



# See Things Differently

A Newsletter for *Performance* Employee Assistance and Business Services Partners

## Supervisor

**Q** I have an employee with whom I have trouble communicating.

**She doesn't have any performance problems, but she is difficult to supervise. Can I refer myself to the EAP for advice on how best to communicate with my employee?**

**A** Yes! *Performance EAP* professionals are ready to help you manage any relationship issue, whether work-related or family/friend-related. And when it comes to communicating well with others, working with an EAP counselor speeds learning and results fourfold! The truth is: Building the most effective communication skill is a life-long journey. Lessons that incorporate real life examples and people you know are the most long-lasting in terms of results. Although good communication is not your responsibility alone (your employee is responsible also), working with an EAP counselor can also help you become more assertive and empowering as a manager, thus allowing your employee to improve as well. Call *Performance EAP* at 337-436-9533 for an appointment.

Submit your supervisory questions for the Supervisor Q&A section to Candis at [candis@fyca.org](mailto:candis@fyca.org), or fax 337-439-9941.



**Performance**  
Employee Assistance  
and Business Services

A program of Family & Youth

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## Negative Feedback can be a Beautiful Thing

Though unsettling at first, negative feedback can be the best thing that happens to you at work, as long as it is delivered correctly. If you don't believe it, remember a time when negative feedback made a positive difference for you (in the long run!). The truth is...constructive criticism can be a beautiful thing.

Who would you rather get negative feedback from – your boss or your co-workers? Many people fear the boss *less*. This is because people in positions of leadership often follow the conventional rules of feedback they have learned, making it easier for the recipient to accept the feedback. Co-workers, on the other hand, can sometimes take a no-holds-barred, take-no-prisoners approach to letting you know how you messed up. While they may be telling you the truth, the truth is easily dismissed when delivered in a mean-spirited way. Why not adopt some rules of engagement that make delivering negative feedback a more effective process?

When giving feedback to a co-worker, focus on behavior, actions, statements, and content. In other words, don't focus on *the person*. Consider these tips:

1) Rather than making general comments, make specific ones. For example, avoid "Your presentation wasn't very interesting to me." Instead, say "Mary, I liked it when you gave examples on that one point about \_\_\_\_, and when you showed enthusiasm about \_\_\_\_, I found myself getting more enthusiastic also."

2) Rather than mentioning negatives, point out all the positives. For example, "You really dressed up for this presentation," and "The length of the presentation was just right."

3) Rather than illuminating every possible point you want the co-worker to understand, start with one or two comments and then ask if he or she would like more feedback, or even some negative feedback. *Get the invitation* to include more information than your co-worker might have anticipated, including the negatives. Consensus is always a good place to start. Ask a simple question: "Would you like some more feedback?"

Good luck! Let's hope you, too, will be the recipient of useful co-worker feedback one day!

### News You Can Use

#### Professionalism 2007: Mastering Today's Unwritten Rules

an Employee Relations Workshop  
Wed., Dec. 5, 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.  
Light lunch included

Email [Roxanne@fyca.org](mailto:Roxanne@fyca.org) to register or  
call Roxanne at 436-9533.

#### Connections Count! Family Focus Professional Development Conference

Feb. 20 & 21, 2008  
at  
L'Auberge du Lac

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## Exercise for Better Short-Term Memory

Can't remember where you put your keys? What were you supposed to pick up at the store? Researchers at Yale are reporting that exercise helps maintain good short-term memory function. Exercise is crucial for younger and middle-aged persons for optimum memory function. For older persons, exercise combined with mental stimulation is important. As physical ability diminishes with age, mental exercise begins to play a larger role in helping retain memory. So remember to get moving!



## A Good Night's Sleep for Lower Blood Pressure

If you have high blood pressure, make sure you are getting enough sleep. A recent study suggests the number of hours of sleep affects your blood pressure. Study participants between the ages of 32 and 59 who slept less than six hours a night doubled their risk of high blood pressure. So, turn out the light a little earlier, and avoid caffeine and alcohol before bed time to catch a few more Zs.

If you are having trouble sleeping because of job-related stress, family concerns, or an "unknown reason" call **Performance EAP** at 337-436-9533. A counselor will help you figure out what's keeping you up a night.



## Smart Parenting: Living in a Blended Family

Hollywood makes it look so easy...blending two families into one. How does it work in the real world? Join us **Monday, Nov. 5, 5:30 to 7:00** to find out!

Successfully blending mine and yours into ours takes patience, respect, and commitment to each individual. Established personalities, customs, and memories are brought together to form new, but sometimes not so immediate bonds.

Whether you're considering remarriage, or are currently married, understanding the issues of step or blended families may help make the transition smoother. Join us for an informative seminar and interactive discussion on the trials and rewards of blended families.

Call 436-9533 to register or for more information, or visit [www.fyca.org](http://www.fyca.org). **Cost is \$5.** Seminar held at **Family & Youth, 220 Louie St., Lake Charles, LA 70601.**

### The Other Side

**Q** I often find myself listening to my customers' problems about money, family, or whatever. I try to offer advice or respond with words of encouragement, but it's wearing me out! What can I do?

**A** You are a good listener who may be experiencing compassion fatigue. Being a good listener can have its drawbacks, but you don't have to change who you are. Limit the time you allow a customer to carry on about their troubles, or cleverly change to a more positive topic. Reduce the amount of feedback you give that entices them to explain further. Take control by practicing detachment, and congratulate yourself for taking care of you. If you need further assistance contact **Performance EAP** at 337-436-9533 for an appointment with an EAP professional.

Submit your questions for The Other Side Q&A to Candis at [candis@fyca.org](mailto:candis@fyca.org), or fax 337-439-9941.

## ON GOING SEMINARS @ FAMILY & YOUTH

For more info, or to register call 337.436.9533

### PARENTING 101

Wednesdays, 4:30 to 6:00 p.m.

Six-week course that offers parents skills to enhance the family structure. Make a good home better, and a happy family a healthy family.

### ANGER

MANAGEMENT  
Thursdays, 6:00 p.m.

Don't let your anger take control! Join us for one individual session, six group sessions, then one follow-up session to get a handle on your anger.

### BRAINWORKS

First Tuesday of Nov., Jan., March, and May  
5:30 to 7:00 p.m.

For parents, spouses, friends, teachers, or other adults who live with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

### BODY BLUES

First Tuesday of Dec., Feb., April, and June  
5:30 to 7:00 p.m.

Join us for tips on healthier living! For parents and their children ages nine and up! Begin to see yourself and your world differently.

Family & Youth's guiding principle is that all individuals possess the ability to solve their own challenges and live full and healthy lives when support is available.

