

Welcome to KGA's semi-annual HR Business Partner Newsletter. What a year it's been! Highlighted are articles about the critical role that HR plays in supporting and developing managers to create and sustain a healthy work environment. Our EAP, Wellness and HR Solutions may be helpful during these challenging times. Please know that we are standing by to assist you.



SUE PENCHANSKY, VICE PRESIDENT

MOTHER NATURE...HUMAN NATURE

Here's something for you to think about, and share with others. We sometimes comment on an individual's response to an every day event or situation as "human nature," because that situation creates a predictable response we can identify with and understand.

However, what happens when situations are far from the everyday - when we have no base of experience to draw on?

We have turned the pages of our 2011 calendar nine times. During this period Mother Nature has delivered earthquakes and tsunamis in Japan, tornadoes, wild fires and hurricanes in the United States, to name just a few acts of nature beyond the scope of our experience. In these cases it's "human nature" to feel empathy for victims, concern for family and friends, and to search for answers on how to help and how to cope.

During this same nine months, many of us have been presented with problems beyond our experience - personal issues for which we are unprepared. Without experience, there is no understanding. Without understanding, there are no answers.

An EAP is designed to provide the support, the information, and the options for reacting to life's situations. It may be your first time dealing with an issue, but chances are the EAP has assisted others in your situation. Life is unpredictable.

We all need a place to turn for answers. Whether in the aftermath of a natural disaster or in dealing with unexpected life issues, your EAP is a valuable, no-cost source of information to assist you in your time of need.

MANAGER ON-BOARDING

Research indicates that over 40% of all managers and leaders, regardless of being hired from the outside or promoted from within, fail to meet expectations in the first year. Leaders new to the organization fail, in general, to understand and adapt to important cultural norms and expectations. Leaders who are promoted from within most often fail to fully transition from one level of leadership to the next. In both cases, the organization holds at least half the responsibility for the failure.

KGA can help your organization be better prepared to predict different assimilation challenges and establish shared responsibility for the success of new leaders and managers. Call Seth Moeller at KGA to discuss on-boarding approaches, tools, and related training.

WATCH FOR ENHANCED EAP/WORK LIFE WEBSITE

KGA is making a substantial investment in our EAP and Work Life website, kgreer.com. The site will be available to all our EAP clients on November 1, 2011. The enhanced and improved site will have a cleaner look, an improved search function and more video, podcast and quality in our articles, resources and tip sheets. We will continue to offer self-assessments, skill-builders, a Spanish site, daycare, eldercare and other self-directed searches. There is no need for our client companies to do anything to implement the change. We will do it behind the scenes. We'd love to hear your feedback once you review the site. Please let us know what you think!

NEW CLIENTS

KGA is pleased to welcome two EAP clients this quarter:

Abel Womack
Bentley University

EMBRACING DIVERSITY IN TOUGH TIMES

Embracing diversity is a phrase that creates mixed emotions in people. Some view it as an expanse of new ideas, people and opinions. There can be excitement as a perceived journey of exploration begins. Others may react with guarded anticipation of uninvited change.

Starting in the 1980's, the topic of diversity was in vogue across the business community. Hispanics and Asian immigrants, along with women, were entering the US workforce in record numbers. Today diversity in the workforce has broadened beyond racial and ethnic identities to include differences in culture, religion, sexual orientation, disabilities and a host of unique life experiences. While the American workforce continues to grow more comfortable with our differences, behaviors based on stereotypes and assumptions about perceived differences come to the forefront during times of uncertainty and stress.

The dismal economic picture, stagnant job growth, workforce reductions, and the overall political landscape have surrounded all of us with increased uncertainty and therefore, elevated stress. A very human response to stress is to hunker down, look inwardly and seek what is familiar. However common this response may be, it often is done at the expense of diversity and the values and optimal result your organization desires.

How then can you safeguard your organization during stressful times such as we are in now? There are two critical steps, observe and engage. Be particularly observant of backsliding in the form of decreasing collaboration, the stifling of dissenting opinions, and a questioning of others' motives. When you see these warning signs, engage. Be a model for inclusive behaviors in how you show up as a leader. Be courageous and directly engage your team, manager, or senior leadership about the troubling trends you have observed. Offer perspectives on what more constructive behavior would include. Help colleagues and leaders see what is being lost and what is to be gained, or regained, by embracing the principles that make diversity powerful.

For more information, call Dale Arsenault 508.879.2093

KGA WRITES WORKFORCE TRAINING GRANTS

KGA has had tremendous success in writing for the Massachusetts Workforce Training Grant program. Although the program was on hold for a period of time, there are new grants available for management training. Let us know about your training needs and if you would like our help in securing funds through this program. For more information, email Seth Moeller at moeller@kgreer.com.

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS**WORK LIFE WEBINARS- NO CHARGE FOR EMPLOYEES OF EAP CLIENTS**

October 18, 2011 at 12 pm, 2 pm and 4 pm EST
– *The ABC's of Working with the XYZ's*

Today's workforce is comprised of generations with different values and priorities. Learn to identify the characteristics and key motivational factors of each generation to foster successful work groups. Early registration is recommended. Space availability is on a first come, first served basis.

Visit <http://www.kgreer.com> and click on member or manager login to register.

OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS

NEHRA Stress Management for HR Professionals
at KGA, September 28, 2011

EAP Orientation for Employees

November 2, 2011, 12:15 pm and 3:15 pm EST
These live, 20-minute webinars describe the services available through the EAP. Register by going to http://www.kgreer.com/news_events.aspx

Cape Cod HR Association Conference, October 13, 2011
Kathy Greer is speaking on *Building Resiliency*