abuse Research) Fax, knowledge of tampering practices is not only important for the identification of prescription drug misuse, but it also offers developers of these drugs an opportunity to assess the strengths and limitations

of their products in light of how recreational-drug users may approach their products. There are numerous ways that prescription medicines can be designed to hinder tampering and thus discourage drug misuse. A pill that is very hard and therefore difficult to crush is less likely to be abused.

Making the drug insoluble in water or including wax-based bindings can hinder extraction of the active drug. Wax-based bindings that gum up when heated can also make it difficult to inject drugs.

A recent review of tampering methods reported on the Internet for selected pharmaceutical products found four main methods of tampering:

- Altering dosage forms to allow alternate routes of administration. This is most often achieved by crushing the tablets and then snorting or injecting the drug.
- Removing the active drug from high-dose formulations, such as patches. For example, methods of removal of fentanyl from patches include squeezing the fentanyl gel out of the patch, removal with a syringe, and extraction with various solvents.
- Separating narcotic drugs (codeine, hydrocodone, oxycodone) from undesirable drugs (aspirin, acetaminophen, ibuprofen) or inactive ingredients. The techniques most often discussed involve water- or acid-based extraction.
- Overcoming time-release formulations. Many prescription drugs use beads or layers to enable time-release of the drugs. Techniques for overcoming these barriers, such as crushing the beads or separating the layers, are frequently discussed on the internet.



Aging Baby-Boom Generation May Result in Increased Number of Older Adults Using Drugs

The number of older adults using drugs will increase dramatically as the baby-boom generation ages, according to an analysis of data from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health. The number of adults ages 50 and older using illicit drugs in the past year is projected to increase from 1.6 million in 1999–2001 to 3.5 million in 2020. Even larger increases are projected for past-year marijuana use and the nonmedical use of prescription psychotherapeutics (i.e., analgesics, tranquilizers, stimulants, or sedatives).

The projected increases are due to “an anticipated 52% increase in population in that age group and a projected increase in the rate of past-year use as more persons from younger higher-drug-using cohorts reach the age of 50 years.”

According to the authors, these findings suggest a “need for improved knowledge of the biomedical and psychosocial effects of nonmedical drug use on aging and elderly individuals.”

A Weighty (And Costly) Issue

The obesity problem is no secret. Restaurant portions are immense, and dual-income families have little time to prepare healthy meals. Communities are set up to encourage driving rather than walking. But now, says Thomas B. Gilliam, PhD, the fruits of this modern lifestyle are hitting us where it really hurts — in the profit sheets of our corporations.

“Many people don’t realize the drastic impact that obesity has on the workplace,” says Gilliam, creator of the new Move It. Lose It. Live Healthy.® employee wellness program and co-author (with Jane Neill, RD, LD) of *Move It. Lose It. Live Healthy.: Achieve a Healthier Workplace One Employee at a Time!* (T. Gilliam & Associates, LLC, 2005, ISBN: 0-9762703-0-7, \$19.95). “It’s a tough problem and one that’s going to get only worse. Recent analysis conducted by Industrial Physical Capability Services indicates that new hire applicants under the age of 40 show a greater prevalence of obesity than those older than 40. We are on the verge of an obesity epidemic that could wreak havoc on our corporations if we don’t get a handle on it soon.”

Gilliam has written a white paper on the need for organizations to adopt corporate weight-loss incentive programs. You can view or receive a copy of *Solving a Weighty Problem: Companies Can Combat the Rising Costs of Obesity*

in the Workplace by logging on to www.healthybodyweight.com or by calling 1-877-316-5097.

The bottom line? A long-term wellness program — one that reaches out not only to employees but also to their spouses, children, and friends — may be the answer for companies struggling with obesity issues.



HR Says Relationships With Supervisors Are Key for Employee Satisfaction

Seventy percent of employees reported that compensation is the most important factor in job satisfaction, overtaking benefits. Eight out of ten employees are satisfied with their current jobs and say benefits, job security, work/life balance, and workplace safety round out the top five most important factors, according to the Society for Human Resource Management’s (SHRM) latest Job Satisfaction Survey.

“It should come as no surprise that employees are more concerned about their compensation,” said Susan R. Meisinger, SPHR, president and CEO of SHRM. “With the rising costs of health care premiums and prescription drugs, employees know they need to put more of their money toward covering health care and retirement.”

Whereas compensation and benefits are the driving forces behind employee satisfaction, HR professionals have consistently rated the relationship with immediate supervisors and recognition for performance as more important to employees. This may be because when employees decide to leave an organization, they frequently cite poor relationships with supervisors as the reason. However, this factor does not necessarily translate to positive relationships fostering satisfaction for employees.

Compensation alone is not enough to differentiate a company as an employer of choice. As the labor market tightens, HR professionals may need to increase communication about the rewards of positive work environments, strong corporate culture, and appreciation for good performance.

In addition, work/life balance benefits may have helped make many organizations employers of choice among certain groups of workers. ■

Workplace Options Moves Into the European Work-Life Arena

Accor Services and Workplace Options announced that Employee Advisory Resource (EAR), one of the UK's leading providers of employee assistance programmes (EAP) and work-life services, will join forces with Workplace Options (WPO), the largest provider of work-life employee benefits in the United States and a current partner of Accor Services.

This strategic partnership will allow EAR's growing portfolio of global clients to quickly and effectively extend coverage of their employee benefits outside the UK. It will allow WPO's EAP clients to expand their work-life services internationally and will provide them with access to an extensive network of behavioral health providers throughout Europe. These combined forces will now be able to share ideas and investments, in order to bring innovative new products to the two most dynamic marketplaces for work-life and employee support services.

The partnership reinforces Accor Services' global EAP/work-life strategy, which seeks to leverage shared quality/service standards and technology platforms with a strong local presence. Accor Services currently has EAP/work-life subsidiaries in the UK, the US, Australia and France. In addition, its rapidly-expanding international

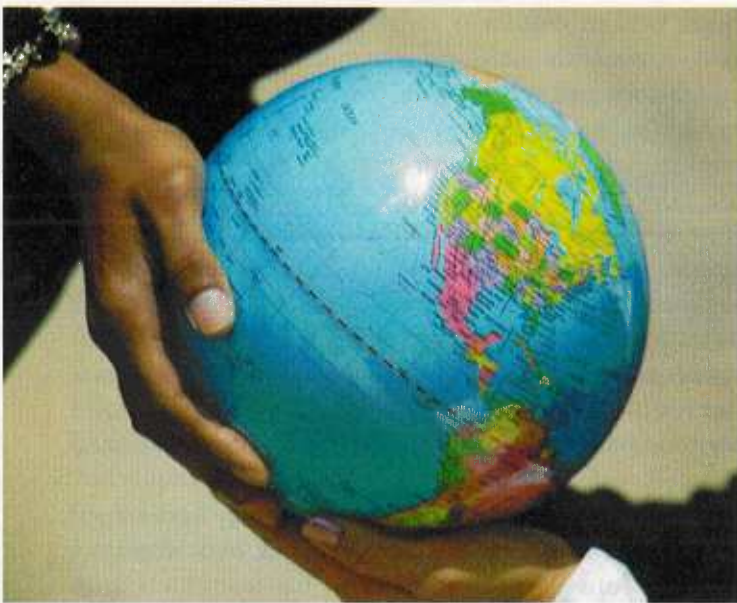
network of affiliate partners enables Accor Services to provide EAP coverage in more than 35 countries and to reaffirm its leadership in the global HR-benefit market. Additionally, Workplace Options announced that its Care Coach service won a 2006 Caregiver Friendly Award from *Today's Caregiver* magazine. Caregiver Friendly Awards are presented by *Today's Caregiver* magazine to celebrate outstanding books, media, products and services designed with the best interest of the family caregiver in mind.

Care Coach, launched by Workplace Options in 2005, pairs families who are caring for an aging family member with a professional geriatric care manager during a telephonic "family meeting" facilitated by Workplace Options. The geriatric care manager explains available options and builds consensus among the family members. Once consensus is reached, Workplace Options' geriatric care manager will coordinate a care plan, work to resolve any outstanding issues, and is available for ongoing contact from the family.

Axsiom Group to Sponsor "Enterprise Workforce Management" Initiatives

The Human Capital Institute (HCI), a global professional association and educator in talent management strategies, and Axsiom Group, a leading workforce management consulting firm, announced that Axsiom will sponsor HCI's Enterprise Workforce Management education and research track. The track is one of several topics addressed in HCI's Talent Strategy Community of Interest, a community HCI considers critical to organizations working to leverage human capital.

For many HR professionals, workforce management (WFM) is not a new concept; companies have been using transactional, stand-alone systems to automate one or several WFM functions for years. Recently, however, the discipline of Enterprise Workforce Management has evolved to the point where it is now capable of supporting complex processes at a holistic, enterprise level. When implemented successfully, the benefits of an enterprise WFM solution are significant; the hard cost savings and productivity improvements related to how employees are scheduled, compensated, and managed can result in investment paybacks measured in months, not years.





The Enterprise Workforce Management track looks at common software, including time and attendance, scheduling, leave management, attendance management, performance management, and employee and manager self-service, examining the benefits of each as well as the benefits of integration.

A panel of expert advisers explores best- and next-practices, sharing information with human-capital professionals through webcasts, white papers, education, and other resources.

More information about HCI's education and research tracks is available at: www.humancapitalinstitute.org

Verifications Earns SAPAA Certification

Verifications Inc., a leading global provider of employment screening and applicant processing services, was recently designated a certified – third party administrator (C-TPA) by the Substance Abuse Program Administrators Association (SAPAA). Verifications became the first company in the country to earn the C-TPA designation.

TPAs must meet a number of minimum requirements in order to qualify for designation as an SAPAA certified TPA. Verifications earned the C-TPA designation by participating in industry trade associations, completing a minimum number of SAPAA Training Institute courses and employing a certified substance abuse program Administrator. The C-TPA designation signifies Verifications' dedication and experience while indicating to

employers that Verifications is committed to a consistently high level of professionalism.

In addition to SAPAA C-TPA certification, Verifications' Substance Abuse Services Division earned ISO 9001:2000 certification in August of 2005. The ISO 9001:2000 standard specifies quality management system requirements, helping an organization demonstrate its ability to consistently provide products and services that meet customer requirements.

The Human Capital Institute, University of Chicago GSB, and Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management Announce Agreement

The Human Capital Institute (HCI), a global professional association and educator in talent management strategies, the University of Chicago Graduate School of Business, and Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management, announced an agreement this summer to bring human capital education and networking to the Greater Chicago business community.

In conjunction with the business schools at the University of Chicago and the Kellogg School, HCI will sponsor a series of networking breakfast events, featuring leadership and human capital experts who will share best and next practices in talent management. The first event will be September 21 from 8-9:30 a.m. at the Gleacher Center of the University of Chicago Graduate School of Business, in downtown Chicago. The second event in the series will be November 9 from 8-9:30 a.m. at the James L. Allen Center on the Evanston campus of Northwestern University.

Partnering with distinguished universities and business schools all over the world, the Human Capital Institute is known for these powerful, on-campus learning events, which include networking and presentations by prominent academic, government, and corporate leaders. Events are targeted to forward-looking executives who understand that talent is a key competitive lever in the global knowledge economy.

"HCI's collaboration with top business schools is one more way to reach out to organizations and help them marry business strategy with talent management," said Allan Schweyer, HCI's President & Executive Director. "And, we are pleased to be the catalyst for bringing these two renowned academic leaders together to offer joint events that bring them even closer to local executives and the business community."

For a list of Human Capital Leadership events at prestigious universities throughout the US and Canada, please visit: www.humancapitalinstitute.org

The Wellness Corporation Expands Organizational Development Service

The Wellness Corporation (TWC), a leading provider of employee assistance programs (EAPs), has expanded yet another service in its growing list of offerings. The Organizational Development (OD) program assists organizations to more effectively bring about positive change, implement strategies, surmount obstacles, and resolve conflicts.

The enhanced OD program follows the launch over the past year of other TWC services including Executive Coaching, the New Parent Transition Program, and Just-In-Time Care. Through the OD program, TWC will build on its strong relationships with, and understanding of, the operational culture of their clients and help them to

operate more efficiently and deftly navigate complicated situations.

"One of the reasons that we have been so successful in our relationships is that we continually look for better ways to serve clients," said Hamish Blackman, president of TWC. "The Organizational Development program will help employees at all levels and across all departments to establish goals, develop the best strategies to achieve those goals, and then work cooperatively to implement those strategies."

Specific areas in which the OD program offers support and direction include 1.) leadership development, 2.) strategic-change management, 3.) organizational assessment, 4.) organizational/development intervention, 5.) customized training programs, and 6.) conflict resolution and intervention. ■



The Voice of Employee Assistance Programs

EAP Digest™

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*Offer expires November 30, 2006

“Digital Dirt” Offers Extra Clues About Job Candidates

Does Someone’s Internet Image Influence HR Decision-Makers?

Have you “Googled” yourself lately? The results may be surprising and might even pose a risk for job seekers — especially if the information found casts a negative light on the candidate.

According to website www.collegegrad.com, there is a growing trend in the number of employers who are “Googling” (i.e. Internet keyword searching, typically through Google) candidates to research for additional information.

“I like to take a look and see what information is out there about the candidates,” said Nic Romero, Talent Acquisition Specialist for North Star Resource Group. “If they have recognition through sports or the community, that’s great information that adds credibility to the candidate.”

However, while the searches are often used to learn about accomplishments not listed within the limited space of a résumé, name searching does not select for positive versus negative results. In searching for candidate achievements, other — potentially embarrassing — pages may come up.

Brian Krueger, President of CollegeGrad.com points out other savvy research techniques.

“One of the favorite tricks of employers is to take the résumé page of a candidate and backtrack it to the person’s primary page. Even if the résumé page is ‘clean,’ the primary page may be filled with all sorts of other tidbits about the person that they may be quite embarrassed about if their future employer was reviewing.”

In the very public world of the Internet, millions of college students and other web-savvy young adults also maintain creative personal web pages within Internet social networking communities, such as Facebook and MySpace. Users create personal profiles that are sometimes questionable, and that often include photographs, videos, or blogs (short for web-logs) on dating experiences, politics or musings on what really bugs them about their parents, roommates, professors or even their employers.

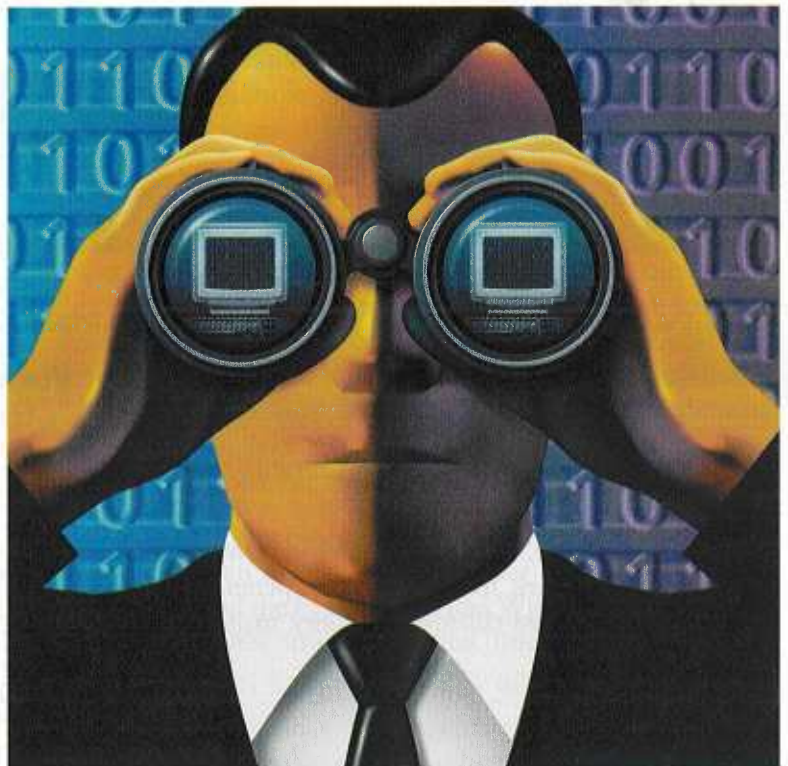
Job seekers beware, notes Krueger. “While there is still more hype than reality around employers using these sites to research potential hires, it is a growing trend. More and more employers are going deep into the Internet to dig for more information about potential candidates.”

Some career center experts stress that employers would be walking a fine ethical line if they used Internet social networking sites, or other Internet searching techniques as part of their screening process. But the majority remind students that the Internet blurs the line between what is public and what is private.

“My recommendation to new entry-level job seekers is that they start by cleaning up any personal websites they control, then ‘Googling’ their own information which may be located on other sites,” said Krueger. “If information (and — yikes! — photos) about that all night party are posted on someone else’s site, usually a polite request for removal will suffice.” ■

POLL QUESTION:

Would you ever check up on an employee by “Googling” them online? Send your answers to Erin@PRPonline.net.



Cultural-Diversity Capability: The EAP Edge in the Workplace

By Melita Travis Johnson

A recent article entitled "Cross-Cultural Solidarity: A Journey Within" by Juan Carlos Arean questioned a 1989 definition of cultural competence provided in the monograph *Towards a Culturally Competent System of Care*.

Cultural competence was defined in this work as "a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals and enables that system, agency or those professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations."

While this definition summarizes extrinsic factors necessary to facilitate a climate of cultural competency, it does not take into account the internal self-work that must be done as we "get out of our own way" (Thomas, 2006).

Senge (1995) emphasized the importance of introspection as he stated "organizational growth and success demands that each individual examine their own 'mental models' or deeply ingrained assumptions, pictures or images that influence how we understand the world and take action."

The discipline of working with mental models starts with turning the mirror inward: learning to unearth our internal pictures of the world, to bring them to the surface and hold them rigorously to scrutiny.

When differences collide in the workplace, EAP professionals are frequently called upon as first- or second-responders. The relentless nature of work-organization productivity issues coupled with the ever-increasing diversity of today's workplace simply do not allow for just-in-time self-scrutiny.

Arean, like Senge, supports inward scrutiny with his alternative framework for cultural competence, which he repackages as cross-cultural solidarity to include the following points:

1. The process of comprehending the unique experiences of members from a different culture through awareness of one's own culture.

2. Empathic understanding of oppression and critical assessment of one's own privilege.
3. A resulting ability to effectively operate in different cultural contexts.

The Three-way Mirror of Self-Reflection

Building on the admonition of Arean and Senge, employee assistance professionals need to consider a three-way mirror of self-reflection which includes the following "views":

View 1: Self-to-Self

What are the differences that I represent individually? Who am I as a diverse individual? Family/parent style, socioeconomically, educationally, religiously, work/learning style, etc. The diversity in you triggers your response to the diversity in others.

View 2: Self-to-Others

When interacting with those different from myself, am I giving due diligence, taking those extra seconds to avoid learned stereotypes, prejudices, and resulting discrimination? Instead, am I committed to delve more deeply, as an employee assistance professional, to grasp the authentic realities within the context of their work experience?

View 3: Self-to-"Isms"

Have I honestly identified my own biases with regard to classism, sexism, ethnocentrism, ageism, racism, heterosexism, able-ism, weight-ism, etc., in order to "get out of my own way"?

Ramifications

Employee assistance professionals must engage in an introspective process to authentically address our own "isms" in order to validate the "culture-of-the-other" in a professional, respectful and humane manner.

Many believe that the key to cultural competence is



gaining knowledge of as many facts as possible about other cultures. Given the global nature of the world we face in this millennium, culture is less monolithic and static than ever. Values, norms, subcultures, and even geography are shifting as you read this article.

Grasping Cultural Differences

Rowe and Lee Gardenswartz (1998) provide us with a comprehensive listing of cultural values and differentiated between Mainstream US Tendencies and Tendencies in Other Cultures. Adapting their work and expanding it to specific workplace needs, the chart on pages 16 and

17 was developed. At a glance, the schema enables EAP professionals to focus on what the behaviors in question are and related cultural implications.

The content in the chart provides ten value features in the first column. The second and third columns list Mainstream US Tendencies and Tendencies in Other Cultures respectively. In column four is the Impact that occurs when mainstream and other cultures intersect or collide. And the fifth column lists What to Do or what can be done in the strain of cultural differences.

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Travis Johnson Workplace Schematic: Workplace Behaviors and Cultural Factors

Impact of Cultural Factors in Workplace and Beyond

Factors	Mainstream US Tendencies	Tendencies in Other Cultures	Impact	What to Do
1) Interactions and Greetings	Informal handshake	Formal hugs/bows/ handshakes	May challenge personal comfort zone/social space	Allow for differences Flex w/circumstances/ different styles
2) Communication and Language	Explicit, direct communication Emphasis on "what you say" Professional jargon Value well-spoken, standard English	Implicit, indirect communication What is going on "around" the words? Less direct and more contextual Strong dialect/accents Must establish relationship before genuine communication can occur	May be difficult to figure out what is really on someone's mind May create challenges in trying to understand speaker Miscommunications common Oral/written messages may not fit "standard" norms	Develop trusting relationships Minimize "jargon" in cross- cultural/functional settings Take time to understand communication subtleties Develop keener listening skills, patience Pay attention to non-verbal cues Focus on what is said, not how it is said
3) Dress and Appearance	"Dress for success" ideal Casual trends/informal valued Variety of dress OK	Dress seen as sign of position, wealth, prestige Religious values may dictate May exemplify cultural pride/mission	May perceive casual dress as non-serious posture toward interactions May shift observer's view of "appropriateness" May have implications for work/meeting/office attire	Know the individual Identify dress expectations When in doubt, ask!
4) Food and Eating Habits	Eating as a necessity Fast/efficient meals	Eating as a social experience "Ceremonial" quality Religious rules can influence Medical/dietary restrictions	Meal timing/planning may conflict w/ business process When/where, how food prepared or consumed may impact credibility of business interactions	Be knowledgeable of individual/cultural needs Meal times may need to be elastic in schedule planning Closely consider when planning snacks/treats and when served
5) Time and Time Consciousness	Linear and exact Time = money Value on promptness	Elastic and relative – being on time not critical Value on relationship Time-consuming challenges	Attitude as lazy, unmotivated, uncaring May result in slowed processes/interactions (meetings, production, etc.)	Clarify expectations Reinforce meeting rules Position timeliness as respectfulness Tolerance due to unavoidable/unpreventable circumstances (non-barrier -free access) that delay

Factors	Mainstream US Tendencies	Tendencies in Other Cultures	Impact	What to Do
6) Relationships, Families, Friends and Associates	Youth valued Gender equity Responsibility to self Focus on nuclear family	Age given status and respect Different roles for males and females Family responsibility – first priority Focus on “extended” family (fictive kin)	Might need extended leave/on-call options/flex work hours Grief time needed beyond standard limits Meetings, deadlines, assignments may be missed	Work to find middle ground = win-win Be sensitive in time of family emergency Notification systems (pagers, cellular) and explore usefulness Be clear about trade-offs Establish emergency-notification teams If pattern develops, choices need to be made
7) Values and Norms	Individual emphasis Independence Situational honesty Environment as a commodity Wealth accumulation	Group conformity Value placed on harmony/collaboration Emphasis on group Unconditional honesty Respect-protect environment Charitable/sacrificial giving	Creates a tenuously peaceful working environment Unwillingness to discuss painful truths May assume people are unmotivated or lazy Varied/often conflicting priority-setting in business resource distribution	Respect groups' informal leadership Use the group as a collective of “individuals” Use question-asking skills to problem-solve solution Practice sensitive non-threatening tones in communication Stress teamwork Focus on group accomplishment
8) Beliefs and Attitudes	“Everyone is the same” Challenging authority Individuals control their own destinies Ethnocentric – attitude of cultural superiority Minimal tolerance of difference	“Someone is in charge” Respect for authority – “chain of command” Individuals accept their destinies Adaptive tolerance of difference Fear of shame and loss of face Goal setting/planning influenced by fatalism	Unwillingness to challenge authority, or be challenged as authority Inhibits solutions to problem-solving Creates formal atmosphere Some appear passive/unmotivated; others driven and controlling Behavior shaped by the “will of God”/destiny/learned helplessness	State expectation emphasizing/validating participation Patience, respect, positive reinforcement are critical Evaluate personal issues of control/tolerance Reach beyond learned cultural patterns Think globally!
9) Thinking and Learning Style	Linear (uniform) logical, sequential learning style Problem-solving focus Analytical parts-specific	Lateral, holistic, simultaneous Accepting of life's difficulties, i.e., some problems are unavoidable Problem-solving – less uniform/more use of surrounding circumstances Relations – global	Conversations may feel circular May wonder if you are getting anywhere	Learn/value/utilize different thinking styles Avoid discounting non-linear, non-logical methods
10) Work Habits and Practices	Emphasis on specific task Reward based on individual achievement Work has built-in value Value placed on expertise; trusting-rapport secondary	Emphasis on relationship Rewards based on group work/relationships Work is a necessity of life Socializing, rapport/trust-building significant	Tension may occur between task-focused/relationship-focused styles Challenges in accurately evaluating individual performance	Seek balance between getting down to business and social/rapport/trust-building Seek awareness of personal work style preference vs. individual's actual performance

Prepared by: Melita Travis Johnson, MSW/ENCOMPASS, LLC

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In the EAP realm, training and coaching is provided to those in today's workplaces of cultural difference; we are called upon to assist in the determination of whether behavior that reflects cultural differences can be tolerated or whether this behavior needs to be challenged or confronted. There are three questions that must be considered as we lead decision-makers through this dilemma:

- Is the cultural behavior getting in the way of the particular employee's job responsibility?
- Is the cultural behavior interfering with the responsibility of the department's leadership?
- Is the cultural behavior interfering with co-workers' or teams' ability to get their work done?

If the answer to any of these questions is "yes," and it is a continuous problem, the behavior needs to be challenged or confronted. If the answer is "no," then the behavior can be tolerated.

Whether in the microcosm of a workshop or the macrocosm of the workplace, tension will remain the primary pattern in the wallpaper of increasingly more

diverse workspaces. Employee assistance professionals must understand their own internal tension and biases as we work to assist employers and demystify the predictable tensions arising from cultural differences.

Dr. R. Roosevelt Thomas (2006), founder of the American Institute for Managing Diversity, and a virtual pioneer in the field of differences, launched the concept of cultural or diversity capability. This capability involves mastering the art of making quality decisions in spite of the tension that is inherent in culturally-diverse environments. Quality decisions are decisions that help people and organizations accomplish their mission (what they are seeking to do), their vision (what their success will ideally look like), and their strategy (what is required of them — their organization, their department, their individual job — to stay competitive).

The EAP contribution to a work organization's competitive edge in the global economy must not be understated. Diversity capability is a must for employee assistance professionals as we deliver EAP services. We must be able to step outside of our comfort zones and look beyond traditional, comfortable, convenient, or preferred decision-making methods. In so doing, the validation, respect and humane engagement of cultural differences are strategically dispatched. ■

Melita Travis Johnson is the director of Inclusion Initiatives at ENCOMPASS, LLC, and is called upon to provide diversity, inclusion and cultural competency consulting to numerous companies and organizations. Melita is an experienced trainer and teacher, having worked throughout the United States to assist corporations find their competitive edge with respect to cultural competency. For additional information or to dialogue, Melita may be reached at: 1-800-788-8630.

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CALENDAR

The 16th Annual Renfrew Center Foundation Conference for Professionals, Feminist Perspectives and Beyond: Maximizing Change in the Treatment of Eating Disorders. This is a four-day seminar for behavioral health professionals and dietitians and offers CEUs. The event is taking place at the Philadelphia Airport Marriott, Philadelphia, PA on November 9-12, 2006. Please visit <http://www.renfrewcenter.com/news-events/event.asp?id=81> for more information.



3rd Annual Symposium on Crisis Intervention — Crisis Intervention: Bridging the Gap to Mental Health Treatment— to be held Tuesday, November 14, 2006 in Greenbelt, MD. This is a one day conference offering CEUs. Call 1-410-931-2116, e-mail crsconference@santegroup.org or check out www.thesantegroup.org for more information.

21st Annual San Diego International Conference On Child and Family Maltreatment — Sponsoring Agency: The Chadwick Center for Children and Families at Rady Children's Hospital-San Diego, January 22-26, 2007. Location: Town and Country Resort & Convention Center, 500 Hotel Circle N, San Diego, CA, 92108. Website: <http://www.chadwickcenter.org>. Contact information: sdconference@chsd.org or call 858-966-4972. The Chadwick Center for Children and Families, Rady Children's Hospital-San Diego present the 21st Annual San Diego International Conference on Child and Family Maltreatment. The conference is directed to a

multidisciplinary audience from the fields of medicine, mental health, interviewing, child welfare, advocacy, law, law enforcement, education, family support, public policy and research. The conference will feature over 225 experts from around the globe providing the latest research, practical experience, and skill-building workshops on evidence-based practices. Workshop programs focus on research or evidence-based practice, ensuring quality practice and programs, substance abuse promising and best programs, ethical practice, cultural issues and LGBTQ youth, the Internet, and child maltreatment.

The 3rd World Congress on Women's Mental Health — will be held in Melbourne, Australia in 2008. March 16-20, 2008. For more information, see www.iawmhcongress2008.com.au.

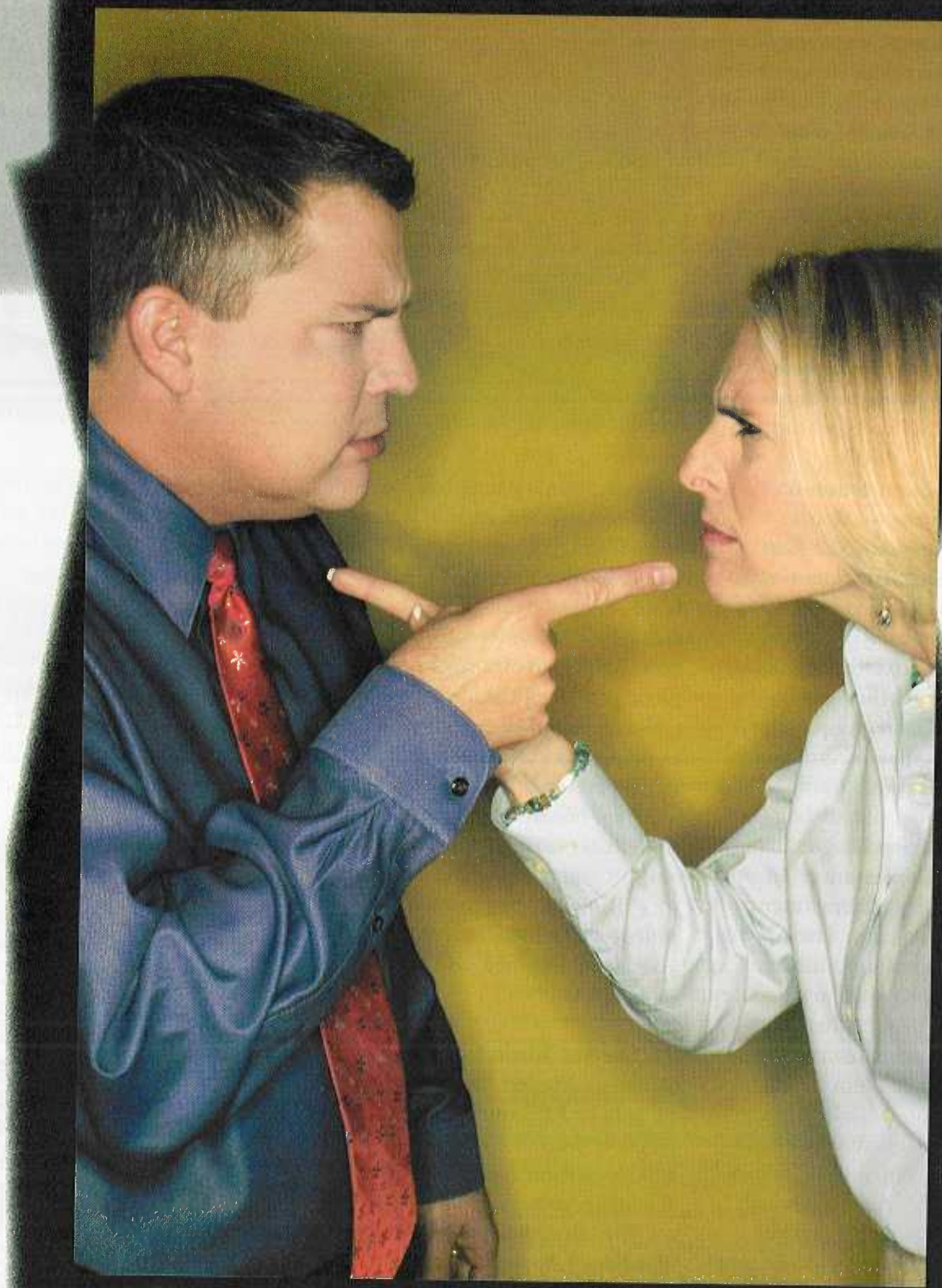
Worklife Media, LLC, presents A Resiliency Approach to Early Crisis Intervention — an alternative to traditional group debriefings. This training provides a model that is designed to enhance individual and

work group resilience following a crisis event. The training includes the foundation for a resiliency approach, the appropriate application and structure for the model. Continuing education credits or professional development hours are available from the APA, NBCC, NASW, EACC and HRCI. To register, go to: <http://worklifemedia.net/s.nl/sc.2/category.4/.f>. For information, contact Jane Adams at 616-604-0483 or jane.adams@worklifemedia.net

Other Items of Interest:

Behavioral Edu at <http://www.behavioraledu.com/> offers online continuing education courses for psychologists and counselors.

Psy Broadcasting Corporation offers online symposia for CE credits in the following topic areas: Cognitive Behavior Therapy, Group Therapy, Psychoanalysis and Psychopharmacology for Psychotherapists. For more info and a list of upcoming events, see <http://www.psybc.com> ■



MANAGING DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIORS

By Michael Goldstein

It is no secret that staff morale, productivity and service to customers and clients are at their highest when everyone is working effectively as a team and practicing basic tenets of dignity and respect for each other. Unfortunately, this is not always the case because of the influences of inappropriate behavior of disruptive staff. Problems resulting from this behavior can be especially acute when the disruptive behavior comes from someone in a managerial or leadership position.

Despite the pressures and exigencies that often arise in the work setting, managers and leaders are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner and be productive team players and positive role models for others. Behavior that is not consistent with basic collegial and professional expectations places the organization at potential liability and can result in significantly negative consequences.

The following is a summary of some typical disruptive behaviors practiced by managers and the potential risks they create; an identification of some of the factors that contribute to or enable their behavior; and general guidelines for responding appropriately to it.

Characteristics of a disruptive management staff member include:

- Making rude, condescending, insulting and demeaning statements to others.
- Using angry, hostile tones.
- Shouting, throwing things, slamming doors, etc., when displeased.
- Berating staff and colleagues in front of others.
- Showing insensitive, curt and disrespectful treatment of peers, support staff and clients.
- Being physically or verbally abusive toward those he/she considers less important.
- Attacking immediately if criticized or crossed.
- Threatening litigation when displeased or challenged.
- Disdaining authority and believing that rules do not apply to him/her.
- Regularly being the source of many issues that, if taken singly, would be of limited relevance but when taken together become highly significant.

Some potential risks to the organization if problem is not managed:

- Union grievances, discrimination complaints and/or hostile work environment claims.
- Lawsuits against the individual because of his/her conduct, and against the organization for failure to control or prevent it.
- Increased workers' compensation claims alleging disabling workplace stress.
- Considerable expenditures of time, energy and money responding to and defending against these claims.
- Increased use of sick leave.
- Negative public perception.
- Drain on morale and productivity.
- Turnover of good staff.
- Negative impact on service to clients and customers.

Causes/Enabling Factors

There are many common causes for disruptive managerial behavior. Some disruptive managers suffer from psychological disorders and chronic physical conditions, or may be impaired because of their use of drugs and alcohol. Others are experiencing personal turmoil (marital, family-related or financial problems) that impacts their ability to deal with support staff and peers in a civil and professional manner. Some are simply unable, or no longer willing, to cope with the workplace stresses that exist; this type appears to be on the rise in today's difficult business environment. Finally, some are merely unpleasant individuals who have acquired the belief that they will, more often than not, get the results they desire by bullying, abusing and intimidating others.

Often, other managers or peers are unwilling to intervene or complain about a disruptive colleague. Some are sympathetic toward their colleague's "issues" and share his/her frustrations. Some may think of themselves as similar in kind, if not degree, and therefore feel they have no right to be critical. Others fear getting involved in the problems of others, don't wish to harm the career opportunities of a peer, or worry that intervention may provoke an even more serious or violent reaction. Finally, managers who work in departments that are short-staffed

are reluctant to do anything that might lead to the removal of a contributing member.

Unfortunately, the problem will not simply "go away" if it is tolerated or ignored. It will, in fact, get worse. The disruptive individual may interpret tolerance of inappropriate behavior as acceptance or condoning the behavior. Company management has a legal and ethical obligation to investigate complaints or other evidence of such behavior, and to prevent its recurrence by taking prompt, appropriate remedial action. If the organization ignores the problem hoping that the situation or behavior will improve, the company runs the risk of condoning unprofessional behavior and becomes vulnerable to potential liability.

Company Policies

Managers are on solid ground when they attempt to intervene and stop disruptive behavior. For example:

- Many labor agreements contain requirements that employees and managers treat each other with dignity and respect. Regardless of how someone in a leadership role feels that support staff are living up to this standard, there is an expectation that a senior staff member or leader will lead by example.
- Most organizational policies, and federal and state

laws, prohibit harassment and discrimination, and an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

- Most organizations have (or should have) suggested performance criteria for evaluation of staff that includes employee and coworker relationships and clearly states that staff will not engage in disruptive behavior. At a minimum, staff in a group work setting are expected to respect and be respected by colleagues, to work well with colleagues and coworkers, and to conduct themselves in a professional manner.

The following management actions should be taken to correct inappropriate and unprofessional behavior:

Set and Communicate Expectations. Have a face-to-face meeting—outline the behaviors that may be viewed as problematic and a potential disruption to departmental morale, as well as the types of behaviors that will not be tolerated and the possible negative outcomes (see the “potential risks to the organization” list).

Measure Performance Against Expectations. For ongoing problems that have not been corrected, consider documenting less than satisfactory ratings in the individual’s performance evaluation (work habits, coworker and employee relationships).

Provide Periodic Feedback. Provide ongoing verbal

and written communications at the time behaviors are inappropriate. Recognize and compliment positive behaviors.

Manage Poor Performance and Take Corrective Action. When verbal counseling is not effective, it is important to define and maintain appropriate limits and boundaries and to outline the consequences for noncompliance. Depending on the severity of the situation or specific incident, progressive discipline should be initiated. A psychological disorder or alcohol or chemical abuse may be contributing to the behavioral problem. In these situations a consultation and/or referral to the EAP is appropriate. Referral to a community-based anger-management program may also be appropriate. Regardless, the presence of impairment does not excuse the behavior, and corrective action must be taken if it does not stop.

Document — Build a Written Record of the Disruptive Behavior. Disruptive individuals are, by their nature, more likely than not to challenge disciplinary actions or other efforts to correct their behavior. It is vital that the manager be able to document, with sufficient examples and details, the conduct that forced the actions in question.

Conclusion

Dealing with a disruptive staff member, particularly someone in a senior or leadership role, is often awkward, exhausting and time-consuming. However, the consequences of ignoring or tolerating the behavior can be exceedingly more costly and time-consuming and lead to significantly negative outcomes. Behavior that jeopardizes the health and safety of members of the company workforce and organizational resources is unacceptable, and intervention is imperative. Human resource professionals are a valuable tool to assist their company managers and leaders with these matters. ■

Michael Goldstein has over 20 years of experience as a human resources director and manager and is currently the senior physician human resources consultant for the Permanente Medical Group.

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EAPs and Eldercare: Offering Support to Caregivers

By Erin Brown Bell

“In the United States, 20% of all Americans, or about 70 million people, will have passed their 60th birthday by 2030. The demographic tidal wave is coming. Aging in the 21st century, however, is more than just a matter of numbers. The average 75-year-old has three chronic conditions and uses five prescription drugs. Older adults also have unique challenges and different medical needs than younger adults. Consequently, it is not enough to be aware of the demographic imperative; we must also be prepared for it.”

*— Patricia P. Barry, MD, MPH,
Executive Director, Merck Institute of Aging & Health*

Lately there has been a lot of talk about the senior boom in the workforce. To date, many seniors are continuing their careers well past the Social Security checkpoint. However, there is another age-related issue affecting companies across all sectors of industry. While many seniors continue to work, there are myriad others who are in quite the opposite situation; they are desperately in need of eldercare due to failing mental and physical health. Many of these people now depend on working family members to take care of their needs, and that, in turn, is affecting the workforce.

According to recent statistics from the American Society on Aging, nearly one out of every four US households — or 22 million households — provide care to a relative or friend aged 50 or older. In addition, 40% of caregivers are also raising children and 64% work full- or part-time. The National Alliance for Caregiving reports that on average, caregivers spend four and a half years providing care and spend about 12 hours each week providing it.

Nationally, companies lose up to \$29 billion a year because of lost productivity from workers caring for their parents, according to a study by the insurance company MetLife Inc. The number is expected to grow to \$166 billion by 2050. (Donnelly and Bouffard 2004).

"Absenteeism used to be the big issue," says Alan King, president and chief operating officer of Workplace Options (WPO), the largest provider of work/life programs to corporate America. "Problems [related to child care or eldercare] would prevent employees from coming to work. Now, even though they may be physically in the workplace, the employees are not focused on working or they are focusing on a problem from home. They are there, but they are not delivering productivity. That's presenteeism."

What are these workers focusing on instead of work? It could be that one of their parents just had a stroke, or perhaps an aging aunt or uncle just got into a car accident. Perhaps the employee is concerned about a recently widowed parent. Whatever the problem, eldercare issues often carry into employees' work lives.

"People's lives don't fall into very neat time frames," says King. "From 7-5 you don't suddenly stop having a personal life, any more than when you go home, work doesn't affect your home life."

So many times, solving a crisis at home can easily affect life at work. Perhaps employees use the Internet on

a company computer to research nursing homes. Maybe they are making phone calls during work hours trying to find their parent a new doctor.

Just because workers are using company time to try to solve their eldercare needs, it doesn't necessarily mean that they are "bad" employees. Many doctors' offices, HMOs and other senior health care organizations keep normal business hours only. That means that there is essentially no time for employees to fix their eldercare problems except during work hours.

The stress of working a full-time job and taking care of an aging parent or relative can take a toll on workers at home and at work. Whatever the problem, EAPs are now addressing these eldercare-related concerns in their umbrella of services. Right now, many members of your workplace are already responsible for taking care of their aging parents. So rather than let employees miss work and/or deal with the problem of presenteeism, we must be prepared to assist these caretakers and their families.

According to *Self-Awareness in Family Caregiving: A Report on the Communications Environment*:

"The nature of caregiving varies widely. Caregivers may provide care 24 hours in their homes; others offer care after work or on weekends; still others provide daily assistance to relatives in long-term care facilities, making up for sparse paid staff. The care they provide includes administering medicines and physical therapy; feeding, bathing, dressing and toileting; providing help in moving around the house; transportation; serving as an informal case manager including coordinating treatment regimens and schedules with health care professionals; and helping with financial and administrative aspects of medical care. And of course, they provide much-needed emotional support that is essential to healing or coping with disease."

So as EAPs, we must ascertain just what type of assistance each of our caregiving employees need.

For example, WPO's eldercare services cover just about the entire gamut of the needed senior services. According to Alan King, the WPO eldercare consultants are designed to not only respond to a user's presenting issue, but to also scope out the full range of support required to resolve the member's need. An Advantage Care Assist Geriatric Manager starts by meeting with the family and conducting a comprehensive assessment that determines the strengths, needs and preferences of the senior. An assessment report

Resources for Caregivers

National Association of Area Agencies on Aging

927 15th Street, NW, 6th Floor
Washington, DC 20005
202-296-8130
www.n4a.org

National Council on the Aging

300 D Street, SW, Suite 801
Washington, DC 20024
202-479-1200
www.ncoa.org

National Institute on Aging Information Center

P.O. Box 8057
Gaithersburg, MD 20898-8057
1-800-222-2225
1-800-222-4225 (toll-free TTY)
www.nia.nih.gov

Alzheimer's Disease Education and Referral Center

P.O. Box 8250
Silver Springs, MD 20907-8250
1-800-438-4380
www.alzheimers.org

Alzheimer's Association

225 N. Michigan Avenue, Suite 1700
Chicago, IL 60601-7633
1-800-272-3900
www.alz.org

Children of Aging Parents

1609 Woodbourne Road, Suite 302A
Levittown, PA 19057-1511
1-800-227-7294
www.caps4caregivers.org

Family Caregiver Alliance

690 Market Street, Suite 600
San Francisco, CA 94104
415-434-3388
www.caregiver.org

National Alliance for Caregiving

4720 Montgomery Lane, 5th Floor
Bethesda, MD 20814
www.caregiving.org

National Family Caregivers Association

10400 Connecticut Avenue, #500
Kensington, MD 20895-3944
1-800-896-3650
www.nfcacares.org

Well Spouse Foundation

63 W. Main Street, Suite H
Freehold, NJ 07728
1-800-838-0879
www.wellspouse.org

provides recommendations that, if requested, can lead to a detailed care plan that is ready for implementation. This plan includes a range of services that make for a safe, healthy, enriching lifestyle for the senior.

"Consultants work with a caller so as to clearly understand their situation and to assist them in developing a comprehensive plan of action," says King. "Our response is not merely to answer questions, but to ensure effective and successful outcomes."

Some of the categories that are included in their services include: Medicare/Medicaid, Supplemental Insurance, Home Safety, Acute/Post-Acute Rehabilitation Programs, Skilled Nursing Facilities, Adult Day Care and more.

Most other EAPs and work/life organizations across the country are working hard to integrate caregiving services into their plans as well.

Tips for Caregivers

When it comes to their health, caregivers are less

likely than their peers to take steps to prevent or control chronic disease. Make sure you share these tips with your caregiving staff members. Research suggests that the physical and emotional demands on caregivers put them at greater risk for health problems. Caregivers are more at risk for infectious diseases, such as colds and flu, and chronic diseases, such as heart problems, diabetes, and cancer. Depression is twice as common among caregivers compared to non-caregivers. Taking care of their health will help them to better care for their loved one longer. Here are some tips from the US Department of Health and Human Services Administration on Aging.

- **Be wise – immunize.** The CDC recommends that caregivers of the elderly get one each year: influenza (flu) vaccine, pneumococcal vaccination, tetanus booster. Don't neglect your health. Get a yearly checkup and the recommended cancer screenings (mammogram, cervical screening, etc.). Tell your doctor that you are a caregiver. Tell your doctor if you

feel depressed or nervous.

- Take some time each day to do something for yourself. Read, listen to music, telephone friends, or exercise.
- Eat healthy foods and do not skip meals.
- Find caregiver resources in your area early. You may not need their information or services now, but you will have them when you need them.
- Don't be afraid to ask for help. And don't do it all yourself. Use your family, friends, or neighbors for support. Family may help share caregiving tasks. Friends and neighbors may help with other chores.
- Caregiving can take a toll on you!

Eldercare-Related Issues Employees May Need Help With

We've addressed the types of eldercare resources that EAPs are now including in their services, so let's look at the types of problems that employees may need guidance on.

To continue providing the tremendous service they offer, caregivers need:

- information, support, access to services, and resources.
- understanding and cooperation from employers, family members, friends and neighbors, health care providers, health plan administrators, their own physicians, and even strangers.
- new skills — communication skills, financial management skills, time management/organizational skills, even medical-technical skills.
- financial assistance to help with non-compensated costs for incidentals, transportation, respite care, home modifications, medical supplies, equipment and medicines.
- someone to talk to and share experiences with.
- someone to do an errand.
- a place to go for a change of environment and fresh perspectives.

(Source: *Self-Awareness in Family Caregiving: A Report on the Communications Environment*)

In conclusion, EAPs must continue to grow their eldercare services. The benefits are many-fold, for both the employee and employer. It's obvious that as this senior demographic tidal wave quickly approaches, we must continue to support workers who are doubling as caregivers for this older generation. The problems that the baby boomer caregivers will face, such as confronting a parent about their unsafe driving; deciding whether it's time for

a parent or relative to live in an assisted-care facility, or other health concerns truly can spill over into the worker's professional life. The EAP needs to be there every step of the way to assist these workers. ■

Erin Brown Bell is the editor of EAP Digest.

Is It Time to Give Up Driving?

We all age differently. For this reason, there is no way to say what age should be the upper limit for driving. So, how do you know if a loved one should stop driving? To help you decide, ask him/her:

- Do other drivers often honk at you?
- Have you had some accidents, even "fender benders"?
- Do you get lost, even on roads you know?
- Do people walking or cars seem to appear out of nowhere?
- Have family, friends, or your doctor said they are worried about your driving?
- Are you driving less these days because you are not as sure about your driving as you used to be?

If your loved one answered "yes" to any of these questions, you should think seriously about whether or not he/she is still a safe driver. If your loved one answered "no" to all these questions, don't forget to have his/her eyes and ears checked regularly. Talk to your loved one's doctor about any changes in health that could affect his/her ability to drive safely.

How Will Your Loved One Get Around?

People can stay active and do the things they like to do, even if they decide to give up driving. There may be more options for getting around than one thinks. Some areas offer low-cost bus or taxi service for older people. Some also have car pools or other transportation on request.

Alcohol Remains Most-Abused Substance in Rural Areas

Substance use and abuse rates are similar in urban and rural areas, according to a recent report by the Carsey Institute's Center on Rural Families and Communities at the University of New Hampshire. But while the overall rates are similar, some distinctions exist.

Researchers examined data primarily from the Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH). They define substance use as using a substance in the past year, and substance abuse as meeting the criteria for substance abuse or dependence specified in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM).

Alcohol remains the most used and abused substance in both rural and urban areas. However, rural youth have overtaken urban youth in their reported alcohol consumption. Rural youth appear to have significantly greater problems with alcohol than their urban counterparts. Underage drinking is higher in rural youth populations than in urban youth populations. Rural youth ages 12 to 17 are more likely to report alcohol use than urban youth. When it comes to alcohol abuse, rural youth 12 to 13 are twice as likely to abuse alcohol, and 13% of rural youth ages 16 to 17 meet definitions of alcohol abuse compared to 10% of urban youth.

For more information, visit the Carsey Institute at the University of New Hampshire's website and download *Substance Abuse in Rural and Small Town America*, part of a series of Carsey Institute policy reports on topics concerning rural America.

Early Use Contributes to Future Alcohol Problems

In other alcoholism-related news, data from a survey of 43,000 adults heighten concerns that early alcohol use, independent of other risk factors, may contribute to the risk of developing future alcohol problems. Those who began drinking in their early teens were not only at greater risk of developing alcohol dependence at some point in their lives, they were also at greater risk of developing dependence more quickly and at younger ages, and of developing chronic, relapsing dependence. Among all respondents who developed alcoholism at some point, almost half (47%) met the diagnostic criteria for alcohol dependence (alcoholism) by age 21.

The associations between early drinking and later problems held even after investigators controlled for other risk factors for dependence, adding to concerns that drinking at a young age might raise the risk of future alcohol problems rather than being an identifying feature of young people predisposed to risky behavior. The study appears in the July issue of *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine*, volume 160, pp. 739-746.

Scientists at the Boston University School of Public Health and Youth Alcohol Prevention Center, led by Dr. Ralph Hingson, carried out the analysis using data from the 2001-2002 *National Epidemiologic Survey on Alcohol and Related Conditions* (NESARC), a representative survey of the US civilian noninstitutionalized population aged 18 years and older.

In results that echo earlier studies of those individuals who began drinking before age 14, 47% experienced dependence at some point, vs. 9% of those who began drinking at age 21 or older. In general, each additional year earlier than 21 that a respondent began to drink, the greater the odds that he or she would develop alcohol dependence at some point in life. While one-quarter of all drinkers in the survey started drinking by age 16, nearly half (46%) of drinkers who developed alcohol dependence began drinking at age 16 or younger.

New findings showed that among all drinkers, early drinking was associated not only with a higher risk of developing alcoholism at some point, but it occurs within 10 years of first starting to drink. Early drinking was also associated with increased risk of having multiple episodes of alcoholism. Further, among respondents who had had alcohol dependence at some point, those who began drinking young had episodes of longer duration and with a wider range of symptoms than those who started later.

The authors conclude that the results of both studies support the need to take measures to delay alcohol consumption by underage youth. Dr. Hingson said, "This analysis suggests that interventions that delay drinking onset may not only reduce the acute consequences of drinking among youth, but may help reduce alcohol dependence among adolescents and adults. It's an important public health issue for longitudinal research to resolve." ■

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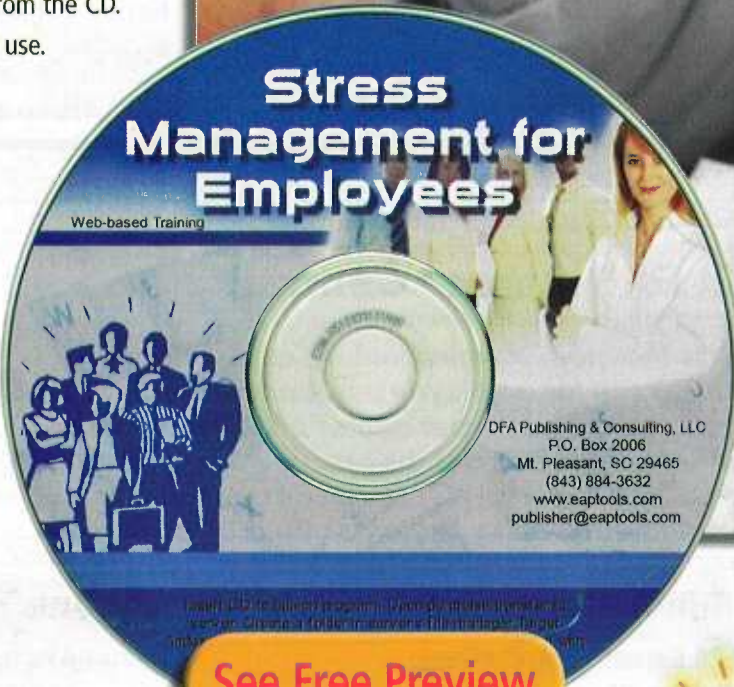
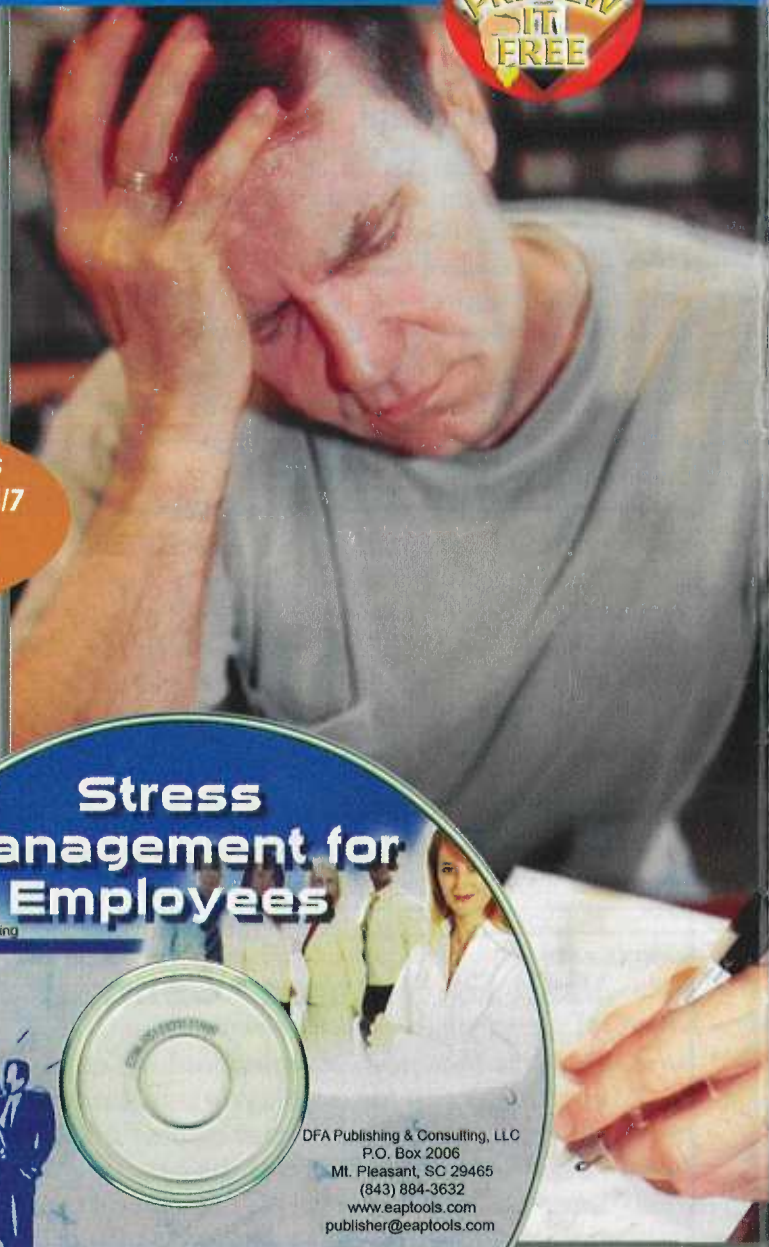
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