

# THE FRONTLINE SUPERVISOR

May 2007

*Helping You Manage Your Company's Most Valuable Resource--Employees*

**Q.** *We have a new supervisor who comes with a great reputation, but some employees feel she is too pushy and "on task." I wasn't hearing these complaints with the last supervisor. Maybe she is a bad fit, or perhaps it is others who need to be more like her. Should I just let her go and return to the status quo?*

**A.** This conflict is not desirable, but it may signal the need for some employees to make changes. Instead of focusing on how to return to the status quo, recognize that this scenario may signal an opportunity that offers rewards to your organization. Discourage complainers from running to you during this adjustment period, and be aware that even a passing "hallway venting session" with you by employees could undermine motivation for them to work toward cooperating with her. Encourage your new supervisor to use the EAP—not because she is actually creating problems, but for guidance on gaining acceptance for her supervision style. The EAP will help her determine how to proceed in managing differences with her subordinates. In the end, this approach will allow the best chance for a win-win solution. You will be able to capitalize on your investment in hiring her and help those under her supervision make the changes needed to improve their performance and productivity.

**Q.** *The EAP provides short-term problem solving and counseling, but it refers people to psychotherapy. What's the difference between the two?*

**A.** Counseling is distinctly different from psychotherapy. Counseling is problem solving; it is often a discussion between a counselor and a client that addresses an individual's concerns or struggles associated with life's problems or issues. Psychotherapy is treatment for emotional problems where the relationship with the psychotherapist is a means (a tool) to help the client or patient make difficult changes in behavior, beliefs, and habits of thinking to improve their life functioning. Most people who go to psychotherapy do so after experiencing much personal distress because the way they have always coped with or responded to life's problems (especially conflicts in relationships) is no longer working.

**Q.** *Our company's supervisors recently attended a presentation on workplace substance abuse and were told marijuana was addictive. I do not know anyone who ever became addicted to marijuana. So what is the real story on how dangerous this drug truly is (or is not)?*

**A.** The medical professionals who are the most knowledgeable about marijuana are addiction medicine physicians who specialize in the treatment of alcoholics and drug addicts. The American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) has 4,000 of these physicians as its members. Their clinical work and research support the policies and positions they publish on controversial subjects such as marijuana. ASAM's public policy on marijuana was last updated May 2006. You can look it up at [www.asam.org](http://www.asam.org). ASAM states that marijuana is

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“a dangerous drug with harmful effects.” Addiction to it is classified as “the disease of marijuana dependence.” According to these experts, marijuana requires some addicts to smoke four times as much as they once did to get the desired effect. Withdrawal symptoms can last two to four weeks, and may be so severe that medical support and detoxification is required to overcome cravings. Like alcohol, not everyone becomes addicted to marijuana. Similarly, a user’s past experience with the drug will influence the believability about its addictive potential.

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***Q. I have done very well in my career, so they keep moving me up the ladder. I am happy about it, but I can't seem to relax and accept my success. Self-doubt still creeps in, and I am feeling more fear because more is expected of me, and the stakes are higher. How can I relax?***

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**A.** It is easy to fall victim to the stresses associated with success. When you earn promotions, gain responsibility, and wield more authority, your inner voice can begin to work against you. You can feel like an impostor who does not deserve such success, and your anxiety can translate into an ongoing sense that others will discover that you are ill-equipped for your role. Self-doubt can even get to the point where you are rereading positive written comments on old performance evaluations. Challenge the inner voices and scrutinize the validity of your fears. Acknowledge how they can undermine your life so that you muster the will to overcome them. The key is to eliminate defeatist self-talk by changing the wording. If your inner voice says, “I have no idea what I'm doing,” replace that with, “I'm learning more every day.” If it says, “People think I don't deserve to have this job,” replace that with, “I am earning their respect.” Don't hesitate to contact the EAP for more support.

### ***AWP Training Opportunities***

AWP is a proven entity known for its training and curriculum development. AWP trainers are among the best training professionals in the business. We use PowerPoint and participant manuals/handouts supported by instructor manuals for each training topic. To provide training is a great way to promote the EAP to employees. For scheduling, contact your local HR coordinator or AWP account manager.

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### ***Featured Training***



#### ***Communication, Team Building, and Respect***

In businesses today, being a solid performer is only part of the picture. Building solid relationships with coworkers and managers is just as important. Mastering the “ins and outs” of workplace protocol is crucial for professionals at all levels. This interactive seminar focuses on workplace communication, team building, and respect in the workplace. Participants will complete a self-test on respect in the workplace along with performing some team exercises that will test their communication and listening skills. Strategies will be given on how best to show respect while communicating. We will discuss what team members value in team leaders and other team members. We'll also go over benefits of workplace respect.



*Information contained in **The Frontline Supervisor** is for general information purposes only and is not intended to be specific guidance for any particular supervisor or HR management concern. For specific guidance call AWP.*

***(AWP) offers supervisors confidential, unlimited consultation with experienced EAP professionals.***

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