



Getting to the roots of addiction. Building a bridge to wellness.



Bridging The Gaps

A Holistic Approach to Addiction Treatment



A Caring and Helping Hand Is
Just A **Call** Away

540-535-1111

bridgingthegaps.com

31 S. Braddock St. Winchester, VA 22601



We are Trusted and Highly Accredited



(540) 535-1111



www.bridgingthegaps.com

31 S. Braddock St. Winchester, Va. 22601

About Bridging the Gaps

Bridging the Gaps is a comprehensive residential treatment center located in Winchester, Virginia, dedicated to helping individuals heal from substance use and co-occurring mental health disorders. Our integrated approach addresses the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual aspects of recovery, combining evidence-based clinical therapies with holistic modalities such as nutrition, yoga, acupuncture, and amino acid therapy.

We Are Trusted and Highly Accredited

At Bridging the Gaps, we are licensed by the [Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services \(DBHDS\)](#). Licensure ensures accountability and oversight, confirming that our staff members are fully qualified to provide high-quality mental health and addiction treatment services.

We are proudly accredited by the [Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities \(CARF\)](#). Their mission aligns closely with ours—enhancing the lives of those we serve through a consultative accreditation process and a commitment to continuous improvement.

We are also [certified by the American Society of Addiction Medicine \(ASAM\)](#) for our residential levels of care. ASAM's certification program validates treatment program capabilities, increases transparency, and boosts patient confidence in our services. We are honored to have participated in their pilot program for this initiative.

Our Commitment

Together, these achievements reflect our unwavering commitment to clinical excellence, compassionate care, and long-term recovery for every individual we serve.

Early Identification & Employee Wellness

For EAP Professionals – Bridging the Gaps

Introduction

Employee Assistance Program (EAP) professionals play a key role in identifying early signs of stress, mental health concerns, and substance use among employees. Early recognition allows for timely intervention, preserves employee well-being, and supports a safe, productive workplace.

This guide provides practical strategies, checklists, and tips for EAP professionals to detect potential concerns while maintaining confidentiality and trust.

1. Why Early Identification Matters

- Prevents escalation of workplace issues.
 - Promotes recovery-friendly and supportive environments.
 - Encourages employees to seek help proactively.
 - Protects workplace safety and productivity.
-

2. Behavioral Warning Signs

Look for changes that may indicate an employee is struggling:

- Frequent absenteeism or tardiness.
- Decreased productivity or quality of work.
- Withdrawal from colleagues or social activities.

- Increased irritability, conflict, or emotional outbursts.
-

3. Physical Warning Signs

Physical indicators can be subtle but important:

- Changes in appearance or hygiene.
 - Noticeable fatigue or sleep disruption.
 - Unexplained weight loss or gain.
 - Signs of intoxication or withdrawal.
-

4. Performance Indicators

Monitor workplace performance patterns:

- Missed deadlines or incomplete work.
 - Frequent errors or lapses in judgment.
 - Difficulty concentrating or making decisions.
 - Decline in overall engagement or initiative.
-

5. Approach & Confidentiality Tips

- Approach employees with care, empathy, and neutrality.
- Use private, confidential settings for discussions.
- Focus on observable behaviors and patterns rather than assumptions.

- Document observations objectively, without judgment.
 - Ensure compliance with HIPAA, ADA, and organizational policies.
-

6. Early Engagement & Support Steps

1. **Initial Check-In:** Reach out with a supportive, non-judgmental approach.
 2. **Confidential Screening:** Offer voluntary self-assessment tools (see Appendix A).
 3. **Resource Connection:** Provide information about counseling, treatment, or internal wellness programs.
 4. **Follow-Up:** Schedule follow-up check-ins to track progress and support continued engagement.
-

7. Checklist: Early Identification

	Action	Notes
1	Observe for behavioral, physical, and performance indicators	Maintain objectivity
2	Document patterns of concern	Use EAP-approved tracking forms
3	Approach employee with empathy	Keep conversation private
4	Offer confidential wellness screening	Provide voluntary self-assessment tools
5	Connect employee to support resources	Counseling, EAP services, treatment referrals
6	Schedule follow-up	Track engagement and improvement

8. Appendix A: Suggested Self-Assessment Tools

- [Workplace Wellness Questionnaire \(fillable PDF\)](#)
- [Behavior & Performance Tracker \(fillable PDF\)](#)

These tools allow employees to reflect on stress, mood, or substance use and provide EAP professionals with structured insight for early intervention.

9. Resources & References

- [BridgingtheGaps.com/resources-for-eap-professionals](https://bridgingthegaps.com/resources-for-eap-professionals)
 - National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) – Workplace Substance Use Guidance
 - Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) – Employee Assistance Programs
-

10. Contact & Support

For additional guidance, training, or partnership opportunities:

Bridging the Gaps EAP Support Team
sue@bridgingthegaps.com 540-535-1111

Workplace Wellness Questionnaire

Confidential Self-Assessment for Employees – Bridging the Gaps EAP

Instructions for Employees

This questionnaire is **voluntary and confidential**. Your responses help you reflect on your well-being and allow our EAP professionals to provide support if needed.

- Complete honestly; there are no right or wrong answers.
 - This questionnaire is **not a diagnostic tool**. It is intended to identify areas where additional support may be helpful.
 - If you have concerns about your health, please reach out to your EAP or a qualified professional.
-

Section 1: Stress & Emotional Health

Rate each statement based on your experiences in the past month.

Question	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
I feel stressed or overwhelmed at work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have trouble focusing or concentrating on tasks.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel anxious or worried during the workday.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have difficulty balancing work and personal life.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel emotionally drained or fatigued at the end of the day.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section 2: Physical Health & Well-Being

Question	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
I get adequate sleep most nights.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I experience frequent headaches, muscle tension, or other physical symptoms of stress.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I maintain a regular exercise routine or physical activity.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I eat balanced meals and stay hydrated during the workday.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I take breaks to rest and recharge during work hours.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section 3: Workplace Behavior & Engagement

Question	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
I feel motivated and engaged in my work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have noticed changes in my mood or behavior at work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I interact positively with coworkers and maintain healthy professional relationships.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I find myself withdrawing from colleagues or team activities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have noticed an increase in errors or missed deadlines.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section 4: Substance Use (Optional)

This section is optional and **for self-reflection only**.

Question	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
I consume alcohol in a way that impacts my work or well-being.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have used prescription or over-the-counter drugs in ways not intended.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have used substances to cope with stress or work pressure.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section 5: Reflection & Support Needs

1. What areas of your wellness do you feel need the most attention?
(Text field for free response – fillable)
 2. Would you like to speak with an EAP professional about support or resources?
 - ☐ ☐ Yes
 - ☐ ☐ No
-

Optional Scoring & Interpretation for EAP Staff

- **Never/Rarely** = Low concern
- **Sometimes** = Moderate concern, monitor and offer resources
- **Often/Always** = High concern, consider EAP consultation or referral

Note: Employees' answers are confidential. Use responses only to guide voluntary support or wellness resources.

Behavior & Performance Tracker

For EAP Professionals & Managers – Bridging the Gaps

Instructions

- Use this tracker to **monitor trends in employee behavior, performance, or well-being** over time.
 - Focus on **observable behaviors and patterns**—do not include assumptions or personal judgments.
 - Maintain **confidentiality**; only authorized EAP or HR personnel should access completed trackers.
 - Review trends periodically to identify potential early interventions or support needs.
-

Employee Information

Field	Fillable Text Field
Employee Name	
Department / Team	
Job Title	
Date Tracker Started	
Supervisor / EAP Assigned	

Daily / Weekly Observation Log

Date	Observed Behavior / Performance Notes	Stress Indicators	Positive Behaviors	Follow-Up / Action Taken	EAP Staff / Manager Initials
------	--	----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------------	---------------------------------

Column Guidance:

- **Observed Behavior / Performance Notes:** Record objective behaviors or incidents.
- **Stress Indicators:** Signs such as fatigue, irritability, absenteeism, or withdrawal.
- **Positive Behaviors:** Highlight strengths, improvements, or engagement.
- **Follow-Up / Action Taken:** Document interventions, coaching, or referrals.
- **EAP Staff / Manager Initials:** Confirm who documented the observation.

Trend Analysis & Summary (Optional Section for EAP Staff)

Time Period	Notable Patterns	Recommended Support / Intervention	Notes
-------------	------------------	------------------------------------	-------

Usage Tips:

- Complete at least weekly, or after notable events/observations.
- Compare entries over time to detect trends, potential concerns, or positive progress.
- Use this tracker in combination with the Workplace Wellness Questionnaire for a holistic view.

Confidentiality & Compliance Reminder

- Store completed trackers securely according to organizational policy.
- Share only with authorized personnel involved in the employee's support.
- Ensure compliance with **HIPAA, ADA, and internal HR/EAP policies**.

Guide: Engaging Employees Early

For EAP Professionals – Bridging the Gaps

Introduction

Early engagement is key to preventing escalation of stress, mental health concerns, or substance use in the workplace. EAP professionals play a vital role in identifying employees who may benefit from support and connecting them to appropriate resources.

This guide provides a **step-by-step framework** to engage employees proactively while maintaining trust, confidentiality, and compliance.

1. The Importance of Early Engagement

- Detect potential concerns before they impact performance or well-being.
 - Reduce workplace stress and improve employee morale.
 - Encourage employees to utilize EAP and wellness resources.
 - Support a recovery-friendly, safe, and productive workplace.
-

2. Steps for Early Engagement

Step 1: Observation & Documentation

- Monitor for behavioral, performance, or physical indicators.
- Record trends objectively using tools like the **Behavior & Performance Tracker**.
- Avoid assumptions—focus only on observable actions.

Step 2: Initial Check-In

- Schedule a **private, confidential meeting** with the employee.
- Use **empathetic, non-judgmental language**:
 - “I’ve noticed X behavior recently and wanted to check in.”
 - “I want to make sure you have the support you need.”
- Keep the conversation **fact-based** and supportive.

Step 3: Offer Resources

- Share voluntary wellness tools:
 - Workplace Wellness Questionnaire
 - Self-assessment or stress management resources
- Inform employees about EAP services, counseling, and referral options.

Step 4: Collaborative Action Plan

- Encourage employees to identify supportive strategies that work for them.
- Discuss reasonable accommodations, flexible schedules, or workload adjustments if needed.
- Set expectations for follow-up or progress review.

Step 5: Follow-Up & Tracking

- Schedule **regular follow-ups** to monitor progress and provide ongoing support.
- Document engagement and outcomes using the Behavior & Performance Tracker.
- Adjust support strategies based on feedback and observed improvements.

3. Communication Best Practices

- Focus on **empathy, listening, and validation**.
 - Avoid stigmatizing language or assumptions about personal choices.
 - Reinforce **confidentiality** and voluntary participation in support programs.
 - Maintain a balance between **support and accountability**.
-

4. Sample Engagement Workflow

1. **Observation:** Identify trends or behaviors that may indicate stress or challenges.
 2. **Check-In:** Initiate private, supportive conversation.
 3. **Screening:** Offer self-assessment tools and wellness questionnaires.
 4. **Resource Connection:** Provide access to EAP services or external support.
 5. **Action Planning:** Collaborate on next steps with the employee.
 6. **Follow-Up:** Review progress and adjust support as needed.
-

5. Tips for EAP Professionals

- Build **trust and rapport** with employees before engaging.
 - Document interactions carefully while maintaining confidentiality.
 - Use **positive reinforcement** to acknowledge improvements or effort.
 - Educate managers about **supportive engagement strategies**.
-

6. Resources & References

- Workplace Wellness Questionnaire (fillable PDF)
 - Behavior & Performance Tracker (fillable PDF)
 - Early Identification Guide (PDF)
 - [Bridging the Gaps EAP Resource Hub]
-

7. Contact & Support

For additional guidance, training, or partnership opportunities:

Bridging the Gaps EAP Support Team

sue@bridgingthegaps.com 540-535-1111

CAGE-AID Questionnaire

Patient Name _____ Date of Visit _____

When thinking about drug use, include illegal drug use and the use of prescription drug other than prescribed.

Questions:	YES	NO
1. Have you ever felt that you ought to cut down on your drinking or drug use?	☐	☐
.....		
2. Have people annoyed you by criticizing your drinking or drug use?	☐	☐
.....		
3. Have you ever felt bad or guilty about your drinking or drug use?	☐	☐
.....		
4. Have you ever had a drink or used drugs first thing in the morning to steady your nerves or to get rid of a hangover?	☐	☐

Scoring

Regard one or more positive responses to the CAGE-AID as a positive screen.

Psychometric Properties

The CAGE-AID exhibited:	Sensitivity	Specificity
One or more Yes responses	0.79	0.77
Two or more Yes responses	0.70	0.85

(Brown 1995)

Drug Abuse Screening Test, DAST-10

The following questions concern information about your possible involvement with drugs *not including alcoholic beverages* during the past 12 months.

"Drug abuse" refers to (1) the use of prescribed or over-the-counter drugs in excess of the directions, and (2) any nonmedical use of drugs.

The various classes of drugs may include cannabis (marijuana, hashish), solvents (e.g., paint thinner), tranquilizers (e.g., Valium), barbiturates, cocaine, stimulants (e.g., speed), hallucinogens (e.g., LSD) or narcotics (e.g., heroin). Remember that the questions *do not* include alcoholic beverages.

Please answer every question. If you have difficulty with a statement, then choose the response that is mostly right.

In the past 12 months...			Circle	
1	Have you used drugs other than those required for medical reasons?		Yes	No
2	Do you use more than one drug at a time?		Yes	No
3	Are you always able to stop using drugs when you want to? (If never use drugs, answer "Yes")		Yes	No
4	Have you ever had blackouts or flashbacks as a result of drug use?		Yes	No
5	Do you ever feel bad or guilty about your drug use? (If never use drugs, answer "No")		Yes	No
6	Does your spouse (or parents) ever complain about your involvement with drugs?		Yes	No
7	Have you neglected your family because of your use of drugs?		Yes	No
8	Have you engaged in illegal activities in order to obtain drugs?		Yes	No
9	Have you ever experienced withdrawal symptoms (felt sick) when you stopped taking drugs?		Yes	No
10	Have you had medical problems as a result of your drug use (e.g. memory loss, hepatitis, convulsions, bleeding)?		Yes	No

Drug Abuse Screening Test (DAST-10). (Copyright 1982 by the Addiction Research Foundation.)

DAST – 10 Scores and Zones

Score	Risk Level	Intervention
0	Zone 1: No risk	Simple advice: Congratulations this means you are abstaining from excessive use of prescribed or over-the-counter medications, illegal or non-medical drugs.
1-2	Zone 2: At Risk Use - “low level” of problem drug use	Brief Intervention (BI). You are at risk. Even though you may not be currently suffering or causing harm to yourself or others, you are at risk of chronic health or behavior problems because of using drugs or medications in excess.
3-5	Zone 3: “intermediate level”	Extended BI (EBI) and RT – your score indicates you are at an “intermediate level” of problem drug use. Talk with a professional and find out what services are available to help you to decide what approach is best to help you to effectively change this pattern of behavior.
6-10	Zone 4: Very High Risk, Probable Substance Use Disorder	EBI/RT- considered to be at a “substantial to severe level” of problem drug use. Refer to specialist for diagnostic evaluation and treatment.

Scoring: Score 1 point for each question answered “Yes,” except for question 3 for which a “No” receives 1 point

Short Michigan Alcoholism Test Geriatric Version (SMAST-G)

The rights of the University of Michigan, 1991.

Source: University of Michigan Alcohol Research Center. Reprinted with permission.

		Yes (1)	No (0)
1	When talking with others, do you ever underestimate how much do you drink?		
2	After a few drinks, have you sometimes not eaten or been able to skip a meal because you didn't feel hungry?		
3	Does having a few drinks help decrease your shakiness or tremors		
4	Does alcohol sometimes make it hard for you to remember parts of the day or night?		
5	Do you usually take a drink to relax or calm your nerves?		
6	Do you drink to take your mind off problems?		
7	Have you ever increased your drinking after experiencing a loss in your life?		
8	Has a doctor or nurse ever said they were worried or concerned about your drinking?		
9	Have you ever made rules to manage your drinking?		
10	When you feel lonely, does having a drink help?		

Total SMAST G Score (0-10) _____

SCORING 2 OR MORE "YES" RESPONSES IS INDICATIVE OF AN ALCOHOL PROBLEM.

For further information, contact Frederic C. Blow, PhD, Director, Serious Mental Illness Treatment Research and Evaluation Center (SMITREC), Department of Veterans Affairs, Senior Associate Research Scientist, Associate Professor, Department of Psychiatry, University of Michigan.

Conversation Scripts for EAP & Supervisors

Guidance for EAP Professionals – Bridging the Gaps

Introduction

Difficult conversations about employee performance, stress, or potential substance use can be challenging. This guide provides **structured scripts and strategies** to help EAP professionals and supervisors approach these discussions confidently, respectfully, and effectively.

These scripts are **not prescriptive**—adapt language to fit your organizational culture and the unique needs of the employee while following confidentiality and compliance policies.

1. Preparing for the Conversation

Before initiating a discussion:

- Review employee behavior or performance documentation objectively.
 - Identify the **purpose of the conversation** (support, clarification, referral, coaching).
 - Choose a **private, confidential location** for discussion.
 - Gather relevant resources (EAP contacts, wellness tools, referral options).
 - Set a **time limit** (30–45 minutes) and plan for follow-up.
-

2. Opening the Conversation

Goal: Establish a supportive tone and demonstrate concern.

Script Example:

“Thank you for meeting with me today. I want to check in with you about some observations and see how you’re doing. My goal is to ensure you have the support you need to succeed.”

Tips:

- Keep language **neutral and empathetic**.
 - Avoid assumptions or judgmental statements.
 - Allow the employee to speak first if they wish.
-

3. Discussing Observed Behaviors or Performance

Goal: Focus on observable behaviors and patterns without labeling or diagnosing.

Script Example:

“I’ve noticed that over the past few weeks, there have been several missed deadlines and changes in your engagement with the team. I wanted to check in and understand if there’s anything affecting your work.”

Tips:

- Use **specific examples** rather than generalizations.
 - Avoid stigmatizing or personal language (e.g., “You seem like you have a problem”).
 - Frame the discussion around **support and solutions**.
-

4. Offering Support & Resources

Goal: Provide options for help and emphasize voluntary participation.

Script Example:

“We have resources available through our Employee Assistance Program that many employees find helpful, including confidential counseling and wellness tools. Would you like me to share more information?”

Tips:

- Highlight confidentiality and voluntary nature of EAP services.
 - Offer multiple support options (internal and external).
 - Be prepared to provide written resources or links.
-

5. Collaborating on Next Steps

Goal: Empower the employee to take an active role in their well-being and workplace performance.

Script Example:

“Let’s work together on a plan. We can schedule check-ins, discuss accommodations if needed, and review resources that may help. What would feel most helpful to you?”

Tips:

- Encourage open dialogue and employee input.
 - Set clear follow-up expectations (dates, responsibilities).
 - Document the plan and share with relevant parties while maintaining confidentiality.
-

6. Handling Resistance or Denial

Goal: Maintain professionalism and support even if the employee is defensive.

Script Example:

“I understand this may feel unexpected. My role is to ensure you have access to support if you want it. We can take this one step at a time and review options together.”

Tips:

- Remain calm, patient, and non-confrontational.
 - Avoid arguing or trying to force disclosure.
 - Reaffirm that resources are available whenever the employee is ready.
-

7. Closing the Conversation

Goal: End on a supportive, forward-looking note.

Script Example:

“Thank you for taking the time to discuss this today. I’ll follow up with you on [date] to see how things are going, and remember, you have access to confidential support anytime.”

Tips:

- Summarize next steps clearly.
 - Reinforce the availability of EAP resources.
 - Document the conversation for compliance and follow-up.
-

8. Quick Reference Table: Sample Scripts by Scenario

Scenario	Opening	Key Points	Support Offer
Performance decline	"I've noticed X and want to check in."	Focus on behaviors, avoid assumptions	EAP services, wellness tools
Stress / burnout	"I see you're under pressure and want to support you."	Normalize stress, ask about needs	EAP counseling, workload review
Suspected substance use	"I've observed changes and want to ensure you're safe and supported."	Do not diagnose, document facts	EAP referral, confidential resources
Conflict with coworkers	"I understand there's been tension and want to discuss solutions."	Encourage employee input	Mediation, EAP coaching

Contact & Support

For further guidance or training:

Bridging the Gaps EAP Support Team

Email: sue@bridgingthegaps.com

Phone: 540-535-1111

Empathy & Active Listening Techniques

For EAP Professionals & Supervisors – Bridging the Gaps

Introduction

Empathy and active listening are essential skills for EAP professionals and supervisors when engaging employees about stress, performance concerns, or potential substance use. These techniques help build trust, create a safe space for dialogue, and encourage employees to seek support when needed.

This guide provides practical strategies, examples, and tips to enhance your communication effectiveness in the workplace.

1. Understanding Empathy

Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of another person. In the workplace, it helps employees feel heard, valued, and supported.

Key Components of Empathy:

- **Cognitive:** Understanding the employee's perspective.
 - **Emotional:** Connecting with their feelings without judgment.
 - **Behavioral:** Responding in a supportive and helpful manner.
-

2. Principles of Active Listening

Active listening involves fully focusing on the speaker, understanding their message, and responding thoughtfully.

Techniques:

1. **Give Full Attention** – Avoid distractions, maintain eye contact, and nod to show engagement.
 2. **Paraphrase & Reflect** – Restate what the employee says to confirm understanding.
 - Example: “It sounds like you’ve been feeling overwhelmed with recent deadlines.”
 3. **Ask Open-Ended Questions** – Encourage detailed responses.
 - Example: “Can you tell me more about what’s been challenging lately?”
 4. **Avoid Interrupting or Judging** – Let the employee finish their thoughts before responding.
 5. **Observe Non-Verbal Cues** – Notice body language, tone, and emotional signals.
-

3. Using Empathy in Conversations

Sample Phrases to Demonstrate Empathy:

- “I hear that this has been difficult for you, and I appreciate you sharing.”
- “It seems like you’ve been under a lot of pressure; let’s see how we can support you.”
- “Your feelings are valid, and I want to make sure you have the resources you need.”

Tips:

- Combine empathy with factual observations from the Behavior & Performance Tracker.
- Avoid minimizing the employee’s experience (e.g., “It’s not a big deal”).

- Balance empathy with accountability when discussing performance or policy concerns.
-

4. Active Listening in Practice

Step-by-Step Example:

1. **Opening:** “Thank you for meeting with me. I want to check in and understand how things have been going for you.”
 2. **Listen & Observe:** Pay attention to words, tone, and body language.
 3. **Reflect:** “It sounds like you’ve been juggling multiple deadlines and feeling exhausted.”
 4. **Clarify:** “Can you share what has been most challenging this week?”
 5. **Support & Collaborate:** “Let’s explore resources or adjustments that could help you manage your workload and well-being.”
-

5. Handling Difficult Emotions

- **Remain Calm:** Take deep breaths and stay neutral if the employee becomes upset.
- **Validate Feelings:** Acknowledge emotions without agreeing or disagreeing with the cause.
- **Redirect if Needed:** Guide the conversation back to solutions and support options.

Example:

Employee: “I just can’t keep up; it’s all too much.”

Response: “I hear that you’re feeling overwhelmed. Let’s discuss what support could make things more manageable.”

6. Practical Tips for EAP Professionals

- Schedule regular check-ins to build rapport.
 - Use **empathy and active listening together** to encourage open dialogue.
 - Document key points objectively for follow-up while maintaining confidentiality.
 - Combine insights from questionnaires and trackers to inform conversations.
-

Contact & Support

For further guidance or training:

Bridging the Gaps EAP Support Team

Email: sue@bridgingthegaps.com

Phone: 540-535-1111

De-escalation & Crisis Response Tips

For EAP Professionals & Supervisors – Bridging the Gaps

Introduction

Workplace crises or highly emotional situations can arise when employees face stress, conflict, or personal challenges. Proper **de-escalation and crisis response skills** are essential for EAP professionals and supervisors to maintain safety, provide support, and guide employees toward productive solutions.

This guide provides step-by-step strategies, sample scripts, and best practices for handling tense situations while fostering a safe and supportive work environment.

1. Principles of De-escalation

1. **Stay Calm:** Maintain a neutral tone and composed body language.
 2. **Assess the Situation:** Identify potential triggers, safety concerns, and urgency.
 3. **Empathize & Listen:** Validate feelings without judgment.
 4. **Set Boundaries:** Clearly communicate acceptable behavior.
 5. **Offer Options:** Provide constructive ways for the employee to express concerns or receive support.
-

2. Early Warning Signs of Escalation

- Raised voice or hostile tone
 - Rapid speech or emotional outbursts
 - Physical agitation (pacing, clenched fists)
 - Withdrawal or avoidance
 - Threatening statements or aggression
-

3. Step-by-Step De-escalation Approach

Step 1: Approach Calmly

- Maintain appropriate distance.
- Speak slowly and clearly.
- Avoid sudden movements or gestures that could escalate tension.

Script Example:

“I see that this is a stressful situation. Let’s take a moment to talk and find a solution together.”

Step 2: Listen Actively

- Let the employee express feelings without interruption.
- Use reflective statements to show understanding.
- Ask open-ended questions to gather information.

Script Example:

“It sounds like you’ve been feeling overwhelmed with recent deadlines. Can you tell me more about what’s been most challenging?”

Step 3: Validate & Normalize Feelings

- Acknowledge emotions without agreeing or disagreeing with the cause.
- Normalize common reactions to stress or frustration.

Script Example:

“It makes sense that you’re frustrated given the workload. Many people feel this way in similar situations.”

Step 4: Set Boundaries & Focus on Safety

- Clearly outline acceptable behavior while maintaining respect.
- Ensure physical and emotional safety for everyone involved.

Script Example:

“I want to make sure this conversation stays productive. Let’s focus on the issues and solutions rather than personal attacks.”

Step 5: Offer Support & Next Steps

- Connect the employee to resources (EAP, counseling, wellness programs).
- Create a plan for follow-up or check-ins.

Script Example:

“I can help connect you with support through our EAP. Let’s also schedule a follow-up to review progress and see how things are going.”

4. Crisis Response Guidelines

- **Immediate Threats:** If there's danger to the employee or others, contact security, law enforcement, or emergency services immediately.
- **High Emotional Distress:** Use short, calm statements and redirect focus to safe actions.
- **Substance-Related Crisis:** Do not confront aggressively—ensure safety and refer to medical or EAP support.

Checklist:

- Assess safety
- Keep calm and neutral
- Listen and validate
- Set clear boundaries
- Offer resources and follow-up
- Document all actions and observations

5. Documentation & Follow-Up

- Record the incident objectively using the **Behavior & Performance Tracker** or incident report forms.
 - Document employee statements, observed behaviors, actions taken, and follow-up plans.
 - Maintain confidentiality and share only with authorized personnel.
-

Contact & Support

For further guidance or training:

Bridging the Gaps EAP Support Team

Email: sue@bridgingthegaps.com

Phone: 540-535-1111

Treatment Program Evaluation Checklist

For EAP Professionals & Employers – Bridging the Gaps

Introduction

Evaluating treatment programs is a critical step for ensuring employees or clients receive high-quality care. This checklist provides EAP professionals and employers with a structured way to assess the effectiveness, safety, and suitability of addiction or behavioral health programs.

Use this checklist as a **guide for informed referral decisions**, while maintaining confidentiality and compliance with organizational policies.

1. Program Accreditation & Credentials

- ☐ Is the facility licensed and accredited by relevant regulatory bodies?
 - ☐ Are clinicians certified in evidence-based addiction or mental health treatment modalities?
 - ☐ Does the program follow nationally recognized standards for quality care?
-

2. Treatment Approach & Services

- ☐ Does the program offer evidence-based therapies (e.g., CBT, IFS, Motivational Interviewing)?
- ☐ Are medical and psychiatric services available on-site or through qualified partners?
- ☐ Does the program provide a structured continuum of care (e.g., residential, PHP, IOP, aftercare)?

- ☐ Are holistic or complementary services offered (e.g., nutrition support, mindfulness, yoga)?
-

3. Staff & Environment

- ☐ Are staff-to-client ratios appropriate for personalized care?
 - ☐ Is the environment safe, comfortable, and supportive for recovery?
 - ☐ Are programs designed to reduce stigma and encourage engagement?
-

4. Outcome & Progress Tracking

- ☐ Does the program regularly measure clinical outcomes and client satisfaction?
 - ☐ Are relapse prevention strategies included?
 - ☐ Are aftercare and alumni support options available?
-

5. Compliance & Legal Considerations

- ☐ Does the program comply with HIPAA and other privacy regulations?
 - ☐ Are employee-specific considerations, such as workplace leave and coordination with EAP, handled confidentially?
-

6. Logistics & Accessibility

- ☐ Is the program location convenient for the employee?
 - ☐ Are telehealth or hybrid treatment options available if needed?
 - ☐ Is the program covered by insurance or easily coordinated with employer benefits?
-

7. Evaluation Notes

Use this section to record observations or additional comments for each program evaluated:

Program Name	Strengths	Considerations	Follow-Up Actions	Evaluator Initials
--------------	-----------	----------------	-------------------	--------------------

8. Contact & Support

For further guidance or training:

Bridging the Gaps EAP Support Team

Email: sue@bridgingthegaps.com

Phone: 540-535-1111

Family Support Resource Guide

For EAP Professionals, Supervisors & Families – Bridging the Gaps

Introduction

Families play a vital role in supporting employees or loved ones through recovery and wellness challenges. This guide provides practical strategies for family engagement, communication, and access to resources while respecting confidentiality and promoting positive outcomes.

Use this guide to **equip families with tools and knowledge** that support recovery, reduce stress, and foster a healthy, recovery-friendly environment.

1. Understanding Family Roles in Recovery

- Encourage **open, supportive communication** without judgment.
 - Recognize signs of stress or struggle while maintaining healthy boundaries.
 - Support the employee in accessing EAP services, counseling, and wellness programs.
 - Balance empathy with accountability, reinforcing workplace and personal responsibilities.
-

2. Communication Strategies for Families

- **Active Listening:** Focus fully on the speaker, reflect their feelings, and ask open-ended questions.
- **Empathy:** Validate emotions without trying to solve the problem immediately.
- **Consistency:** Reinforce positive behaviors and recovery efforts consistently.

- **Safe Boundaries:** Respect privacy while offering guidance and support.

Sample Phrases:

- “I hear that you’ve been under a lot of stress. How can I support you?”
 - “It sounds like this has been challenging for you. Let’s explore resources together.”
 - “I’m here to listen and help you find the support you need.”
-

3. Supporting Recovery at Home

- Encourage **healthy routines** (sleep, nutrition, exercise).
 - Promote **stress management strategies** (mindfulness, journaling, meditation).
 - Provide reminders and encouragement for **EAP appointments or counseling sessions**.
 - Celebrate milestones and improvements to reinforce positive progress.
-

4. Crisis Management & Safety

- Recognize warning signs of potential crises (substance misuse, emotional distress, conflict).
 - Maintain calm, empathetic communication during heightened situations.
 - Know when to **contact EAP, medical providers, or emergency services** if needed.
 - Encourage family participation in professional guidance rather than handling crises alone.
-

5. Connecting Families to Support

- Encourage participation in **family therapy or support groups** if offered by treatment providers.
 - Share educational materials about substance use, stress management, and recovery.
 - Help families understand **confidentiality and workplace boundaries** while supporting employees effectively.
-

6. Notes & Action Plan

Use this section to track family involvement, communication strategies, or follow-up actions:

Date	Observations / Needs	Support Provided	Follow-Up Actions	Initials
------	-------------------------	------------------	----------------------	----------

7. Contact & Support

For further guidance or training:

Bridging the Gaps EAP Support Team

Email: sue@bridgingthegaps.com

Phone: 540-535-1111

Referral Scripts & Guidance

For EAP Professionals & Supervisors – Bridging the Gaps

Introduction

Referral to appropriate treatment or wellness resources is a critical step in supporting employees who may be experiencing stress, behavioral challenges, or substance use concerns. This guide provides **practical scripts and guidance** for EAP professionals and supervisors to make referrals with empathy, clarity, and professionalism.

Use this guide to **encourage engagement**, maintain trust, and ensure employees understand available support options while protecting confidentiality and compliance.

1. Preparing for a Referral Conversation

Before initiating a referral:

- Review **employee observations** and relevant documentation objectively.
 - Identify the **purpose of the referral** (e.g., EAP counseling, treatment program, wellness support).
 - Confirm **available resources** and next steps.
 - Choose a **private and confidential location** for the discussion.
-

2. Opening the Referral Conversation

Goal: Establish a supportive and non-judgmental tone.

Script Example:

“Thank you for meeting with me today. I want to check in with you and discuss some resources that could provide support. My goal is to make sure you have access to help if you need it.”

Tips:

- Use **empathetic, neutral language**.
 - Avoid assumptions or labels about substance use or personal challenges.
 - Emphasize **voluntary participation** and confidentiality.
-

3. Discussing the Need for Referral

Goal: Frame the referral as a supportive step, not a punishment.

Script Example:

“I’ve noticed some changes in [behavior/performance], and I want to ensure you have access to support. Our EAP offers confidential counseling and wellness services that many employees find helpful.”

Tips:

- Focus on **observable behaviors** and workplace impact.
 - Reinforce that the referral is meant to **support success and well-being**.
 - Allow the employee to respond and share concerns.
-

4. Presenting Options & Next Steps

Goal: Provide clear, actionable choices for employees.

Script Example:

“Here are a few options: you can meet with an EAP counselor this week, explore wellness programs, or participate in stress management workshops. Which of these would feel most helpful for you?”

Tips:

- Offer **multiple resources** when possible.
 - Encourage the employee to **choose the approach** that feels comfortable.
 - Provide written or digital information about programs or services.
-

5. Handling Resistance or Hesitation

Goal: Maintain professionalism and support, even if the employee is reluctant.

Script Example:

“I understand this may feel unexpected. My role is to ensure you’re aware of the resources available. You can access them at any time, and I’m here to support you when you’re ready.”

Tips:

- Stay **calm, patient, and non-confrontational**.
 - Avoid pressuring the employee.
 - Emphasize **confidentiality and voluntary engagement**.
-

6. Documenting & Following Up

- Record the conversation objectively, noting **observed behaviors, recommendations, and employee responses**.
 - Schedule follow-ups to review engagement and progress.
 - Maintain confidentiality and share documentation only with **authorized personnel**.
-

7. Sample Quick Reference Table: Referral Scripts

Situation	Opening Script	Support Offer	Follow-Up
Stress or burnout	"I want to check in and discuss support options."	EAP counseling, wellness workshops	Schedule follow-up in 1 week
Performance concerns	"I've noticed X behavior and want to ensure support is available."	EAP, coaching sessions	Document and review progress
Suspected substance use	"I've observed changes and want to ensure you're safe and supported."	EAP referral, treatment options	Confidential follow-up

8. Contact & Support

For further guidance or training:

Bridging the Gaps EAP Support Team

Email: sue@bridgingthegaps.com

Phone: 540-535-1111

Employee Support Log Template

For EAP Professionals, HR Teams & Supervisors – Bridging the Gaps

Introduction

This **Employee Support Log Template** helps EAP professionals and supervisors document key interactions, interventions, and follow-ups related to employee wellness, performance, or treatment referrals.

Use this tool to maintain **accurate, confidential records** of support activities while ensuring compliance with organizational policies and privacy standards. It also promotes consistency across departments and strengthens communication between HR, EAP, and management teams.

1. Employee Information

Field	Details
Employee Name	
Department	
Supervisor	
Date of Initial Concern	
Date of First Contact	
Case/Support ID (if applicable)	
Confidential Notes Location	☐ HR

2. Identified Concern or Trigger for Support

(Select all that apply)

- ☐ Performance Decline
- ☐ Attendance Issues
- ☐ Behavioral or Emotional Changes
- ☐ Workplace Conflict
- ☐ Reported Substance Use or Stress
- ☐ Health/Personal Crisis
- ☐ Other: _____

Brief Description:

3. Initial Intervention or Action Taken

Date	Type of Action	Description	Person Responsible
------	----------------	-------------	--------------------

- ☐ Meeting
- ☐ EAP Referral
- ☐ Written Notice
- ☐ Informal Check-in
- ☐ Other: _____

Summary of Discussion:

4. Follow-Up & Outcomes Tracking

Date	Follow-Up Method	Employee Response	Next Steps
	☐ Email	☐ Call	☐ In-Person
	☐ Email	☐ Call	☐ In-Person
	☐ Email	☐ Call	☐ In-Person

Notes:

5. Coordination with EAP or Treatment Provider

Date	Provider Contact	Summary of Coordination	Next Review Date
------	------------------	-------------------------	------------------

- ☐ Consent form signed and on file
- ☐ Communication limited to functional updates only (per HIPAA/ADA)

6. Case Closure Summary

Date Closed	Reason for Closure	Supervisor Initials	EAP Initials
	☐ Completed Plan	☐ Resigned	☐ Terminated

Final Notes:

7. Confidentiality Notice

All documentation must be maintained according to your organization's confidentiality policies and applicable laws. Access should be limited to authorized personnel only.

8. Contact & Support

For further guidance or training:

Bridging the Gaps EAP Support Team

Email: sue@bridgingthegaps.com

Phone: 540-535-1111

Incident & Concern Reporting Template

For HR Professionals & Supervisors – Bridging the Gaps

Introduction

This structured template helps HR professionals and managers **document workplace incidents or employee concerns clearly and consistently**. Using this form ensures fair, transparent handling of issues while maintaining compliance, accountability, and confidentiality.

1. Employee & Report Information

Field	Details
Date of Report	
	—
Employee(s) Involved	
	—
Department/Team	
	—
Reported By	
	—
Position/Title	
	—

2. Type of Concern

(Select all that apply)

- ☐ Performance Issue
- ☐ Policy Violation
- ☐ Behavioral Concern
- ☐ Safety Issue
- ☐ Other:

3. Description of Incident / Concern

Provide a clear, objective description of the incident or observed behaviors:

4. Immediate Actions Taken

5. Witnesses (if applicable)

6. Follow-Up or Next Steps

7. Supervisor / HR Sign-Off

Supervisor/HR Signature: _____

Date: _____

8. Contact & Support

For further guidance or training:

Bridging the Gaps EAP Support Team

Email: sue@bridgingthegaps.com

Phone: 540-535-1111

Confidentiality Best Practices for EAPs

For EAP Professionals & Supervisors – Bridging the Gaps

Introduction

Protecting sensitive employee information is a cornerstone of effective EAP support. Maintaining confidentiality builds trust, ensures legal compliance, and promotes a safe environment for employees to seek help.

This guide provides **practical best practices** for managing confidential information in workplace support, referral, and wellness programs.

1. Principles of Confidentiality

- **Privacy First:** Treat all employee communications as confidential unless disclosure is legally required.
 - **Need-to-Know Basis:** Share information only with individuals directly responsible for support, HR compliance, or safety.
 - **Clear Boundaries:** Separate HR documentation, supervisory notes, and EAP records appropriately.
-

2. Handling Employee Information

- Store records securely (locked cabinets or password-protected systems).
 - Use anonymized or limited identifiers when sharing trends or patterns.
 - Avoid discussing employee issues in public spaces or with unauthorized personnel.
-

3. Communication Guidelines

- When discussing referrals or interventions, use neutral, factual language.
 - Reinforce confidentiality when introducing employees to EAP or external providers.
 - Document only necessary details for compliance, follow-up, or safety.
-

4. Legal Compliance Considerations

- Understand [HIPAA](#), [ADA](#), [FMLA](#), and state privacy regulations.
 - Ensure EAPs and treatment providers have clear agreements for information sharing.
 - Maintain proper consent forms when necessary.
-

5. Best Practices for Supervisors

- Keep all discussions private and focused on **observed behaviors or performance concerns**.
 - Encourage employees to use EAP resources directly for personal or sensitive matters.
 - Avoid storing sensitive information in general personnel files unless required.
-

6. Contact & Support

For further guidance or training:

Bridging the Gaps EAP Support Team

Email: sue@bridgingthegaps.com

Phone: 540-535-1111

Legal Considerations for Employee Support

For HR Professionals & EAP Teams – Bridging the Gaps

Introduction

Supporting employees with wellness, behavioral health, or substance use challenges requires a clear understanding of legal obligations. This guide provides an overview of **FMLA, ADA, and workplace accommodations**, helping HR and EAP professionals support employees effectively while staying compliant.

1. Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

- Employees may be eligible for **protected leave** for their own serious health condition or to care for a family member.
- HR teams must provide **timely notice, documentation, and tracking** to ensure compliance.
- FMLA leave cannot be denied based on an employee's participation in EAP or treatment programs.

Key Actions:

- Verify eligibility and leave type.
 - Maintain confidentiality of medical information.
 - Coordinate leave with payroll and benefits teams.
-

2. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

- The ADA protects employees with **disabilities, including substance use disorders in recovery**.
- Employers must provide **reasonable accommodations** unless it creates undue hardship.
- Accommodations may include schedule flexibility, remote work, or modified duties during recovery.

Key Actions:

- Engage in an interactive process to determine accommodations.
 - Document all requests, decisions, and accommodations offered.
 - Ensure supervisors and managers understand **privacy and non-discrimination requirements**.
-

3. Workplace Accommodations

- **Flexible scheduling:** Allow for therapy, counseling, or medical appointments.
- **Modified workload:** Temporarily adjust responsibilities during recovery.
- **Telework or remote options:** Support treatment or wellness needs without disrupting workflow.
- **Access to EAP services:** Encourage voluntary participation in confidential programs.

Key Considerations:

- Accommodations should be individualized and documented.
- Regularly review accommodations to ensure effectiveness.
- Maintain confidentiality and avoid stigmatizing language.

4. Coordination Between HR & EAP

- HR and EAP teams should collaborate while **maintaining privacy protections**.
 - Ensure legal compliance while providing **supportive workplace interventions**.
 - Establish clear policies for **tracking leave, accommodations, and follow-up**.
-

5. Contact & Support

For further guidance or training:

Bridging the Gaps EAP Support Team

Email: sue@bridgingthegaps.com

Phone: 540-535-1111

Employee Wellness Toolkit

For EAP Professionals, HR Teams & Supervisors – Bridging the Gaps

Introduction

A wellness-focused workplace promotes resilience, productivity, and engagement. This toolkit provides HR and EAP professionals with **practical strategies, templates, and guidance** to support employee well-being while maintaining confidentiality and compliance.

Use these resources to **encourage proactive wellness, early intervention, and a culture of support** across your organization.

1. Promoting Wellness in the Workplace

- **Encourage Healthy Routines:** Nutrition, sleep, physical activity, and mindfulness practices.
 - **Stress Management Strategies:** Meditation, journaling, guided relaxation, and short breaks.
 - **Employee Engagement:** Wellness challenges, workshops, and access to counseling resources.
 - **Supportive Environment:** Foster open communication and reduce stigma around mental health or substance use concerns.
-

2. Early Identification & Intervention

- Implement **screening questionnaires** to detect early signs of stress or behavioral challenges.
 - Use the **Behavior & Performance Tracker** to monitor changes in employee behavior or performance.
 - Engage employees proactively with **EAP referrals, wellness resources, and confidential check-ins**.
-

3. Tools & Templates Included

- [Workplace Wellness Questionnaire](#) – Identify stressors and areas for support.
 - [Behavior & Performance Tracker](#) – Track behaviors and interventions.
 - [Employee Support Log Template](#) – Document support interactions and follow-ups.
 - [Referral Scripts & Guidance](#) – Conduct referral conversations with empathy and professionalism.
-

4. Best Practices for HR & EAP Professionals

- Maintain **confidentiality** in all wellness-related communications.
 - Document interactions and interventions consistently for **compliance and accountability**.
 - Encourage voluntary participation in wellness programs and referrals.
 - Coordinate with supervisors while **protecting employee privacy**.
-

5. Sample Wellness Initiatives

- On-site or virtual mindfulness sessions
 - Fitness or step challenges
 - Lunch-and-learn workshops on stress management
 - Peer support groups or mentoring programs
-

6. Contact & Support

For further guidance or training:

Bridging the Gaps EAP Support Team

Email: sue@bridgingthegaps.com

Phone: 540-535-1111

Manager Training Modules for EAP Professionals

Bridging the Gaps – Training Supervisors to Support Employee Wellness, Engagement, and Recovery

Introduction

Supervisors and managers are on the front lines of supporting employee wellness, addressing workplace challenges, and fostering a recovery-friendly environment. Effective manager training helps **identify early warning signs, communicate with empathy, and coordinate interventions** while maintaining compliance and confidentiality.

These modules provide a **comprehensive framework** to equip managers with the knowledge, skills, and tools necessary to support employees effectively, from early identification to return-to-work planning.

Module 1: Understanding the EAP Framework

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the scope and benefits of Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs).
- Learn how EAP services complement HR policies, wellness initiatives, and recovery programs.
- Recognize the manager's role in **encouraging utilization, reducing stigma, and supporting employees proactively**.

Key Topics:

- Overview of EAP services: counseling, wellness workshops, referrals to treatment.
- Confidentiality principles and boundaries between managers, HR, and EAP.

- Signs that an employee may benefit from EAP support (stress, absenteeism, performance changes).
-

Module 2: Early Identification & Observation Skills

Learning Objectives:

- Identify behavioral, performance, and engagement changes that may indicate stress or wellness concerns.
- Document observations objectively using **Behavior & Performance Trackers**.
- Distinguish between work-related performance issues and potential wellness concerns.

Scenarios for Practice:

- Increased tardiness or absenteeism over several weeks.
- Noticeable changes in mood, social interaction, or work quality.
- Repeated conflicts with team members or supervisors.

Tools Provided:

- [Behavior & Performance Tracker template](#)
 - [Employee Support Log Template](#)
-

Module 3: Effective Communication Strategies

Learning Objectives:

- Communicate with empathy while maintaining professional boundaries.
- Conduct sensitive conversations that promote engagement without stigmatization.
- Use **active listening, reflection, and open-ended questions** to encourage dialogue.

Core Techniques:

- Empathy & Active Listening: Focus fully, acknowledge feelings, validate concerns.
- [De-escalation](#): Stay calm, manage emotional intensity, prevent escalation.
- [Referral Introductions](#): Use scripts to guide employees to EAP or wellness resources.

Sample Conversation Framework:

1. Opening: “I want to check in with you to see how things are going and discuss available support resources.”
 2. Observation: “I’ve noticed X behaviors/performance changes and want to ensure you have the right support.”
 3. Options & Next Steps: “Our EAP offers counseling, wellness workshops, or other resources. Which feels most helpful for you?”
-

Module 4: Legal, Ethical & Compliance Considerations

Learning Objectives:

- Understand **FMLA, ADA, and workplace accommodation obligations**.
- Learn when and how to involve HR while protecting confidentiality.
- Document interactions and follow-ups appropriately.

Key Takeaways:

- Engage in the **interactive process** for accommodations.
 - Keep records confidential and separate from personnel files unless required.
 - Avoid assumptions, labeling, or making promises about outcomes.
-

Module 5: Supporting Wellness & Recovery

Learning Objectives:

- Encourage employee participation in wellness programs, stress management initiatives, and EAP services.
- Understand the manager's role in supporting return-to-work and phased re-entry.
- Promote a **recovery-friendly culture** that balances compassion and accountability.

Best Practices:

- Check in regularly while respecting privacy.
- Celebrate progress and milestones in employee wellness or recovery.
- Use structured documentation tools to track interventions and outcomes.

Tools Provided:

- [Employee Wellness Toolkit](#)
 - [Return-to-Work Planning Template](#)
-

Module 6: Scenarios, Role-Plays, & Skill-Building

- Simulated conversations to practice **referrals, de-escalation, and accommodations discussions**.
 - Case studies highlighting performance vs. wellness concerns.
 - Interactive exercises to reinforce **documentation, confidentiality, and compliance principles**.
-

Module 7: Ongoing Support & Resources

Managers should have access to:

- EAP support for guidance during challenging conversations.
 - HR consultation for legal compliance and policy questions.
 - Peer mentoring or ongoing training sessions for **skills refresh and knowledge updates**.
-

8. Contact & Support

For further guidance, consultation, or training:

Bridging the Gaps EAP Support Team

Email: sue@bridgingthegaps.com

Phone: 540-535-1111



Getting to the roots of addiction. Building a bridge to wellness.



Bridging The Gaps

A Holistic Approach to Addiction Treatment



A Caring and Helping Hand Is
Just A **Call** Away

540-535-1111

bridgingthegaps.com

31 S. Braddock St. Winchester, VA 22601



We are Trusted and Highly Accredited



(540) 535-1111



www.bridgingthegaps.com

31 S. Braddock St. Winchester, Va. 22601

Early Identification & Employee Wellness

For EAP Professionals – Bridging the Gaps

Introduction

Employee Assistance Program (EAP) professionals play a key role in identifying early signs of stress, mental health concerns, and substance use among employees. Early recognition allows for timely intervention, preserves employee well-being, and supports a safe, productive workplace.

This guide provides practical strategies, checklists, and tips for EAP professionals to detect potential concerns while maintaining confidentiality and trust.

1. Why Early Identification Matters

- Prevents escalation of workplace issues.
 - Promotes recovery-friendly and supportive environments.
 - Encourages employees to seek help proactively.
 - Protects workplace safety and productivity.
-

2. Behavioral Warning Signs

Look for changes that may indicate an employee is struggling:

- Frequent absenteeism or tardiness.
- Decreased productivity or quality of work.
- Withdrawal from colleagues or social activities.

- Increased irritability, conflict, or emotional outbursts.
-

3. Physical Warning Signs

Physical indicators can be subtle but important:

- Changes in appearance or hygiene.
 - Noticeable fatigue or sleep disruption.
 - Unexplained weight loss or gain.
 - Signs of intoxication or withdrawal.
-

4. Performance Indicators

Monitor workplace performance patterns:

- Missed deadlines or incomplete work.
 - Frequent errors or lapses in judgment.
 - Difficulty concentrating or making decisions.
 - Decline in overall engagement or initiative.
-

5. Approach & Confidentiality Tips

- Approach employees with care, empathy, and neutrality.
- Use private, confidential settings for discussions.
- Focus on observable behaviors and patterns rather than assumptions.

- Document observations objectively, without judgment.
 - Ensure compliance with HIPAA, ADA, and organizational policies.
-

6. Early Engagement & Support Steps

1. **Initial Check-In:** Reach out with a supportive, non-judgmental approach.
 2. **Confidential Screening:** Offer voluntary self-assessment tools (see Appendix A).
 3. **Resource Connection:** Provide information about counseling, treatment, or internal wellness programs.
 4. **Follow-Up:** Schedule follow-up check-ins to track progress and support continued engagement.
-

7. Checklist: Early Identification

	Action	Notes
1	Observe for behavioral, physical, and performance indicators	Maintain objectivity
2	Document patterns of concern	Use EAP-approved tracking forms
3	Approach employee with empathy	Keep conversation private
4	Offer confidential wellness screening	Provide voluntary self-assessment tools
5	Connect employee to support resources	Counseling, EAP services, treatment referrals
6	Schedule follow-up	Track engagement and improvement

8. Appendix A: Suggested Self-Assessment Tools

- [Workplace Wellness Questionnaire \(fillable PDF\)](#)
- [Behavior & Performance Tracker \(fillable PDF\)](#)

These tools allow employees to reflect on stress, mood, or substance use and provide EAP professionals with structured insight for early intervention.

9. Resources & References

- [BridgingtheGaps.com/resources-for-eap-professionals](https://bridgingthegaps.com/resources-for-eap-professionals)
 - National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) – Workplace Substance Use Guidance
 - Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) – Employee Assistance Programs
-

10. Contact & Support

For additional guidance, training, or partnership opportunities:

Bridging the Gaps EAP Support Team
sue@bridgingthegaps.com 540-535-1111

Workplace Wellness Questionnaire

Confidential Self-Assessment for Employees – Bridging the Gaps EAP

Instructions for Employees

This questionnaire is **voluntary and confidential**. Your responses help you reflect on your well-being and allow our EAP professionals to provide support if needed.

- Complete honestly; there are no right or wrong answers.
 - This questionnaire is **not a diagnostic tool**. It is intended to identify areas where additional support may be helpful.
 - If you have concerns about your health, please reach out to your EAP or a qualified professional.
-

Section 1: Stress & Emotional Health

Rate each statement based on your experiences in the past month.

Question	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
I feel stressed or overwhelmed at work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have trouble focusing or concentrating on tasks.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel anxious or worried during the workday.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have difficulty balancing work and personal life.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel emotionally drained or fatigued at the end of the day.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section 2: Physical Health & Well-Being

Question	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
I get adequate sleep most nights.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I experience frequent headaches, muscle tension, or other physical symptoms of stress.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I maintain a regular exercise routine or physical activity.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I eat balanced meals and stay hydrated during the workday.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I take breaks to rest and recharge during work hours.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section 3: Workplace Behavior & Engagement

Question	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
I feel motivated and engaged in my work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have noticed changes in my mood or behavior at work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I interact positively with coworkers and maintain healthy professional relationships.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I find myself withdrawing from colleagues or team activities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have noticed an increase in errors or missed deadlines.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section 4: Substance Use (Optional)

This section is optional and **for self-reflection only**.

Question	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
I consume alcohol in a way that impacts my work or well-being.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have used prescription or over-the-counter drugs in ways not intended.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have used substances to cope with stress or work pressure.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section 5: Reflection & Support Needs

1. What areas of your wellness do you feel need the most attention?
(Text field for free response – fillable)
 2. Would you like to speak with an EAP professional about support or resources?
 - ☐ ☐ Yes
 - ☐ ☐ No
-

Optional Scoring & Interpretation for EAP Staff

- **Never/Rarely** = Low concern
- **Sometimes** = Moderate concern, monitor and offer resources
- **Often/Always** = High concern, consider EAP consultation or referral

Note: Employees' answers are confidential. Use responses only to guide voluntary support or wellness resources.

Behavior & Performance Tracker

For EAP Professionals & Managers – Bridging the Gaps

Instructions

- Use this tracker to **monitor trends in employee behavior, performance, or well-being** over time.
 - Focus on **observable behaviors and patterns**—do not include assumptions or personal judgments.
 - Maintain **confidentiality**; only authorized EAP or HR personnel should access completed trackers.
 - Review trends periodically to identify potential early interventions or support needs.
-

Employee Information

Field	Fillable Text Field
Employee Name	
Department / Team	
Job Title	
Date Tracker Started	
Supervisor / EAP Assigned	

Daily / Weekly Observation Log

Date	Observed Behavior / Performance Notes	Stress Indicators	Positive Behaviors	Follow-Up / Action Taken	EAP Staff / Manager Initials
------	--	----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------------	---------------------------------

Column Guidance:

- **Observed Behavior / Performance Notes:** Record objective behaviors or incidents.
- **Stress Indicators:** Signs such as fatigue, irritability, absenteeism, or withdrawal.
- **Positive Behaviors:** Highlight strengths, improvements, or engagement.
- **Follow-Up / Action Taken:** Document interventions, coaching, or referrals.
- **EAP Staff / Manager Initials:** Confirm who documented the observation.

Trend Analysis & Summary (Optional Section for EAP Staff)

Time Period	Notable Patterns	Recommended Support / Intervention	Notes
-------------	------------------	------------------------------------	-------

Usage Tips:

- Complete at least weekly, or after notable events/observations.
- Compare entries over time to detect trends, potential concerns, or positive progress.
- Use this tracker in combination with the Workplace Wellness Questionnaire for a holistic view.

Confidentiality & Compliance Reminder

- Store completed trackers securely according to organizational policy.
- Share only with authorized personnel involved in the employee's support.
- Ensure compliance with **HIPAA, ADA, and internal HR/EAP policies**.

Guide: Engaging Employees Early

For EAP Professionals – Bridging the Gaps

Introduction

Early engagement is key to preventing escalation of stress, mental health concerns, or substance use in the workplace. EAP professionals play a vital role in identifying employees who may benefit from support and connecting them to appropriate resources.

This guide provides a **step-by-step framework** to engage employees proactively while maintaining trust, confidentiality, and compliance.

1. The Importance of Early Engagement

- Detect potential concerns before they impact performance or well-being.
 - Reduce workplace stress and improve employee morale.
 - Encourage employees to utilize EAP and wellness resources.
 - Support a recovery-friendly, safe, and productive workplace.
-

2. Steps for Early Engagement

Step 1: Observation & Documentation

- Monitor for behavioral, performance, or physical indicators.
- Record trends objectively using tools like the **Behavior & Performance Tracker**.
- Avoid assumptions—focus only on observable actions.

Step 2: Initial Check-In

- Schedule a **private, confidential meeting** with the employee.
- Use **empathetic, non-judgmental language**:
 - “I’ve noticed X behavior recently and wanted to check in.”
 - “I want to make sure you have the support you need.”
- Keep the conversation **fact-based** and supportive.

Step 3: Offer Resources

- Share voluntary wellness tools:
 - Workplace Wellness Questionnaire
 - Self-assessment or stress management resources
- Inform employees about EAP services, counseling, and referral options.

Step 4: Collaborative Action Plan

- Encourage employees to identify supportive strategies that work for them.
- Discuss reasonable accommodations, flexible schedules, or workload adjustments if needed.
- Set expectations for follow-up or progress review.

Step 5: Follow-Up & Tracking

- Schedule **regular follow-ups** to monitor progress and provide ongoing support.
- Document engagement and outcomes using the Behavior & Performance Tracker.
- Adjust support strategies based on feedback and observed improvements.

3. Communication Best Practices

- Focus on **empathy, listening, and validation**.
 - Avoid stigmatizing language or assumptions about personal choices.
 - Reinforce **confidentiality** and voluntary participation in support programs.
 - Maintain a balance between **support and accountability**.
-

4. Sample Engagement Workflow

1. **Observation:** Identify trends or behaviors that may indicate stress or challenges.
 2. **Check-In:** Initiate private, supportive conversation.
 3. **Screening:** Offer self-assessment tools and wellness questionnaires.
 4. **Resource Connection:** Provide access to EAP services or external support.
 5. **Action Planning:** Collaborate on next steps with the employee.
 6. **Follow-Up:** Review progress and adjust support as needed.
-

5. Tips for EAP Professionals

- Build **trust and rapport** with employees before engaging.
 - Document interactions carefully while maintaining confidentiality.
 - Use **positive reinforcement** to acknowledge improvements or effort.
 - Educate managers about **supportive engagement strategies**.
-

6. Resources & References

- Workplace Wellness Questionnaire (fillable PDF)
 - Behavior & Performance Tracker (fillable PDF)
 - Early Identification Guide (PDF)
 - [Bridging the Gaps EAP Resource Hub]
-

7. Contact & Support

For additional guidance, training, or partnership opportunities:

Bridging the Gaps EAP Support Team

sue@bridgingthegaps.com 540-535-1111

Conversation Scripts for EAP & Supervisors

Guidance for EAP Professionals – Bridging the Gaps

Introduction

Difficult conversations about employee performance, stress, or potential substance use can be challenging. This guide provides **structured scripts and strategies** to help EAP professionals and supervisors approach these discussions confidently, respectfully, and effectively.

These scripts are **not prescriptive**—adapt language to fit your organizational culture and the unique needs of the employee while following confidentiality and compliance policies.

1. Preparing for the Conversation

Before initiating a discussion:

- Review employee behavior or performance documentation objectively.
 - Identify the **purpose of the conversation** (support, clarification, referral, coaching).
 - Choose a **private, confidential location** for discussion.
 - Gather relevant resources (EAP contacts, wellness tools, referral options).
 - Set a **time limit** (30–45 minutes) and plan for follow-up.
-

2. Opening the Conversation

Goal: Establish a supportive tone and demonstrate concern.

Script Example:

“Thank you for meeting with me today. I want to check in with you about some observations and see how you’re doing. My goal is to ensure you have the support you need to succeed.”

Tips:

- Keep language **neutral and empathetic**.
 - Avoid assumptions or judgmental statements.
 - Allow the employee to speak first if they wish.
-

3. Discussing Observed Behaviors or Performance

Goal: Focus on observable behaviors and patterns without labeling or diagnosing.

Script Example:

“I’ve noticed that over the past few weeks, there have been several missed deadlines and changes in your engagement with the team. I wanted to check in and understand if there’s anything affecting your work.”

Tips:

- Use **specific examples** rather than generalizations.
 - Avoid stigmatizing or personal language (e.g., “You seem like you have a problem”).
 - Frame the discussion around **support and solutions**.
-

4. Offering Support & Resources

Goal: Provide options for help and emphasize voluntary participation.

Script Example:

“We have resources available through our Employee Assistance Program that many employees find helpful, including confidential counseling and wellness tools. Would you like me to share more information?”

Tips:

- Highlight confidentiality and voluntary nature of EAP services.
 - Offer multiple support options (internal and external).
 - Be prepared to provide written resources or links.
-

5. Collaborating on Next Steps

Goal: Empower the employee to take an active role in their well-being and workplace performance.

Script Example:

“Let’s work together on a plan. We can schedule check-ins, discuss accommodations if needed, and review resources that may help. What would feel most helpful to you?”

Tips:

- Encourage open dialogue and employee input.
 - Set clear follow-up expectations (dates, responsibilities).
 - Document the plan and share with relevant parties while maintaining confidentiality.
-

6. Handling Resistance or Denial

Goal: Maintain professionalism and support even if the employee is defensive.

Script Example:

“I understand this may feel unexpected. My role is to ensure you have access to support if you want it. We can take this one step at a time and review options together.”

Tips:

- Remain calm, patient, and non-confrontational.
 - Avoid arguing or trying to force disclosure.
 - Reaffirm that resources are available whenever the employee is ready.
-

7. Closing the Conversation

Goal: End on a supportive, forward-looking note.

Script Example:

“Thank you for taking the time to discuss this today. I’ll follow up with you on [date] to see how things are going, and remember, you have access to confidential support anytime.”

Tips:

- Summarize next steps clearly.
 - Reinforce the availability of EAP resources.
 - Document the conversation for compliance and follow-up.
-

8. Quick Reference Table: Sample Scripts by Scenario

Scenario	Opening	Key Points	Support Offer
Performance decline	"I've noticed X and want to check in."	Focus on behaviors, avoid assumptions	EAP services, wellness tools
Stress / burnout	"I see you're under pressure and want to support you."	Normalize stress, ask about needs	EAP counseling, workload review
Suspected substance use	"I've observed changes and want to ensure you're safe and supported."	Do not diagnose, document facts	EAP referral, confidential resources
Conflict with coworkers	"I understand there's been tension and want to discuss solutions."	Encourage employee input	Mediation, EAP coaching

Contact & Support

For further guidance or training:

Bridging the Gaps EAP Support Team

Email: sue@bridgingthegaps.com

Phone: 540-535-1111

Empathy & Active Listening Techniques

For EAP Professionals & Supervisors – Bridging the Gaps

Introduction

Empathy and active listening are essential skills for EAP professionals and supervisors when engaging employees about stress, performance concerns, or potential substance use. These techniques help build trust, create a safe space for dialogue, and encourage employees to seek support when needed.

This guide provides practical strategies, examples, and tips to enhance your communication effectiveness in the workplace.

1. Understanding Empathy

Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of another person. In the workplace, it helps employees feel heard, valued, and supported.

Key Components of Empathy:

- **Cognitive:** Understanding the employee's perspective.
 - **Emotional:** Connecting with their feelings without judgment.
 - **Behavioral:** Responding in a supportive and helpful manner.
-

2. Principles of Active Listening

Active listening involves fully focusing on the speaker, understanding their message, and responding thoughtfully.

Techniques:

1. **Give Full Attention** – Avoid distractions, maintain eye contact, and nod to show engagement.
 2. **Paraphrase & Reflect** – Restate what the employee says to confirm understanding.
 - Example: “It sounds like you’ve been feeling overwhelmed with recent deadlines.”
 3. **Ask Open-Ended Questions** – Encourage detailed responses.
 - Example: “Can you tell me more about what’s been challenging lately?”
 4. **Avoid Interrupting or Judging** – Let the employee finish their thoughts before responding.
 5. **Observe Non-Verbal Cues** – Notice body language, tone, and emotional signals.
-

3. Using Empathy in Conversations

Sample Phrases to Demonstrate Empathy:

- “I hear that this has been difficult for you, and I appreciate you sharing.”
- “It seems like you’ve been under a lot of pressure; let’s see how we can support you.”
- “Your feelings are valid, and I want to make sure you have the resources you need.”

Tips:

- Combine empathy with factual observations from the Behavior & Performance Tracker.
- Avoid minimizing the employee’s experience (e.g., “It’s not a big deal”).

- Balance empathy with accountability when discussing performance or policy concerns.
-

4. Active Listening in Practice

Step-by-Step Example:

1. **Opening:** “Thank you for meeting with me. I want to check in and understand how things have been going for you.”
 2. **Listen & Observe:** Pay attention to words, tone, and body language.
 3. **Reflect:** “It sounds like you’ve been juggling multiple deadlines and feeling exhausted.”
 4. **Clarify:** “Can you share what has been most challenging this week?”
 5. **Support & Collaborate:** “Let’s explore resources or adjustments that could help you manage your workload and well-being.”
-

5. Handling Difficult Emotions

- **Remain Calm:** Take deep breaths and stay neutral if the employee becomes upset.
- **Validate Feelings:** Acknowledge emotions without agreeing or disagreeing with the cause.
- **Redirect if Needed:** Guide the conversation back to solutions and support options.

Example:

Employee: “I just can’t keep up; it’s all too much.”

Response: “I hear that you’re feeling overwhelmed. Let’s discuss what support could make things more manageable.”

6. Practical Tips for EAP Professionals

- Schedule regular check-ins to build rapport.
 - Use **empathy and active listening together** to encourage open dialogue.
 - Document key points objectively for follow-up while maintaining confidentiality.
 - Combine insights from questionnaires and trackers to inform conversations.
-

Contact & Support

For further guidance or training:

Bridging the Gaps EAP Support Team

Email: sue@bridgingthegaps.com

Phone: 540-535-1111

De-escalation & Crisis Response Tips

For EAP Professionals & Supervisors – Bridging the Gaps

Introduction

Workplace crises or highly emotional situations can arise when employees face stress, conflict, or personal challenges. Proper **de-escalation and crisis response skills** are essential for EAP professionals and supervisors to maintain safety, provide support, and guide employees toward productive solutions.

This guide provides step-by-step strategies, sample scripts, and best practices for handling tense situations while fostering a safe and supportive work environment.

1. Principles of De-escalation

1. **Stay Calm:** Maintain a neutral tone and composed body language.
 2. **Assess the Situation:** Identify potential triggers, safety concerns, and urgency.
 3. **Empathize & Listen:** Validate feelings without judgment.
 4. **Set Boundaries:** Clearly communicate acceptable behavior.
 5. **Offer Options:** Provide constructive ways for the employee to express concerns or receive support.
-

2. Early Warning Signs of Escalation

- Raised voice or hostile tone
 - Rapid speech or emotional outbursts
 - Physical agitation (pacing, clenched fists)
 - Withdrawal or avoidance
 - Threatening statements or aggression
-

3. Step-by-Step De-escalation Approach

Step 1: Approach Calmly

- Maintain appropriate distance.
- Speak slowly and clearly.
- Avoid sudden movements or gestures that could escalate tension.

Script Example:

“I see that this is a stressful situation. Let’s take a moment to talk and find a solution together.”

Step 2: Listen Actively

- Let the employee express feelings without interruption.
- Use reflective statements to show understanding.
- Ask open-ended questions to gather information.

Script Example:

“It sounds like you’ve been feeling overwhelmed with recent deadlines. Can you tell me more about what’s been most challenging?”

Step 3: Validate & Normalize Feelings

- Acknowledge emotions without agreeing or disagreeing with the cause.
- Normalize common reactions to stress or frustration.

Script Example:

“It makes sense that you’re frustrated given the workload. Many people feel this way in similar situations.”

Step 4: Set Boundaries & Focus on Safety

- Clearly outline acceptable behavior while maintaining respect.
- Ensure physical and emotional safety for everyone involved.

Script Example:

“I want to make sure this conversation stays productive. Let’s focus on the issues and solutions rather than personal attacks.”

Step 5: Offer Support & Next Steps

- Connect the employee to resources (EAP, counseling, wellness programs).
- Create a plan for follow-up or check-ins.

Script Example:

“I can help connect you with support through our EAP. Let’s also schedule a follow-up to review progress and see how things are going.”

4. Crisis Response Guidelines

- **Immediate Threats:** If there's danger to the employee or others, contact security, law enforcement, or emergency services immediately.
- **High Emotional Distress:** Use short, calm statements and redirect focus to safe actions.
- **Substance-Related Crisis:** Do not confront aggressively—ensure safety and refer to medical or EAP support.

Checklist:

- Assess safety
- Keep calm and neutral
- Listen and validate
- Set clear boundaries
- Offer resources and follow-up
- Document all actions and observations

5. Documentation & Follow-Up

- Record the incident objectively using the **Behavior & Performance Tracker** or incident report forms.
 - Document employee statements, observed behaviors, actions taken, and follow-up plans.
 - Maintain confidentiality and share only with authorized personnel.
-

Contact & Support

For further guidance or training:

Bridging the Gaps EAP Support Team

Email: sue@bridgingthegaps.com

Phone: 540-535-1111

Treatment Program Evaluation Checklist

For EAP Professionals & Employers – Bridging the Gaps

Introduction

Evaluating treatment programs is a critical step for ensuring employees or clients receive high-quality care. This checklist provides EAP professionals and employers with a structured way to assess the effectiveness, safety, and suitability of addiction or behavioral health programs.

Use this checklist as a **guide for informed referral decisions**, while maintaining confidentiality and compliance with organizational policies.

1. Program Accreditation & Credentials

- ☐ Is the facility licensed and accredited by relevant regulatory bodies?
 - ☐ Are clinicians certified in evidence-based addiction or mental health treatment modalities?
 - ☐ Does the program follow nationally recognized standards for quality care?
-

2. Treatment Approach & Services

- ☐ Does the program offer evidence-based therapies (e.g., CBT, IFS, Motivational Interviewing)?
- ☐ Are medical and psychiatric services available on-site or through qualified partners?
- ☐ Does the program provide a structured continuum of care (e.g., residential, PHP, IOP, aftercare)?

- ☐ Are holistic or complementary services offered (e.g., nutrition support, mindfulness, yoga)?
-

3. Staff & Environment

- ☐ Are staff-to-client ratios appropriate for personalized care?
 - ☐ Is the environment safe, comfortable, and supportive for recovery?
 - ☐ Are programs designed to reduce stigma and encourage engagement?
-

4. Outcome & Progress Tracking

- ☐ Does the program regularly measure clinical outcomes and client satisfaction?
 - ☐ Are relapse prevention strategies included?
 - ☐ Are aftercare and alumni support options available?
-

5. Compliance & Legal Considerations

- ☐ Does the program comply with HIPAA and other privacy regulations?
 - ☐ Are employee-specific considerations, such as workplace leave and coordination with EAP, handled confidentially?
-

6. Logistics & Accessibility

- ☐ Is the program location convenient for the employee?
 - ☐ Are telehealth or hybrid treatment options available if needed?
 - ☐ Is the program covered by insurance or easily coordinated with employer benefits?
-

7. Evaluation Notes

Use this section to record observations or additional comments for each program evaluated:

Program Name	Strengths	Considerations	Follow-Up Actions	Evaluator Initials
--------------	-----------	----------------	-------------------	--------------------

8. Contact & Support

For further guidance or training:

Bridging the Gaps EAP Support Team

Email: sue@bridgingthegaps.com

Phone: 540-535-1111

Family Support Resource Guide

For EAP Professionals, Supervisors & Families – Bridging the Gaps

Introduction

Families play a vital role in supporting employees or loved ones through recovery and wellness challenges. This guide provides practical strategies for family engagement, communication, and access to resources while respecting confidentiality and promoting positive outcomes.

Use this guide to **equip families with tools and knowledge** that support recovery, reduce stress, and foster a healthy, recovery-friendly environment.

1. Understanding Family Roles in Recovery

- Encourage **open, supportive communication** without judgment.
 - Recognize signs of stress or struggle while maintaining healthy boundaries.
 - Support the employee in accessing EAP services, counseling, and wellness programs.
 - Balance empathy with accountability, reinforcing workplace and personal responsibilities.
-

2. Communication Strategies for Families

- **Active Listening:** Focus fully on the speaker, reflect their feelings, and ask open-ended questions.
- **Empathy:** Validate emotions without trying to solve the problem immediately.
- **Consistency:** Reinforce positive behaviors and recovery efforts consistently.

- **Safe Boundaries:** Respect privacy while offering guidance and support.

Sample Phrases:

- “I hear that you’ve been under a lot of stress. How can I support you?”
 - “It sounds like this has been challenging for you. Let’s explore resources together.”
 - “I’m here to listen and help you find the support you need.”
-

3. Supporting Recovery at Home

- Encourage **healthy routines** (sleep, nutrition, exercise).
 - Promote **stress management strategies** (mindfulness, journaling, meditation).
 - Provide reminders and encouragement for **EAP appointments or counseling sessions**.
 - Celebrate milestones and improvements to reinforce positive progress.
-

4. Crisis Management & Safety

- Recognize warning signs of potential crises (substance misuse, emotional distress, conflict).
 - Maintain calm, empathetic communication during heightened situations.
 - Know when to **contact EAP, medical providers, or emergency services** if needed.
 - Encourage family participation in professional guidance rather than handling crises alone.
-

5. Connecting Families to Support

- Encourage participation in **family therapy or support groups** if offered by treatment providers.
 - Share educational materials about substance use, stress management, and recovery.
 - Help families understand **confidentiality and workplace boundaries** while supporting employees effectively.
-

6. Notes & Action Plan

Use this section to track family involvement, communication strategies, or follow-up actions:

Date	Observations / Needs	Support Provided	Follow-Up Actions	Initials
------	-------------------------	------------------	----------------------	----------

7. Contact & Support

For further guidance or training:

Bridging the Gaps EAP Support Team

Email: sue@bridgingthegaps.com

Phone: 540-535-1111

Referral Scripts & Guidance

For EAP Professionals & Supervisors – Bridging the Gaps

Introduction

Referral to appropriate treatment or wellness resources is a critical step in supporting employees who may be experiencing stress, behavioral challenges, or substance use concerns. This guide provides **practical scripts and guidance** for EAP professionals and supervisors to make referrals with empathy, clarity, and professionalism.

Use this guide to **encourage engagement**, maintain trust, and ensure employees understand available support options while protecting confidentiality and compliance.

1. Preparing for a Referral Conversation

Before initiating a referral:

- Review **employee observations** and relevant documentation objectively.
 - Identify the **purpose of the referral** (e.g., EAP counseling, treatment program, wellness support).
 - Confirm **available resources** and next steps.
 - Choose a **private and confidential location** for the discussion.
-

2. Opening the Referral Conversation

Goal: Establish a supportive and non-judgmental tone.

Script Example:

“Thank you for meeting with me today. I want to check in with you and discuss some resources that could provide support. My goal is to make sure you have access to help if you need it.”

Tips:

- Use **empathetic, neutral language**.
 - Avoid assumptions or labels about substance use or personal challenges.
 - Emphasize **voluntary participation** and confidentiality.
-

3. Discussing the Need for Referral

Goal: Frame the referral as a supportive step, not a punishment.

Script Example:

“I’ve noticed some changes in [behavior/performance], and I want to ensure you have access to support. Our EAP offers confidential counseling and wellness services that many employees find helpful.”

Tips:

- Focus on **observable behaviors** and workplace impact.
 - Reinforce that the referral is meant to **support success and well-being**.
 - Allow the employee to respond and share concerns.
-

4. Presenting Options & Next Steps

Goal: Provide clear, actionable choices for employees.

Script Example:

“Here are a few options: you can meet with an EAP counselor this week, explore wellness programs, or participate in stress management workshops. Which of these would feel most helpful for you?”

Tips:

- Offer **multiple resources** when possible.
 - Encourage the employee to **choose the approach** that feels comfortable.
 - Provide written or digital information about programs or services.
-

5. Handling Resistance or Hesitation

Goal: Maintain professionalism and support, even if the employee is reluctant.

Script Example:

“I understand this may feel unexpected. My role is to ensure you’re aware of the resources available. You can access them at any time, and I’m here to support you when you’re ready.”

Tips:

- Stay **calm, patient, and non-confrontational**.
 - Avoid pressuring the employee.
 - Emphasize **confidentiality and voluntary engagement**.
-

6. Documenting & Following Up

- Record the conversation objectively, noting **observed behaviors, recommendations, and employee responses**.
 - Schedule follow-ups to review engagement and progress.
 - Maintain confidentiality and share documentation only with **authorized personnel**.
-

7. Sample Quick Reference Table: Referral Scripts

Situation	Opening Script	Support Offer	Follow-Up
Stress or burnout	"I want to check in and discuss support options."	EAP counseling, wellness workshops	Schedule follow-up in 1 week
Performance concerns	"I've noticed X behavior and want to ensure support is available."	EAP, coaching sessions	Document and review progress
Suspected substance use	"I've observed changes and want to ensure you're safe and supported."	EAP referral, treatment options	Confidential follow-up

8. Contact & Support

For further guidance or training:

Bridging the Gaps EAP Support Team

Email: sue@bridgingthegaps.com

Phone: 540-535-1111

Employee Support Log Template

For EAP Professionals, HR Teams & Supervisors – Bridging the Gaps

Introduction

This **Employee Support Log Template** helps EAP professionals and supervisors document key interactions, interventions, and follow-ups related to employee wellness, performance, or treatment referrals.

Use this tool to maintain **accurate, confidential records** of support activities while ensuring compliance with organizational policies and privacy standards. It also promotes consistency across departments and strengthens communication between HR, EAP, and management teams.

1. Employee Information

Field	Details
Employee Name	
Department	
Supervisor	
Date of Initial Concern	
Date of First Contact	
Case/Support ID (if applicable)	
Confidential Notes Location	☐ HR

2. Identified Concern or Trigger for Support

(Select all that apply)

- ☐ Performance Decline
- ☐ Attendance Issues
- ☐ Behavioral or Emotional Changes
- ☐ Workplace Conflict
- ☐ Reported Substance Use or Stress
- ☐ Health/Personal Crisis
- ☐ Other: _____

Brief Description:

3. Initial Intervention or Action Taken

Date	Type of Action	Description	Person Responsible
------	----------------	-------------	--------------------

- ☐ Meeting
- ☐ EAP Referral
- ☐ Written Notice
- ☐ Informal Check-in
- ☐ Other: _____

Summary of Discussion:

4. Follow-Up & Outcomes Tracking

Date	Follow-Up Method	Employee Response	Next Steps
	☐ Email	☐ Call	☐ In-Person
	☐ Email	☐ Call	☐ In-Person
	☐ Email	☐ Call	☐ In-Person

Notes:

5. Coordination with EAP or Treatment Provider

Date	Provider Contact	Summary of Coordination	Next Review Date
------	------------------	-------------------------	------------------

- ☐ Consent form signed and on file
- ☐ Communication limited to functional updates only (per HIPAA/ADA)

6. Case Closure Summary

Date Closed	Reason for Closure	Supervisor Initials	EAP Initials
	☐ Completed Plan	☐ Resigned	☐ Terminated

Final Notes:

7. Confidentiality Notice

All documentation must be maintained according to your organization's confidentiality policies and applicable laws. Access should be limited to authorized personnel only.

8. Contact & Support

For further guidance or training:

Bridging the Gaps EAP Support Team

Email: sue@bridgingthegaps.com

Phone: 540-535-1111

Incident & Concern Reporting Template

For HR Professionals & Supervisors – Bridging the Gaps

Introduction

This structured template helps HR professionals and managers **document workplace incidents or employee concerns clearly and consistently**. Using this form ensures fair, transparent handling of issues while maintaining compliance, accountability, and confidentiality.

1. Employee & Report Information

Field	Details
Date of Report	
	—
Employee(s) Involved	
	—
Department/Team	
	—
Reported By	
	—
Position/Title	
	—

2. Type of Concern

(Select all that apply)

- ☐ Performance Issue
- ☐ Policy Violation
- ☐ Behavioral Concern
- ☐ Safety Issue
- ☐ Other:

3. Description of Incident / Concern

Provide a clear, objective description of the incident or observed behaviors:

4. Immediate Actions Taken

5. Witnesses (if applicable)

6. Follow-Up or Next Steps

7. Supervisor / HR Sign-Off

Supervisor/HR Signature: _____

Date: _____

8. Contact & Support

For further guidance or training:

Bridging the Gaps EAP Support Team

Email: sue@bridgingthegaps.com

Phone: 540-535-1111

Confidentiality Best Practices for EAPs

For EAP Professionals & Supervisors – Bridging the Gaps

Introduction

Protecting sensitive employee information is a cornerstone of effective EAP support. Maintaining confidentiality builds trust, ensures legal compliance, and promotes a safe environment for employees to seek help.

This guide provides **practical best practices** for managing confidential information in workplace support, referral, and wellness programs.

1. Principles of Confidentiality

- **Privacy First:** Treat all employee communications as confidential unless disclosure is legally required.
 - **Need-to-Know Basis:** Share information only with individuals directly responsible for support, HR compliance, or safety.
 - **Clear Boundaries:** Separate HR documentation, supervisory notes, and EAP records appropriately.
-

2. Handling Employee Information

- Store records securely (locked cabinets or password-protected systems).
 - Use anonymized or limited identifiers when sharing trends or patterns.
 - Avoid discussing employee issues in public spaces or with unauthorized personnel.
-

3. Communication Guidelines

- When discussing referrals or interventions, use neutral, factual language.
 - Reinforce confidentiality when introducing employees to EAP or external providers.
 - Document only necessary details for compliance, follow-up, or safety.
-

4. Legal Compliance Considerations

- Understand [HIPAA](#), [ADA](#), [FMLA](#), and state privacy regulations.
 - Ensure EAPs and treatment providers have clear agreements for information sharing.
 - Maintain proper consent forms when necessary.
-

5. Best Practices for Supervisors

- Keep all discussions private and focused on **observed behaviors or performance concerns**.
 - Encourage employees to use EAP resources directly for personal or sensitive matters.
 - Avoid storing sensitive information in general personnel files unless required.
-

6. Contact & Support

For further guidance or training:

Bridging the Gaps EAP Support Team

Email: sue@bridgingthegaps.com

Phone: 540-535-1111

Legal Considerations for Employee Support

For HR Professionals & EAP Teams – Bridging the Gaps

Introduction

Supporting employees with wellness, behavioral health, or substance use challenges requires a clear understanding of legal obligations. This guide provides an overview of **FMLA, ADA, and workplace accommodations**, helping HR and EAP professionals support employees effectively while staying compliant.

1. Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

- Employees may be eligible for **protected leave** for their own serious health condition or to care for a family member.
- HR teams must provide **timely notice, documentation, and tracking** to ensure compliance.
- FMLA leave cannot be denied based on an employee's participation in EAP or treatment programs.

Key Actions:

- Verify eligibility and leave type.
 - Maintain confidentiality of medical information.
 - Coordinate leave with payroll and benefits teams.
-

2. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

- The ADA protects employees with **disabilities, including substance use disorders in recovery**.
- Employers must provide **reasonable accommodations** unless it creates undue hardship.
- Accommodations may include schedule flexibility, remote work, or modified duties during recovery.

Key Actions:

- Engage in an interactive process to determine accommodations.
 - Document all requests, decisions, and accommodations offered.
 - Ensure supervisors and managers understand **privacy and non-discrimination requirements**.
-

3. Workplace Accommodations

- **Flexible scheduling:** Allow for therapy, counseling, or medical appointments.
- **Modified workload:** Temporarily adjust responsibilities during recovery.
- **Telework or remote options:** Support treatment or wellness needs without disrupting workflow.
- **Access to EAP services:** Encourage voluntary participation in confidential programs.

Key Considerations:

- Accommodations should be individualized and documented.
- Regularly review accommodations to ensure effectiveness.
- Maintain confidentiality and avoid stigmatizing language.

4. Coordination Between HR & EAP

- HR and EAP teams should collaborate while **maintaining privacy protections**.
 - Ensure legal compliance while providing **supportive workplace interventions**.
 - Establish clear policies for **tracking leave, accommodations, and follow-up**.
-

5. Contact & Support

For further guidance or training:

Bridging the Gaps EAP Support Team

Email: sue@bridgingthegaps.com

Phone: 540-535-1111

Employee Wellness Toolkit

For EAP Professionals, HR Teams & Supervisors – Bridging the Gaps

Introduction

A wellness-focused workplace promotes resilience, productivity, and engagement. This toolkit provides HR and EAP professionals with **practical strategies, templates, and guidance** to support employee well-being while maintaining confidentiality and compliance.

Use these resources to **encourage proactive wellness, early intervention, and a culture of support** across your organization.

1. Promoting Wellness in the Workplace

- **Encourage Healthy Routines:** Nutrition, sleep, physical activity, and mindfulness practices.
 - **Stress Management Strategies:** Meditation, journaling, guided relaxation, and short breaks.
 - **Employee Engagement:** Wellness challenges, workshops, and access to counseling resources.
 - **Supportive Environment:** Foster open communication and reduce stigma around mental health or substance use concerns.
-

2. Early Identification & Intervention

- Implement **screening questionnaires** to detect early signs of stress or behavioral challenges.
 - Use the **Behavior & Performance Tracker** to monitor changes in employee behavior or performance.
 - Engage employees proactively with **EAP referrals, wellness resources, and confidential check-ins**.
-

3. Tools & Templates Included

- [Workplace Wellness Questionnaire](#) – Identify stressors and areas for support.
 - [Behavior & Performance Tracker](#) – Track behaviors and interventions.
 - [Employee Support Log Template](#) – Document support interactions and follow-ups.
 - [Referral Scripts & Guidance](#) – Conduct referral conversations with empathy and professionalism.
-

4. Best Practices for HR & EAP Professionals

- Maintain **confidentiality** in all wellness-related communications.
 - Document interactions and interventions consistently for **compliance and accountability**.
 - Encourage voluntary participation in wellness programs and referrals.
 - Coordinate with supervisors while **protecting employee privacy**.
-

5. Sample Wellness Initiatives

- On-site or virtual mindfulness sessions
 - Fitness or step challenges
 - Lunch-and-learn workshops on stress management
 - Peer support groups or mentoring programs
-

6. Contact & Support

For further guidance or training:

Bridging the Gaps EAP Support Team

Email: sue@bridgingthegaps.com

Phone: 540-535-1111

Manager Training Modules for EAP Professionals

Bridging the Gaps – Training Supervisors to Support Employee Wellness, Engagement, and Recovery

Introduction

Supervisors and managers are on the front lines of supporting employee wellness, addressing workplace challenges, and fostering a recovery-friendly environment. Effective manager training helps **identify early warning signs, communicate with empathy, and coordinate interventions** while maintaining compliance and confidentiality.

These modules provide a **comprehensive framework** to equip managers with the knowledge, skills, and tools necessary to support employees effectively, from early identification to return-to-work planning.

Module 1: Understanding the EAP Framework

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the scope and benefits of Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs).
- Learn how EAP services complement HR policies, wellness initiatives, and recovery programs.
- Recognize the manager's role in **encouraging utilization, reducing stigma, and supporting employees proactively**.

Key Topics:

- Overview of EAP services: counseling, wellness workshops, referrals to treatment.
- Confidentiality principles and boundaries between managers, HR, and EAP.

- Signs that an employee may benefit from EAP support (stress, absenteeism, performance changes).
-

Module 2: Early Identification & Observation Skills

Learning Objectives:

- Identify behavioral, performance, and engagement changes that may indicate stress or wellness concerns.
- Document observations objectively using **Behavior & Performance Trackers**.
- Distinguish between work-related performance issues and potential wellness concerns.

Scenarios for Practice:

- Increased tardiness or absenteeism over several weeks.
- Noticeable changes in mood, social interaction, or work quality.
- Repeated conflicts with team members or supervisors.

Tools Provided:

- [Behavior & Performance Tracker template](#)
 - [Employee Support Log Template](#)
-

Module 3: Effective Communication Strategies

Learning Objectives:

- Communicate with empathy while maintaining professional boundaries.
- Conduct sensitive conversations that promote engagement without stigmatization.
- Use **active listening, reflection, and open-ended questions** to encourage dialogue.

Core Techniques:

- Empathy & Active Listening: Focus fully, acknowledge feelings, validate concerns.
- [De-escalation](#): Stay calm, manage emotional intensity, prevent escalation.
- [Referral Introductions](#): Use scripts to guide employees to EAP or wellness resources.

Sample Conversation Framework:

1. Opening: “I want to check in with you to see how things are going and discuss available support resources.”
 2. Observation: “I’ve noticed X behaviors/performance changes and want to ensure you have the right support.”
 3. Options & Next Steps: “Our EAP offers counseling, wellness workshops, or other resources. Which feels most helpful for you?”
-

Module 4: Legal, Ethical & Compliance Considerations

Learning Objectives:

- Understand **FMLA, ADA, and workplace accommodation obligations**.
- Learn when and how to involve HR while protecting confidentiality.
- Document interactions and follow-ups appropriately.

Key Takeaways:

- Engage in the **interactive process** for accommodations.
 - Keep records confidential and separate from personnel files unless required.
 - Avoid assumptions, labeling, or making promises about outcomes.
-

Module 5: Supporting Wellness & Recovery

Learning Objectives:

- Encourage employee participation in wellness programs, stress management initiatives, and EAP services.
- Understand the manager's role in supporting return-to-work and phased re-entry.
- Promote a **recovery-friendly culture** that balances compassion and accountability.

Best Practices:

- Check in regularly while respecting privacy.
- Celebrate progress and milestones in employee wellness or recovery.
- Use structured documentation tools to track interventions and outcomes.

Tools Provided:

- [Employee Wellness Toolkit](#)
 - [Return-to-Work Planning Template](#)
-

Module 6: Scenarios, Role-Plays, & Skill-Building

- Simulated conversations to practice **referrals, de-escalation, and accommodations discussions**.
 - Case studies highlighting performance vs. wellness concerns.
 - Interactive exercises to reinforce **documentation, confidentiality, and compliance principles**.
-

Module 7: Ongoing Support & Resources

Managers should have access to:

- EAP support for guidance during challenging conversations.
 - HR consultation for legal compliance and policy questions.
 - Peer mentoring or ongoing training sessions for **skills refresh and knowledge updates**.
-

8. Contact & Support

For further guidance, consultation, or training:

Bridging the Gaps EAP Support Team

Email: sue@bridgingthegaps.com

Phone: 540-535-1111