



A Study on Eap in Business Development

KEYWORDS

Employee Assistance, Network, Psychiatry, Psychology, Visibility, etc.ww

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ABSTRACT Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs) originated in the United States in the 1960s with the idea of speeding up the processes both at US and in UK, but it is now becoming more accepted world wide.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provides a full range of high quality, professional counseling and support services for employees and their eligible family members. The aim is to bring the participant into contact with that deeper part of his being and to equip him or her with the knowledge and techniques whereby that contact may be maintained after he leaves the program.

The perceptions and observations were obtained through semi-structured interviews and the research findings are presented by aggregating general themes among the overall population surveyed and among the specific groups.

This paper attempts to concentrate on the concept and needs of EAP and the training modules therein for the Indian Corporate sector.

INTRODUCTION

Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs) originated in the United States of America in the 1960s. The idea was slow to catch on in the UK, but it is now becoming more accepted.

There are a number of external agencies which provide EAP services. They offer, on a contractual basis, a 24-hour phone service giving employees and their families access to counseling on a range of problems including stress, marital breakdown and financial and legal problems. Most services identify the problem and arrange for a relevant specialist to phone back, although face-to-face counseling may also be offered.

Confidentiality is guaranteed by all EAPs to users, although employers are usually provided with a periodic statistical report on take-up of the service, which may be broken down by sex, seniority, department or type of problem. Where long-term treatment relating to alcohol and drug problems or psychological problems is needed, employees are referred to state services.

What is EAP?

Employee Assistance Program - provides a full range of high quality, professional counseling and support services for employees and their eligible family members. The aim is to bring the participant into contact with that deeper part of his being from which well his own healing energies and to equip him with the knowledge and techniques whereby that contact may be maintained after he leaves the program.

EAP IN INDIA

It is carried out by the MNCs like Microsoft GTSC. The organizations use an external employee assistance provider, with a range of counselling services, including psychologists, psychiatrists and social workers.

Most use is reported to be related to family problems and alcohol/drug issues. A small percentage (less than 5%) is related to workplace conflict.

The perceptions and observations were obtained through semi-structured interviews and the research findings are presented by aggregating general themes among the overall population surveyed and among the specific groups.

INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE OF SUCCESSFUL IMPLICATION OF EAP:

Visibility and knowledge:

Although EAPs have become common within U.S. organizations, employers report that workers have limited awareness of them and lack a deep understanding of the full scope of EAP services. According to a recent Buck Consulting report, "Employers are stepping up communication with their employees about wellness and employee assistance programs available to them and are not planning to make significant cuts in the budgets for those programs, according to a survey."

There are two delivery system models for EA services: the staff model and the network model. Each has advantages and disadvantages.

Network model: A network includes a large number of independent contractors who provide EAP services. These independent contractors may serve in several EAP and health plan networks. The network model is based on volume, serving employers from a large geographic area. The network model is well suited to provide services to employers with employees spread over large geographic areas, multiple states, or the entire nation.

Staff model:

The staff model is based on a small group of EA professionals serving a few employers, with services and interventions tailored to the specific needs of each employer. This business model emphasizes developing close relationships with employers and acquiring a close working knowledge of each employer's culture, business goals and policies.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The original idea was to use the EAP as a differentiator in the market and provide an inexpensive perk to an employer (Sharar and Masi 2006; Holman 2003). Little or no regular promotion, which leads to utilization ceasing (John Burke, David A. Sharar, July 2009). The strength of EAPs lies in their workplace roots and the knowledge of employers culture and policies, and these are the keys for them to differentiate them from mental health services (Thomas M Fauria, July 2009). A survey of human resources managers, benefits consultants, and EAP providers reveals that attitudes toward the EAP can be changed through research (John Burke, David A. Sharar, July 2009).

Larger EAP providers offer clients the option of reports on average statistics based on work for comparable companies. Additional services include workplace seminars on problems identified as particularly prevalent, training of managers and personnel staff and related literature. The service may be charged for at a per capita rate or according to take-up, which can be as much as twenty-five per cent of the workforce.

Although cost estimates of EAPs exceed the permissible range, most organizations report the programmes to be very cost effective. For example, executives at Banc One Financial Services receive in-office counseling, Lucent Technologies also set up its own internal counseling divisions to coach difficult workers. One survey found that EAPs are available to employees working for companies with 1,000 or more workers, but only 45 percent of all workers utilize their services. GM reports that about 10 percent of its 600,000 employee workforce is experiencing alcohol or other drug-related problems; so GM emphasizes substance abuse in its EAP programmes.

As we stated earlier, many other organizations have responded to problems of substance abuse by implementing drug testing programs, which may involve entry-level screening for drug usage as well as random drug testing of current employees. Such policies are controversial but, in most circumstances, legal. Under the doctrine of employment at will, employers may dismiss employees for any reason other than those covered by statute (e.g. sex, religion, age, national origin, disability). However, most human resource management experts take the position that termination should be a last resort after an attempt at intervention through an EAP, which should be prompted by unacceptable performance.

CONCLUSIONS

- Now in India, the performance of certain group of the employees is not meeting the expectations or matching

the Goals and Policies of the Organisation, employer's culture, etc. It is highly reported due to alcohol/drug issues, also Family problems add to this account. The EAP is projected to be an option for employers to consider well into the future, since all these issues can be resolved with the help of EAP. It will result in the increase in each employee's performance & so it will lead to improve the overall growth of the Industry in the country.

- The concept of EAP is based on the understanding that man is first and foremost a spiritual being seeking to express its truth through the instrumentality of the mental, vital, and physical nature.
- In the Growing country like India, EAP is really needed for all types of Organisations in various sectors, such as Software, BPO, Banking Sectors and Pharmaceuticals.

SUGGESTIONS

- Train and coach EA professionals about factors that contribute to quality EAP services, such as handling dual-role ethical dilemmas common in EAP practice, increasing counsellor sensitivity to balancing client advocacy with workplace safety, and using assessment techniques to objectively assess substance abuse and conduct-related problem behaviour.
- Offer leadership training programs to supervisors and bargaining unit representatives that address issues such as safety, conduct, and problem behaviour. Examples of specific topics include dealing with workplace bullying, hostile comments, and gossip as well as the standard EAP supervisor training topics.
- Provide EA professionals with training (local and Web-based) on topics such as substance abuse assessments, harassment, critical incident stress interventions, the ethics of self-referral, and dual role issues in the workplace. Provide them with additional training to integrate workplace procedures and culture factors into treatment plans.

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