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**THE EXPLORATION OF THE REASONS FOR THE  
RESISTANCE OF TROUBLED EMPLOYEES TO UTILISE THE  
EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME AT AVENTIS  
PHARMA**

by

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## **DEDICATION**

*This work is dedicated to the following:*

*My parents Isaac and Josephine Ramokolo whose words of wisdom inspired me: “you must study hard and hang on books”.*

*My two daughtes Boikoketso and Oketsegang Ramokolo, because of them I have a purpose to be a role model. It is my desire they may not fall far from the tree.*

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My beloved daughter Boikoketso for her understanding and love.

Above all, I owe gratitude to the Almighty God for His unfailing love, for granting me the ability, courage and guidance to complete my post graduate studies. Without His spiritual support, I would not have achieved what I had planned.

Mmatsatsi Ramokolo

## SUMMARY

**The exploration of the reasons for the resistance of troubled employees to utilize the Employee Assistance Programme at Aventis Pharma.**

The researcher is employed at Aventis Pharma as an Employee Assistance Practitioner since 2001. Employees at Aventis Pharma do not utilize the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP). They wait for supervisors to refer them to the EAP for assistance. The purpose of this study was to explore the reasons for the resistance of troubled employees to utilize the EAP at Aventis Pharma.

In this study, a qualitative approach was the most appropriate because the researcher's intention was to get information on employees' perceptions, not numerical data. The researcher intended to ascertain the respondents' feelings, perceptions and opinions based on their resistance to utilize EAP.

The researcher utilized applied research because Royce (1991:19) states that its findings are used to solve problems of immediate concern. The researcher utilized applied research in order to understand the problem in detail and to generate knowledge with regard to solving the problem of resistance.

The researcher utilized an exploratory design that is more qualitative in nature. The purpose of the exploratory study was to gain insight into a situation, phenomenon, community or person (Bless & Higson-Smith,

1995:42). The researcher explored the respondents' perceptions, feelings and opinions of EAP to find out their reasons for not utilizing the EAP. A phenomenological strategy was utilized. The aim of the researcher was to understand perceptions, feelings and opinions about utilizing the EAP from various respondents.

A literature study as well as an empirical investigation was implemented in this research project. Respondents were gathered on a sampling basis and a semi-structured interview schedule was used to gather information from the respondents at Aventis Pharma.

In this study the semi-structured interview schedule helped the researcher to gain knowledge and understand the respondents' perceptions, feelings and opinions on the utilization of an EAP. The interview schedule consisted of open and close-ended questions. A tape recorder was used to ensure that all the necessary information was recorded. After collecting information, it was analysed and interpreted and the researcher compiled a report to document the research findings.

The researcher conducted a pilot test with 2 employees who were not part of the main study and this helped the researcher to check the effectiveness of the interview schedule before it could be done on a large population.

The research population for this study was the employees of Aventis Pharma. The company is situated in the east of Pretoria. It consists of 215 employees. The boundary of the sample consisted of 12 employees at Aventis Pharma. The company consists of skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled employees. The respondents were employees who are semi-skilled, those who have standard seven to a diploma. The respondents

were between the ages of 20 and 55 years, males and females from various race groups. For the purpose of this study, the researcher utilized the non-probability purposive sampling.

The in-depth interviews revealed the following:

The majority of employees knew about the EAP, marketing was done within the company but some employees could not differentiate between the EAP and social work. Different types of written materials were used to introduce the programme in the company. Employees do not want supervisors to refer them to the EAP; they want to consult on their own. They believe that if a supervisor refers you to the EAP, it means you have problems. The employees' resistance to consult on their own forces the supervisors to apply a mandatory referral.

On the issue of supervisory training, employees feel that supervisors should not be trained on EAP. They believe that supervisors will not leave their jobs and become EA practitioners. For most employees, supervisory training is a waste of time.

## **LIST OF KEY CONCEPTS**

- Employee Assistance Programme
  
- Resistance
  
- Troubled Employee

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# **CHAPTER 1**

## **THE EXPLORATION OF THE REASONS FOR THE RESISTANCE OF TROUBLED EMPLOYEES TO UTILIZE THE EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME AT AVENTIS PHARMA.**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

Recently, companies began to implement worksite programmes as a demonstration of support for their employees. These programmes brought about positive changes in employee health, and they increased productivity and employee morale (Association of fitness in business, 1992:7).

An Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) is a work-based programme that is designed to identify problem employees and motivate them to solve their problems. Myers (1984:4) defines EAP as a generic term denoting more or less structured programmes that utilize technical, administrative and professional human services and people, on either a contractual or employment basis, to meet the needs of troubled employees. Work plays a central role in the lives of adults in the world. A significant amount of time is spent in one's place of work..

Bruce (1990:121) states that it is important for employers to have a back-up plan, a way to assist their employees to improve productivity and to deal effectively with their problems which impact on the work group. The typical EAP contains a mechanism for assessment of employees' personal and work related problems in order that an employee can be referred to the best source of assistance.

Aventis Pharma is a pharmacy company that manufactures various types of medication. The mission of Aventis Pharma is customer first and quality always. The company consists of 10 departments with 215 employees from all racial groups. The researcher is an EAP practitioner at Aventis Pharma and she realized that employees have personal and work related problems, which end up affecting their job performance. Employees know that there is an EA practitioner in the company but they go to their managers when they experience problems.

It was the intention of this proposal to explore the employees' reasons for not utilizing the EAP in the company.

## **1.2 MOTIVATION FOR THE CHOICE OF THE STUDY**

Employee Assistance Programmes are designed to help alleviate work related problems and enable people at work to realize their full potential for the benefit of the organization and themselves. The researcher is employed at Aventis Pharma where employees suffer from stress, social and work related problems. Ever since her appointment at Aventis Pharma in 2001, the researcher realized that production is really affected by employees who bring their problems to work.

Since her appointment as an EA practitioner, the researcher has few employees who utilize her services through self-referral. This experience has motivated the researcher to carry out such a study. The desire to improve the standard of the EAP in this company is the major motivating factor to the researcher.

In order to improve the EAP in this company, the researcher found it necessary to conduct a study that would explore the employees' perceptions, feelings and opinions of the EAP.

### **1.3 PROBLEM FORMULATION**

Problem formulation is the initial step in the research process. The researcher understands that one must first identify, understand and formulate the problem before one can undertake an empirical study about the problem. Bruce (1990:122) defines EAP as a counselling service provided directly for employees and their dependants. It is a service to help you help your employees.

Everyone in the workplace is affected in some way by the presence of troubled employees. Bruce (1990:15) states that when an employee experiences family crisis, becomes ill, or abuses alcohol or drugs, that employee is likely to become a troubled employee. Every employee costs the organization in time, productivity, morale and money. About 60% of employees at Aventis Pharma have job related problems caused by alcoholism, financial difficulties, marital discord, family problems, legal difficulties or a combination of these. These troubled employees cause

the majority of performance deficiencies in attendance, conduct, work quality and quantity (Myers, 1984:3).

The researcher has found that 10% of employees are not meeting the deadlines of their work assignments, 15% are absent from work, 20% arrive late and 15% is off sick. The above percentages of late coming and absenteeism end up affecting job performance and productivity. Bruce (1990:15) mentions that one cannot prevent these problems and one cannot change the cause of these types of problems. The only thing that one can learn to change is the impact of these problems on the organization.

The issue in this proposal was that employees know that there is an EAP in the company but they still talk to their managers and supervisors when they have problems. Unfortunately, managers were not trained to be counsellors, so they end up referring them to the EAP. The study will attempt to resolve the abovementioned problems.

#### **1.4 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

##### **Goal**

De Vos, Schurink & Strydom (1998:7) define a goal as the end toward which effort or ambition is directed. According to the researcher, a goal is what you want to achieve at the end of your study. For the purpose of this study, the goal is:

To explore the reasons for the resistance of troubled employees to utilize the Employee Assistance Programme at Aventis Pharma.

## **Objectives**

Objectives are the steps that one has to take one by one, realistically at grass-roots level, within a certain time span in order to attain the goal (De Vos, Schurink, & Strydom, 1998:7). For the purpose of this study, the objectives will be as follows:

- To obtain a theoretical frame of reference regarding the marketing of an EAP, the types of referrals and supervisory training.
- To investigate empirically the reasons why employees resist utilizing the EAP.
- To formulate some recommendations based on the promotion of better referral systems and the reasons for the resistance.

## **1.5 RESEARCH QUESTION**

De Vos (1998:115) states that research always commences with one or more questions or hypotheses. Questions are posed about the nature of real situations, while hypotheses are statements about how things can be. Research questions are more relevant if the researcher works qualitatively, and hypotheses when the researcher works quantitatively.

The research question is the question to be answered at the end of the investigation. Since the aim of this study was to find out the employees' reasons for not utilizing the EAP, the research question was utilized. The research question was stated as follows:

Why do employees resist utilizing the EAP?



## **1.6 RESEARCH APPROACH**

A qualitative research approach describes the nature of a phenomenon. Its objectives are to understand the phenomenon rather than to explain it in terms of the laws of cause and effect. Leedy (1993:139) identifies qualitative research as dealing with information that is principally verbal, and quantitative research methodologies as dealing with data that are principally numerical.

Schurink (1998:241) states that qualitative approach is holistic in nature and the main aim is to understand social life and the meaning that people attach to everyday life.

In this study, a qualitative approach was the most appropriate because the researcher's intention was to get information on employee's perceptions, not numerical data. The researcher intended to get the respondents' feelings, perceptions and opinions based on their resistance to utilize the EAP.

## **1.7 TYPE OF RESEARCH**

There are two types of research, namely basic and applied research. According to Royce (1991:19) basic research is used to develop new theory whereas applied research is used to develop solutions for problems in practice.

The researcher utilized applied research because Royce (1991:19) states that its findings are used to solve problems of immediate concern. The

researcher utilized applied research in order to understand the problem in detail and to generate knowledge with regard to solving the problem of resistance.

## **1.8 RESEARCH DESIGN**

Bless & Higson-Smith (1995:63) define a research design as the planning of any scientific research from the first to the last step. It is a programme to guide the researcher in collecting, analyzing and interpreting information. The focus of the research design is on the logic of the research.

The researcher utilized an exploratory design which is more qualitative in nature. The purpose of the exploratory study was to gain insight into a situation, phenomenon, community or person (Bless & Higson-Smith, 1995:42). The researcher explored the respondents' perceptions, feelings and opinions of an EAP and found out their reasons for not utilizing the EAP.

A phenomenological strategy was utilized. According to Fouché (2002:273), a phenomenological strategy aims to understand and interpret the meaning the subjects give to their everyday life. The aim of the researcher was to understand perceptions, feelings and opinions about utilizing the EAP from various respondents.

## **1.9 RESEARCH PROCEDURE AND STRATEGY**

A literature study as well as an empirical investigation was implemented and a semi-structured interview schedule was used to gather information from the respondents at Aventis Pharma.

Greeff (2002:302) states that the researchers use semi-structured interviews to gain a detailed picture of a participant's beliefs about, or perceptions or accounts of a particular topic. In this study the semi-structured interview schedule helped the researcher to gain knowledge and understand the respondents' perceptions, feelings and opinions on the utilization of the EAP.

Greeff (2002:302) defines an interview schedule as a questionnaire written to guide interviews. The researcher utilized an interview schedule, which helped her to arrange areas into the most appropriate sequence. The interview schedule consisted of open and close-ended questions. A tape recorder was used to ensure that all the necessary information was recorded. After collecting information, it was analyzed and interpreted and the researcher compiled a report to document the research findings.

According to De Vos (2002:339) data analysis is a process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data. She continues that data analysis is a search for general statements about the relationships among categories of data. Data analysis in a qualitative inquiry involves a twofold approach. The first aspect involves data analysis away from the site following a period of data collection (De Vos, 2002:341).

For the purpose of this research, the researcher utilized the second aspect, which involves data analysis away from the site. The researcher was at a private place, taking notes while listening to the tape recorder. She listened to the tape-recorded information and put it into written transcripts. De Vos (2002:343) states that it is important for the researcher to read the transcripts several times to become familiar with the information.

During the reading process, the researcher was making memos and looked for similarities and differences. De Vos (2002:343) mentions that memos are short phrases, ideas or key concepts that occur to the reader. The researcher gave codes to the information collected and that helped her to present the information in a tabular or figure form during the process of interpretation. The researcher compared the information collected so that she could group responses together. After grouping the similarities together, the researcher wrote a research report to document the research findings.

## **1.10 PILOT STUDY**

A pilot study is a process whereby the research design for a prospective survey is tested (New dictionary of Social Work, 1995:45). The pilot study is one way in which the researcher can orientate him/herself to the project he has in mind. The following are the components of a pilot study:

### **1.10.1 Literature Study**

Part of the pilot study is the literature study. The prospective researcher can only hope to undertake a meaningful research if she is fully up to date

with existing knowledge on her prospective subject (Strydom, 2002a:211). He continues that the researcher traces all available literature, which are broadly and specifically relevant to his/her subject. The study of the literature ensured that the researcher gained a greater knowledge basis on the subject of an EAP.

The researcher undertook a literature study using books, articles, previous research and newsletters relevant to the research topic. The researcher got her sources from the Academic Information Centre, University of Pretoria and the library of the University of South Africa, Internet and the Information Centre at Mamelodi.

#### **1.10.2 Consultation with experts**

Since the field of Social Work is already so broad, people automatically specialize (Strydom, 2002a:212). The purpose of interviews with experts was to bring unknown perspectives to the fore or to confirm or reject the researcher's own views. This part of preliminary examination acknowledges the knowledge and wisdom that experts in the field could have. The researcher had the opportunity to meet some of the experts to gather more information regarding their opinions and conditions of their service provisions. The researcher met the following people:

Mrs Laetitia Janse van Rensburg – Human Resource Manager at Aventi Pharma (3 years).

Ms Ophilia Manetjie - (Social Worker: who was employed at FAMSA as an EAP consultant for Ford Motor Company (2 years). Currently she is employed as a lecturer at the University of South Africa in the Department of Industrial Psychology (2 years).

Sr Sven Whittle – Occupational Health Nurse at Aventis Pharma (2 years).

Sr Pretty Nyalungu - Occupational Health Nurse at Ford Motor Company (5 years).

Mrs Petro Theron - Director, Famsa Pretoria (2 years).

Even though some of the above experts are not at Aventis Pharma, they were aware of the problem of resistance. The researcher discussed the problem of resistance of the employees with the abovementioned experts and they also found it difficult to understand why employees wait for supervisors to refer them to the EAP. The abovementioned experts were very impressed about the study and they believed that the research findings would give them the answers to their questions.

### **1.10.3 Feasibility of the study**

Feasibility of the study is the practicability, possibility or convenience of doing the study (Strydom, 1998:49). The study was feasible in that the sample was taken from the researcher's caseload, as a result rapport was already established. The researcher is working for Aventis Pharma on a contractual basis and she was granted permission for the investigation by the management of the company. The company offered to pay for the photocopies. The researcher contacted the respondents since she already had a list from her caseload. The research was conducted during working hours.

#### **1.10.4 Pilot test of the interview schedule**

Pilot test is the process whereby the research design for a prospective survey is tested (Strydom, 2002a:211). It is when an interview schedule is pre-tested on a small population to determine if the questions possess the desired qualities of measurement.

The researcher conducted a pilot test with two employees who were not part of the main study and this helped the researcher to check the effectiveness of the interview schedule before it could be done on a large population. The interview schedule was thoroughly tested and the researcher did not experience any problems during the main investigation.

### **1.11 DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH POPULATION, BOUNDARY OF SAMPLE AND SAMPLING METHOD**

#### **1.11.1 Research Population**

Research population is a set of elements that the research focuses upon and to which the results obtained should be generalized (New dictionary of Social Work, 1995:45). Research population is a group of people, which are the objects of research or the sum total of the units of analysis. The research population for this study were the employees of Aventis Pharma. The company is situated in the east of Pretoria and has 215 employees.

#### **1.11.2 Boundary of sample**

According to Strydom & Venter (2002:197), the concept of sampling is one of the most important in the total research endeavour; therefore it is

imperative that we understand it clearly before studying certain aspects. Sampling means taking any portion of a population or universe as representative of the whole population. The key concept in sampling is representativeness. The aim of sampling is to produce representative selections of the population.

The boundary of the sample consisted of 12 employees at Aventis Pharma. The company consists of skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled employees. The respondents are employees who are semi-skilled, those who have standard seven up to a diploma. The respondents are between the ages of 20 and 55 years old, males and females from all racial groups.

### **1.11.3 Sampling Method**

For the purpose of this study, the researcher utilized the non-probability sampling. Robson (1993:140) states that in non-probability sampling it is not possible for everyone to be included in the sample. Purposive sampling was used. Bless & Higson-Smith (1995:95) state that this sampling method is based on the judgement of the researcher regarding the characteristics of a representative sample. They continue to say that a sample is chosen on the basis of what the researcher thinks to be the average person.

Employees at Aventis Pharma do not utilize the EAP, they wait for managers and supervisors to refer them. The researcher will select the respondents from her caseload of 50 employees. Employees who came to the EAP through a referral were the respondents.

The researcher selected 12 respondents who came with different problems. The researcher used her judgement to select the respondents.



She checked with the management and looked for employees who were referred to the EAP by the supervisors or managers. The first 12 employees on the list were the respondents.

## **1.12 ETHICAL ISSUES**

Strydom (1998b:24) defines ethics as a set of moral principles, which is suggested by an individual or a group, which offers rules and behavioral expectations about the most correct conduct towards the experimental subjects and respondents. The following ethics were considered when conducting the research:

### **➤ Harm to respondents**

Respondents can be harmed in a physical or emotional manner (Strydom, 2002b:64). It was the responsibility of the researcher to protect the respondents against any form of physical or emotional discomfort, which might emerge within reasonable limits from the research project. The researcher was careful not to harm the respondents when conducting the research.

### **➤ Informed consent**

When respondents are involved without their consent, their right to self-determination is impaired (Strydom, 2002b:65). The researcher informed the respondents about the study and they were allowed to participate voluntarily. Subjects were given the opportunity to ask questions before the study commenced as well as during the investigation. The researcher gave the respondents a complete explanation of the total investigation in a written form using clear and understandable language.

➤ **Deception of respondents**

According to Corey, Corey & Callanan (1993:230) deception involves withholding information, or offering incorrect information to ensure participation of subjects when they would otherwise possibly have refused. Deception of respondents is deliberately misrepresenting facts in order to make another person believe what is not true. The researcher did not provide any incorrect information to the respondents.

➤ **Violation of privacy**

It is imperative that the researcher acts with the necessary sensitivity where privacy of respondents is relevant. Strydom (2002b:67) states that the right to privacy is the individual's right to decide where, to whom and to what extent his/her attitudes; beliefs and behaviour will be revealed. The researcher ensured that personal rights and privacy of the respondents were protected. Respondents remained anonymous and information gathered was kept confidential, this is kept by not stating the respondent's name.

➤ **Cooperation with contributors**

Research projects are often expensive and comprehensive and the researcher cannot always handle the financial implications. The researcher did not need financial assistance and there was no need for her to make use of contributors.

➤ **Actions and competence of researcher**

The researcher is ethically obliged to ensure that she is competent and adequately skilled to undertake the proposed investigation. The total research project runned its course in an ethically correct manner.

➤ **Release or publication of findings**

According to Strydom (2002b:71), findings of the study must be introduced to the reading public in a written form. The researchers compiled a final report, which is accurate, objective, clear and contains all essential information. Respondents will be informed about the findings in an objective manner without offering too many details or impairing the principle of confidentiality.

➤ **Debriefing of respondents**

Debriefing sessions, during which subjects get the opportunity after the study to work through their experiences and its aftermath, are possibly one way in which the researcher can assist the subjects and minimize harm (Strydom, 2002b:73). For the purpose of this study, there were no debriefing sessions since the possibility of harm was limited.

### **1.13 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS**

➤ **Employee Assistance Programme**

Bruce (1990:122) defines an EAP as a counselling service provided directly for employees and their dependants.

An EAP is a programme of services offered to employees by employers to prevent, relieve or eliminate work-related and social problems with a view to promoting job satisfaction, productivity and general social functioning (New dictionary of Social Work, 1995:20).

According to the researcher, the EAP is a job based programme operating within a work organization for the purpose of identifying problem employees and motivating them to solve their problems.

➤ **Resistance**

It is the conscious or unconscious negative reactions of clients to every effort to change their behavior and improve their adaptation (New dictionary of Social Work, 1995).

It is also the mental process of preventing one's unconscious thoughts from being brought into the consciousness (The Social Work dictionary, 1991).

According to the researcher, resistance is when a person forces to allow herself or himself not to accept.

➤ **Troubled Employee**

A troubled employee is an employee whose behaviour in the workplace causes reduced productivity and lowered morale for self, co-workers or the supervisor (Bruce, 1990:4).

A troubled employee is an employee who causes a majority of job performance deficiencies in attendance, conduct, safety and work quality and quantity (Myers, 1984:3).

According to the researcher, a troubled employee is an employee who is troubled by personal or work related problems, which end up affecting his/her job performance.

## **1.14 CONTENTS OF THE RESEARCH REPORT**

The research report was divided into four chapters:

Chapter 1: General introduction and research methodology.

Chapter 2 Literature study on marketing of EAP, types of referrals and supervisory training.

Chapter 3: Empirical study and analysis and interpretation of information.

Chapter 4: Conclusions and recommendations.

## **1.15 CONCLUSION**

This chapter focused on the general introduction and the research methodology. The next chapter will be on the literature study that will help the researcher to guide the study.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **MARKETING OF EAP, TYPES OF REFERRAL AND SUPERVISORY TRAINING.**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs) are a method of intervention designed to assist employees with declining work performance and to help restore them to become productive workers again. EAPs provide confidential services to assess an employee's personal problems, link the employee to the most appropriate resource to solve the problem, and facilitate the transition of the employee back to his or her job performance. This is done through careful documentation of work performance and referral to the EAP by supervisors, managers or union representatives (Schoell, 1999:75).

Schoell (1999:75) continues that Employee Assistance Programmes in South Africa are relatively new workplace phenomena, despite assistance given to employees in the workplace dating back at least four decades. However, EAPs are not managed and utilized to their fullest extent. Assistance to troubled employees in the Republic of South Africa is nothing new. However, the concept of Employee Assistance Programmes in its traditional structured format is quite new.

The researcher believes that for an EAP to be effective in an organization, there is a need for the involvement of supervisors, managers, and unions.

Supervisors and managers should help with referring clients to an EAP and also with marketing the programme within the company (Balloun, 1992:107). Supervisors should be trained on EAP.

This chapter will focus on marketing of the EAP, types of referrals and supervisory training. Since the EAP is a new concept in many companies, the researcher wants to find out how marketing is done, and how referral procedures and supervisory training are dealt with in Aventis Pharma.

## **2.2    MARKETING OF AN EAP**

South Africa is one of the most competitive countries in the world. With the present status of the economy, those involved in business are faced with an enormous crisis, which means that if their marketing strategies are not visible and relevant, no one will enter into their business for service. Those who render services should be wise enough to track customers which can only be done through good marketing (Oher, 1999:90).

For most employee assistance programmes, the marketing of the programme and its services is bread and butter, not only in promoting the services to the workforce, but often in informing the foundation of expectations on which the programme's effectiveness will be measured (Oher, 1999:91).

A great deal has been written in various textbooks, journals, and periodicals on the subject of marketing: the "how to" approach. Having developed the important elements for establishing a solid marketing plan,

one must then consider how these techniques can be used in the implementation and maintenance of EAPs. The researcher believes that it is very important to look at the definition of marketing before a discussion about it.

### **2.3 DEFINITION OF MARKETING**

EAPA SA (1999:7) define marketing as the promotion of a service to potential customers and employees of existing services. According to Kotler (1999:4) marketing is the analysis, planning, implementation and control of carefully formulated programmes designed to bring about voluntary exchange of values with markets for the purpose of achieving organizational objectives. Schoell (1993:6) defines marketing as the process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion and distribution of ideas, goods and services to create exchanges that satisfy individuals and organizational objectives. The following are the goals and objectives of marketing.

### **2.4 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF MARKETING**

Before one can discuss the marketing strategies, it is important to look at the goals of marketing. As with any marketing campaign, the EAP promotional efforts must have clear and distinct goals and objectives (Balloun, 1993:37). Generally, those objectives can be summarized in five primary areas:

- To increase employees' knowledge of the EAP and its services, activities, and key components (e.g., confidentiality, policy & referral procedures)



- To increase familiarity and comfort with the EAP's operations and to enhance the acceptance and use of the service by employees, managers, labour representatives, and the organization's leadership.
- To increase utilization of the programme at all levels throughout the organization.
- To enhance the integration of the EAP within the host or contract organization and to promote a feeling of ownership for the programme on the part of the organization and its managers and employees.
- To maintain the visibility of the EAP and its presence as a vital contributor to the organization's productivity and efficiency and to the well-being and general work life of the employees and managers.

It is imperative that an EAP identifies its goals for the overall marketing campaign and its objectives for any specific marketing or promotional activity. According to Balloun (1993:37) there are several unique challenges to promoting an EAP. The researcher is of the opinion that before one can start with marketing of the programme, it is important to have a marketing plan. This plan consists of the assignment of tasks necessary to attain the marketing objectives.

## **2.5 MARKETING PLAN**

According to Joseph (1993:76) a marketing plan refers to a written plan in terms of a specific target market and the assignment of tasks necessary to attain the marketing objectives. An effective marketing plan requires a thorough understanding of the environment wherein the programme will

operate. The climate and culture within the organization will determine not only the type of programme, service and activities but also the type of marketing strategies to be used and the format and structure these strategies will take on.

The researcher is of the opinion that the programme coordinator should understand his/her company and the culture and language that is used in the company. If the researcher thinks of drawing a marketing plan for Aventis Pharma, she knows that Afrikaans is the language most spoken in the company.

A marketing plan for an EAP must also be based on the understanding of the resources available within the broader community, so as to ensure that there is a referral and support network for the programme (Myers, 1984:98). It would also give the practitioner some insight into the provision of similar service, which may impact on the future of the EAP.

Although the entire organization is the target market of an EAP, an effective marketing plan should recognize that within the organization there are various sub-groupings with unique requirements and expectations that will dictate an individualized marketing strategy. This would include employees, management and labour organizations. Marketing must be targeted at all levels of the organization, if it is to be effective (Balloun, 1993:76).

According to Joseph (1995:65) the programme objectives must be clear and specific, but most importantly, it must link with the overall goals and objectives of the organization if the plan is to be a success. The marketing objectives for internal marketing and external marketing will differ, as

their intended purpose is somewhat different. Joseph (1995:65) adds that a marketing plan services a number of purpose which can be summarized as follows:

- It offers a way for implementing marketing strategies
- It assists in control and implementation of strategy
- Is specifies how resources are to be allocated
- It assigns responsibilities, tasks and timing
- It makes participants aware of problems, opportunities and threats.

## **2.6 ELEMENTS OF A MARKETING PLAN**

Marketing is an internal business strategy (Balloun, 1993:38). The basic steps in developing a marketing plan include:

- analyzing both the internal and external environments of the firm
- identifying the potential market and customers
- setting appropriate objectives and goals based on these analyses
- choosing a marketing mix of a place, promotion, price and product designed to meet these objectives and goals
- carrying out decisions
- monitoring and evaluating the plan and changing market conditions.

## **2.7 FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED WHEN DEVELOPING A MARKETING PLAN**

### **Organization's Culture**

According to Beidel (1992:91), the marketing plan should consist of the culture of the organization itself, the unique and particular way that the organization functions and gets things done on both formal and informal levels. An EAP should formulate its marketing strategies into the language of the organization.

Dickman, Challenger, Emener, & Hutchison (1988:110) suggest that it is absolutely necessary that management at its highest level endorses and actively supports their EAP. It is of most importance to look at the primary influences in the organization, not the individuals or the operational components of the organization, but the processes that are followed to get things done. Beidel (1992:95) came up with the process that should be followed to check issues that influence the organization culture. The process is as follows:

**The way the organization is led:** Participation and the degree of delegation in the organization are elements that could explain how the management of the organization conducts the organization. The above factors are often the root of the trust, initiative and the risk taking found within the workforce (Beidel, 1992:95).

**How the organization motivates its workforce:** The degree to which managers take risks and the effectiveness of their supervision as well as

the ability to carry out business, administrative, and operational decisions of the organization.

**How the workforce communicates:** The degree to which and the effectiveness of the information that flows up and across the organization. The ability of the organization to maximize both the informal and formal channels for the exchange of information in the workplace and the solicitation of feedback from the workforce (Beidel, 1992:96).

**The level of interaction within the organization:** The degree of cooperation and teamwork among individuals, workgroups, departments, or organizational functions. The amount of interaction that is promoted among these groups and the amount of information that flows within and between them.

**Timing:** Joseph (1993:102) states that the EAP practitioner should understand and align promotional efforts with the organization's preferred style of doing things. It is equally important to time promotional efforts so that they do not conflict with other organizational events or efforts. For example, the EAP practitioner should avoid doing promotional events at a time when management is in serious debate with employees, as this will make management and employees to doubt and question the EAP motives (Joseph, 1993:102).

## **2.8 INTERNAL MARKETING**

Internal marketing is the systematic promotion of an EAP to a specified employee population. The promotion is carefully tailored to meet the

unique needs of the workforce. A programme is not successfully implemented until it has been satisfactorily marketed inside the organization (Oher, 1999:98). At Aventi Pharma, marketing was done internally and all the employees were able to get the information about the EAP.

The primary goal of an ongoing marketing approach within an EAP is to make sure that employees and their dependants know when and how to use the programme. This marketing approach will also include a specific orientation for management and union representatives that focus on their specific roles and responsibilities (Oher, 1999:99). The EA Practitioner at Aventis Pharma had orientation meetings with the management and explained what the programme is all about.

## **2.9 TRADITIONAL PROMOTIONAL EFFORTS**

Most employee assistance services have employed traditional promotional materials to meet many of the marketing goals. In this discussion, Beidel (1992:97) offers a paradigm of leadership that includes communication as an essential component of effective leadership. He further goes on to enumerate essential components of organizational communication and these are as follows:

### **2.9.1 Orally Transmitted Information**

Very often, employee assistances professionals' most effective strategies for promoting an EAP and the acceptance and use of its services involve some form of oral presentation. These efforts offer several advantages because the professional can use his or her persuasive skills and interact

with the targeted population. Most of the oral promotional efforts employed by EAPs occur as part of a formal training or educational programme for the targeted population in the organization (Oher, 1999:100).

For example, at Aventis Pharma the researcher had training meetings with employees once a week and this helped the researcher to market her services. The researcher also used to walk about in the company so that employees could see her and ask questions or make appointments to visit the EAP office.

Orally transmitted information gives employees the opportunity to ask questions. If none are asked, it is often useful for the coordinator to emphasize certain points by specifically mentioning and answering questions that have come up in other orientation groups. Written material is part of the traditional promotional efforts.

### **2.9.2 Written Materials**

Many companies have an employees newsletter or magazine that should be used to introduce the EAP to employees (Beidel, 1999:105). Newsletters are used to deliver the message to employees about the EAP services. Initial articles should cover the EAPs purpose and objectives, staff qualification and background, and how services can be accessed. Promotional activities should be designed to stimulate client interest, trial use or involvement in some EAP services. Personal service and confidentiality should be stressed in all communications. Written materials of reaching employees include:

Brochures

Flyers

Newsletters

Posters

Informational memos

Paycheque inserts

Training calendars

Some of the above written materials were used at Aventis Pharma as part of marketing. All the written materials were clear to the readers as it reflected a consistent service image of the EAP. Oher (1999:99) is of opinion that these materials are most effective when they employ simple language and use simple persuasive techniques to reach simple objectives for the EAP.

In addition, some basic rules for any printed promotional material apply. Posters and calendars should be distributed in different departments to make employees aware of the EAP. Flyers and brochures should be placed where employees meet during lunchtime, like in the canteens or shops. The EAP practitioner can also arrange with management to insert newsletters inside the employees' salary slips so that they can take them home (Oher, 1999:100).

The copy should be brief and have the intended audience in mind when laying out the format, content and design of the informational piece. An announcement to introduce the EAP may cover the rationale for the programme; the types of services provided and problems covered; the confidentiality of the operation; the process for contacting the services and may define those who are eligible for the service (Beidel, 1999:108).



Klarreich, Francek, & Moore (1985:123) state that written materials should reflect a consistent service image of an EAP, and newly developed materials should build on previously generational pieces. These materials are most effective when they employ simple language and use simple persuasive techniques to reach simple objectives for the EAP. Written materials are of value, particularly when looking for diverse approaches to communicate the EAP's message.

Since the EAP services are not only for employees, it is important for the EAP practitioner to mail the materials to the homes of all employees to be certain that family members would see it as well (Klarreich et al., 1985:123).

### **2.9.3 Interpersonal Communication**

As the Employee Assistance professional becomes more engaged with the organization by attending meetings that arise, the opportunity for establishing these strategic partnerships proportionately increases (Beidel, 1992:109). These expanding partnerships in return provide a variety of avenues for the professional to more fully develop an interpersonal communication style that demonstrates the commitment of the EAP to serve the workforce and support the business interests of the organization.

Through these interpersonal communication opportunities, the EA professional can explain what EAP is all about. Beidel (1992:112) states that it is often easier to communicate this important EAP marketing message through these dynamic interpersonal communication exchanges than through the traditional written material and formal presentations.

## **2.10 NON-TRADITIONAL AND EMERGING PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES**

The emergence of electronic media in the workplace has given rise to alternative strategies to support an organization's EAP internal marketing efforts. Alongside the opportunities presented by these technologies, new issues, concerns and challenges have emerged (Dickman et al., 1988:98).

### **Electronic Media**

Over the past years, e-mail has become an increasingly popular system of communication in the workplace, often replacing memos and other forms of written correspondence or oral communication. Although many welcome the ability to leave messages for colleagues via e-mail, particularly when co-workers are unavailable or away from their desks, EA professionals must use e-mail in a guarded fashion (Schoell, 1993:79). The EAP coordinator at Aventis utilized e-mails to send messages to different departments. This was more helpful when the EA practitioner wanted to present training in different departments.

Using e-mail to broadcast or widely announce an EAP service will be the most effective way of getting the announcement to the targeted audience. Schoell (1993:79) is of the opinion that e-mails will deliver EAP messages to managers and supervisors who will deliver the message to the production workers. It is the responsibility of each and every supervisor or manager to see to it that employees in their departments receive the message that was delivered through e-mails. The EA coordinator at Aventis Pharma played the role of a marketing agent and this was easy for her to deliver the message to employees in different departments.

## **2.11 THE INDIVIDUAL EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROFESSIONAL AS A MARKETING AGENT**

It is the responsibility of the EA practitioner to promote the EAP and market its services in the most positive light. According to Klarreich et al. (1985:29) the profile of a successful marketing consultant will include skills, experience and education. They further stated that the EA professional's knowledge base need to include a good understanding of clinical and organizational issues.

When social workers enter the world of work, whether as occupational social workers or EA practitioners, they inevitably find that they lack certain skills needed to be truly effective, marketing is one of those business functions (Myers, 1984:76). Although traditional and non-traditional marketing strategies are valuable and essential for any EAP, the EA practitioner is often the most critical marketing device within the organization. The EA practitioner can take casual walks through the workplace to generate contacts with employees and supervisors (Joseph, 1993:50).

Joseph (1993:50) continues to say that being the marketing agent will be more helpful for the employees who will have questions about the programme. EA practitioner should represent their programme in all their interactions in the workplace. The reality for the workplace is still 'first impressions are indeed the lasting ones'. The EA practitioner must demonstrate the ability to handle his/her own workload and balance his/her work and family demands in a healthy and positive way.

EA practitioners can also use public speaking to market their services. They can give talks to different departments about their services and some employees might think about using the EAP services or they will know of others who might benefit from it. At Aventis Pharma, the EA Practitioner used to give talks to employees once a week in different departments. It seems that the employees were enjoying the meeting because they normally reminded the EA practitioner about the meeting for the following week.

## **2.12 REFERRAL: A KEY EAP SKILL**

The referral process is central to any EAP, though relatively few references to it are found in the literature. Franz (1986:1) describes referral as a science as well as an art that is important for the EAP professional to master. The assessment and referral resource is a major element in any EAP: it is the key to the entire EAP.

The referral process is then discussed in a four-step model, which includes engagement, problem identification, implementation and follow-up or evaluation. Each step consists of several components.

### **Step 1: Engagement**

The first step in the referral process is engaging the client in a manner that builds trust and rapport (Franz, 1986:5). First impressions are powerful: they can make a difference in whether the employee who phones in for an appointment actually shows up and whether the EAP coordinator's suggestions and recommendations are taken seriously.

It is especially important in EAP work that the issue of privacy and confidentiality be stressed in the initial contact. Through tone of voice and style of questions the practitioner should convey an empathetic concern and a non-judgemental attitude towards the client's presenting problem. The first step in the referral process is thus addressing the employee's question; can I trust this person with my problem?

### **Step 2: Problem identification and analysis**

The second step in the referral process involves problem identification and analysis. Successfully identifying a client's problem has been shown to be the best predictor of effective intervention. Franz (1986:7) states that it is important to use care in eliciting information concerning the difficulty, which brings the employee to the EAP, and in determining the factors which have contributed to the problem. An important basic counselling principle is to start where the client is. Therefore the concern that the client presents should be taken seriously.

### **Step 3: Implementation**

The issue of how to make a referral introduces the third step in the process, that of implementation. The most successful referrals will actively involve the client in the search for an appropriate resource (Franz, 1986:7). The implementation of a referral thereby includes several elements of preparation. In order for an employee to accept and make use of a referral, they must understand their need for those services, why a particular referral is being made and what may be the consequences of accepting or rejecting the recommended services.

Implementation of referrals will involve various degrees of practitioner activity, depending on the personality of the client and the nature of his or

her presenting problem. The inexperienced EA coordinator may be inclined to treat all referrals the same, but the more skilled professional will be prepared to individualize each and every employee.

#### **Step 4: Follow-up and evaluation**

The fourth step in the referral process involves follow-up and evaluation. Follow-up is not only a means of providing ongoing support to employees, it is also a crucial part of an EAP programme's feedback mechanism (Franz, 1986:8). It provides a source of data to document unmet needs, reveal service duplication and overlap and simply to offer evidence of effectiveness. Follow-up asks the crucial question; was the referral helpful? Follow-up is regarded as an essential part of evaluating the effectiveness of an EAP referral.

Referral activity determines an EAP's success because without sufficient referrals the programme becomes a dormant expense (Myers, 1984:231). The types of referrals are self, family, peer and co-worker, union and supervisor. Traditionally, emphasis has been placed on supervisory referrals that result from the confrontation or performance model. There is evidence to suggest that other referral types are becoming increasingly important. Myers (1984:231) discusses each referral type as follows:

##### **2.12.1 Supervisory referrals**

For an EAP to be effective in the workplace, the involvement of supervisors is needed. The supervisory referral occurs when a company supervisor who is not satisfied with an employee's job performance makes formal arrangements for that employee to receive counselling by the EA professional (Martin, Heckel, Goodrick, Schreiber & Young, 1985:26).

With few exceptions, supervisory referrals result from confrontation. One exception is when employees inform a supervisor about a problem that is troubling them. Another exception occurs when supervisors are alert for employee problems and approach an employee who appears to need help. Myers (1984:231) states that in both of those exceptions a sensitive supervisor is motivated by humanitarian considerations to assist the employees in getting help.

Myers (1984:231) further says that the key to a successful EAP is getting the supervisor involved in making referrals. Unfortunately, supervisors have not fully met their confrontation responsibilities; they experience problems with regard to confrontation.

Causes for supervisor's confrontation and referral problems:

- Most supervisors are insensitive to employee problems because they are ignorant of them.
- Supervisors do not confront employees because they are uncomfortable communicating problems with employees.
- Managers generally under-estimate the importance of communication in confrontation interviews. As a result, supervisors are frequently both ill trained and poorly prepared to handle the confrontation interview.
- Most supervisors have little initiative to confront employees because past confrontations have been episodic and unpleasant. Myers (1984:233) continues that supervisors sometimes are more likely to avoid making EAP referrals than they are to confront employees. They feel that making referrals is “playing God” with

employees' lives. Supervisors believe that employees interpret a referral as a judgment that an employee needs help.

- Many supervisors feel that referring an employee to the EAP is an admission that they cannot do their job.
- Supervisors feel that one referral to the EAP is all it takes to ruin an employee's career.

Supervisors have stated that some employees reject referral suggestions by stating, "Hey, I'm no drunk and that place is for drunkards". This type of employee response makes supervisors very uncomfortable in making referrals.

According to Myers (1984:233) troubled employees are among the best employees in an organization. Alcoholics and compulsive gamblers, for example, frequently are dedicated employees, and supervisors are reluctant to confront employees who are so productive. Eventually, however, the work performance of troubled employees is affected by their problems.

There is another supervisory reason for avoiding confrontation that is related to the "good worker" rationalization. This situation occurs when a supervisor has an employee group that performs well as a team. The supervisor may fear that confronting a deficient team member will develop group hostility toward him or her (Myers, 1984:232).

Supervisor may avoid confrontation since they fear employees will initiate a discrimination complaint against them. This fear may explain why supervisors are particularly reluctant to confront female employees. Supervisors also say that women interpret confrontation as a personal



attack on them. Another excuse supervisors use for not making referrals is that they are not doctors and therefore cannot diagnose an employee's problem. They feel that making a referral implies that an employee is sick or needs help (Myers, 1984:232).

### **2.12.2 Voluntary/ Self Referral**

Most EAP practitioners agree that the rate of self-referrals to total referrals is a good indicator of the EAP's success. Self-referral occurs when an employee initiates the counselling (Martin et al., 1985:26). According to Klarreich et al. (1985:18) voluntary assistance is provided to any employee or his immediate family. Contact can be made directly with the counsellor or the EAP office.

Employees can also request their immediate supervisors or union representative to arrange the appointment with the counsellor. No entries will be made in the employees' record and the strictest confidence is maintained. The counsellor exchanges no confidential information with any source without the consent of the employee concerned, unless required by law (Klarreich et al., 1985:18).

According to Myers (1984:239) the biggest obstacle to self-referring is the stigma that employees may feel. This feeling is magnified in EAPs that use names such as Programme for Alcoholic Recovery or Drug Assistance Programme. Even when the EAP treats problems other than alcoholism or drug abuse it is only logical for employees to conclude that anyone being counselled is either an alcoholic or a drug addict. Myers (1984:240) says that employees are not going to refer themselves to a counselling office if there is a chance that they will be seen in the office

or upon entering or leaving it. Exit doors can be made in the counsellor's office so that employees will not have to exit through the waiting room.

### **2.12.3 Family Referrals**

Usually family members are the first to recognize that an employee is troubled. Prompt action in the early stages may save considerable suffering and can speed-up recovery. The EAP counsellor can help educate family members about various problems through periodic mailings to employees' homes. Home mailing usually encourages family members to call the EAP unit if they believe an employed family member has a problem and needs attention. The unit's telephone number is prominently printed on all mailings, and callers are assured that any information they provide will remain confidential (Myers, 1984:241).

Family members often unknowingly contribute to a troubled employee's problem. Family members need to be educated on how their behaviour may reinforce and perpetuate the problem. Education can teach the dangers of covering up for the alcohol or drug abusing employee. Family members can confront the troubled employee and attempt to get him or her to agree to a joint interview with the counsellor. If the employee agrees, the family member then makes an EAP appointment and accompanies the employee to the first session (Myers, 1984:241).

### **2.12.4 Peer or co-worker referral**

Peer or co-worker referrals encompass efforts by co-workers and colleagues to confront and motivate troubled employees to seek assistance. Peer referrals, like all other exclusive of supervisory referrals, are meant to supplement or replace the confrontation model. Myers (1984:243) believes that peer referrals have the best potential for early

prevention and intervention for troubled employees in many kinds of jobs and professions. There are three reasons for this opinion:

- First, many jobs are immune from the traditional employer confrontation model.
- A second reason is the increasing growth of self help assistance among professional, union, and other organizations.
- Finally, EAP researchers and practitioners are educating people about their responsibilities and the ways of helping troubled colleagues get assistance (Myers, 1984:243).

#### **2.12.5 Union referrals**

Union representatives, particularly grievance stewards, have an excellent opportunity to detect troubled employees who need EAP help. Developing this referral source can increase the EAP's effectiveness. Myers (1984:250) is of the opinion that management should seek union referrals. This union responsibility and cooperation can be established through the organizational EAP policy statement.

Union representatives can detect troubled employees through several methods. First, union representatives can encourage members to check with them when they observe an employee who appears to be troubled or needs assistance. Union representatives can also be alert for co-worker cover up. The dangers of cover-up can be communicated through union newsletters (Myers, 1984:250).

Myers (1984:250) further states that union representatives have the opportunity to identify troubled employees through grievance procedures. In addition, employees often will confide in union officials. For this reason it is wise to cultivate and monitor union EAP support.

If the union has a welfare committee to help members, that committee's members should be instructed to refer troubled employees to the EAP. Some unions have part-time or voluntary chaplains or pastors. These individuals can also cooperate in referring troubled employees (Myers, 1984:251).

#### **2.12.6 Mandatory referral**

The mandatory referral procedure is an option available to management to use during the latter stages of the disciplinary procedure, typically where there is a documented case for termination (Klarreick et al., 1985:19). When deemed appropriate, the manager may refer an employee facing dismissal or seeking re-instatement following dismissal, to a counsellor on a mandatory basis as a condition of continued employment. If the employee rejects the option of mandatory referral, or after accepting the option fails, without good reason, to keep the appointment, the normal disciplinary procedure will be followed.

The mandatory referral will be fully explained to the employee in question, in a face-to-face meeting with the department manager or his designate. If the employee agrees to participate in the mandatory referral procedure, the department manager will telephonically contact the EA counsellor to arrange the first interview. Employees will be terminated if their performance does not show improvement within a reasonable period of time, in spite of the assistance provided (Klarreick et al., 1985:19).

### **2.13 SUPERVISORY TRAINING**

Every troubled employee hurts the organization, other employees and the supervisor. For an EAP to be effective in an organization, it requires the involvement of supervisors. Schneider, Colan & Googins (1990:41) state that the role of the supervisor in the constructive confrontation process has been established as central to the EAP.

Supervisors are in a unique position to identify troubled employees and intervene in a meaningful way. As a result, EAPs have implemented supervisory-training programmes in order to enhance supervisors' skills in performing these tasks. These training programmes have been implemented and accepted in virtually all EAPs (Schneider et al., 1990:41).

Schneider et al. (1990: 43) further say that training sessions are relatively small with less than 20 participants in attendance. Supervisory training should be conducted by EAP staff. Supervisors should be trained in the steps of constructive confrontation and training should be presented in a lecture format. Schneider et al. (1990: 43) say that 75% of the training should focus on job performance and 25% on substance abuse.

The supervisory training, which is conducted by the EAP staff for all supervisory personnel, is initiated with top management for total corporate support (Martin et al., 1985:25). The training content begins with an introduction to the policies and procedures of the programme, and then focuses on work performance as the criterion for making referrals. Confrontation techniques with troubled employees, and procedures in making a referral are covered thoroughly. Supervisors are also provided

with a supervisor's manual, and are encouraged, if in doubt, to contact a member of the EAP staff for assistance before making a confrontation.

According to Gerstein, Eichenhofer & Bayer (1989:16), supervisors should be trained to recognize workers in distress through the monitoring of attendance, productivity and co-worker relationships. The focus of the training should be on teaching supervisors how to identify, confront and refer impaired workers to the EAP. They are taught to understand the costs of ignoring poor employee performance and to comprehend their EAP role and function.

### **Training methods**

All the EAPs reported employing stand-up presentations and questions and answers periods (Schneider et al., 1990:44). Supervisory training includes a discussion period with the group utilizing a video or film as a component of the training. The most popular techniques are the use of small group discussions, self-teaching guides, overhead projector and role-play.

### **Training goals**

Schneider et al. (1990:44) perceive supervisory training to be effective in achieving a variety of goals including:

- increased supervisor awareness of the EAP
- improved supervisor attitudes toward the EAP
- increased willingness of supervisors to consult with the EAP
- integration of the EAP into the corporation
- improved supervisor attitudes toward troubled employees
- increased ability of supervisors to identify troubled employees
- increased supervisor referrals

- increased self-referrals

Supervisors are taught how to identify, constructively confront and successfully refer troubled employees to the EAP. During the training, it is important to discuss the importance of protecting a worker's confidentiality. Supervisors should receive handouts on effective methods for helping impaired workers (Schneider et al., 1990:41).

As expected, supervisors who receive constructive confrontation training were found to be more effective when confronting and referring impaired workers than supervisors who had not taken part in this activity. Supervisors in training groups receive information on how to assist impaired workers in general. Gerstein et al. (1989:17) found that supervisors were more inclined to confront their subordinates when receiving instructions on how to manage problem employees generally, as compared to assisting alcoholic workers.

## **2.14 CONCLUSION**

Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs) have become increasingly important to the business and social service communities. For most EAPs, the marketing of its service is its bread and butter, not only in promoting the services to the workforce, but often in forming the foundation on which the programme's effectiveness will be measured.

The referral process is central to any Employee Assistance Programme. For the programme to be effective, supervisors, managers, union members, co-workers and family members should refer troubled

employees to EAP for assistance. Troubled employees can also make a self-referral to the EAP office. Supervisors should attend training on EAP because they are in a unique position to identify troubled employees. The EAP staff should conduct supervisory training. The training will include constructive confrontation and the goals of the EAP.

The next chapter will be on interpretation and analysis of data. The researcher will conduct a research at Aventis Pharma with 12 respondents.



## **CHAPTER 3**

### **THE EMPIRICAL FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter, the research findings will be discussed using themes extracted from the respondents' experience. The researcher interviewed 12 respondents who are employees at Aventis Pharma. All the respondents are working in different departments of Aventis Pharma. The empirical data was gathered by means of a semi-structured interview schedule and a tape recorder with the aim to investigate the reasons for the resistance of troubled employees to utilize the EAP at Aventis Pharma.

This chapter will focus on how the researcher analysed and interpreted the data collected for the purpose of an exploration of the reasons for the resistance of troubled employees to utilize the EAP at Aventis Pharma. However, the researcher will first focus on the methodology used in this study before analyzing the results.

## **3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **Research approach**

For the purpose of this study, the researcher has utilized a qualitative research approach. The objective of qualitative research is to understand the phenomenon rather than explain it in terms of the law of cause and effect. Qualitative research deals with information that is principally verbal, and the main aim is to understand the meaning that people attach to everyday life. The researcher intended to get information on employees' perceptions about the utilization of the EAP in the company.

### **Type of research**

The researcher has utilized applied research that is used to develop solutions for problems in practice. The researcher realized that there is a problem regarding the utilization of the EAP at Aventis Pharma and she utilized applied research in order to understand the problem in detail and to generate knowledge with regard to solving the problem of resistance.

### **Research design**

The researcher utilized exploratory designs, which are more qualitative in nature. The researcher explored the respondents' perceptions, feelings and opinions regarding the utilization of the EAP at Aventis Pharma.

### **3.3 EMPIRICAL DATA**

#### **SECTION A. GENERAL INFORMATION**

##### **➤ PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS**

Respondent no. 1 is a 36-year old female. She is married and her highest qualification is matric. She speaks Tswana.

Respondent no. 2 is a 39-year old male. He is single and his highest qualification is matric. He speaks Tswana.

Respondent no. 3 is a 38-year old male, he is single and his highest qualification is matric. He speaks Zulu.

Respondent no. 4 is a 43-year old male. He is married with a diploma as his highest qualification.

Respondent no. 5 is a 39-year old female, married with matric. She speaks Zulu.

Respondent no. 6 is a 35-year old female, married with matric and she speaks Afrikaans.

Respondent no. 7 is a 25-year old female. She is single and her highest qualification is matric. She speaks Tswana.

Respondent no. 8 is a 29-year old female. She is married and has matric as her highest qualification and she speaks Tsonga.

Respondent no. 9 is a 44-year old female who speaks Afrikaans. Her highest qualification is matric and she is a divorcee.

Respondent no. 10 is a 39-year old female who speaks Zulu. Her highest qualification is matric and she is a widow.

Respondent no. 11 is a 54-year old male who speaks Venda. He has a diploma as his highest qualification and he is a divorcee.

Respondent no. 12 is a 34-year old male who speaks Tswana. He is single and has a diploma as his highest qualification.

- **Summary of the profile of the respondents**

The study consisted of 12 respondents from different departments of Aventis Pharma. The age limit of the respondents ranged between 25 and 54 with 5 males and 7 females. Five of the respondents are married, 4 are still single, 2 are divorced and 1 is a widow. Four of the respondents speak Tswana, 3 Zulu, 2 Venda, 2 Afrikaans and 1 speaks Tsonga. Nine respondents have matric as their highest qualification and 3 have a diploma.

- **CENTRAL THEMES**

In the following section, themes will be extracted from the responses of the respondents. Quotes will be presented according to the order of the respondent's number. In case two or more respondents made the same comment, their number will be specified next to the quote.

## **SECTION B. MARKETING OF THE EAP**

### **• KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE EAP**

For most Employee Assistance Programmes, the marketing of its service is its bread and butter, not only in promoting the service to the workforce, but often in informing the foundation of expectations on which the programme's effectiveness will be measured (Oher, 1999:91). The author continues by stating that internal marketing is the systematic promotion of the EAP to a specific employee population. The promotion is carefully tailored to meet the unique needs of the workforce.

#### **Respondents were asked if they knew about EAP in the company.**

The majority of the respondents stated that they knew about the EAP in the company except respondents 5 and 11 who stated that they did not know anything about the EAP. The following reason supports the above:

**“We only know about social workers, we don't know about the EAP” (Respondents 5 and 11).** Two respondents did not know the difference between the EAP and social workers.

#### **The respondents were asked to indicate how they heard about the EAP in the company.**

Respondents 1,6,7 and 12 heard about the EAP through company meetings. Respondents 2 and 8 said that they had problems and they did not know where to go for assistance and their colleagues informed them about the EAP. This is how they put their statement: **“we heard our colleagues talking about EAP, we were never informed about it” (Respondents 2 and 8).** Respondent 3 was informed by the union about the EAP. He had problems that affected his job performance and the union referred him to the EAP, and that is how he learned about the EAP.

Respondent 4 learned about EAP from the departmental e-mails. He indicated it as follows: **“I was going through my mail and I realized that there was something about the EAP and I started reading, that is how I got the message about the EAP” (Respondent 4).**

Schoell (1993:79) has the same view and says that over the past years, e-mail has become an increasingly popular system of communication in the workplace. Using e-mail to broadcast or widely announce an EAP service is the most effective way of getting the announcement to the targeted audience.

- **WRITTEN MATERIAL**

Most employee assistance services have employed traditional promotional materials to meet many of the marketing goals (Beidel, 1992:97). Traditional promotional materials include written materials such as posters, pamphlets, brochures and informational memos.

**Respondents were asked to comment on how the company introduced the EAP to employees.**

The majority of the respondents stated that they have seen posters, notice boards and newsflash about the EAP. **(Respondents 1,2,3,5,6,7,9,10, and 12).** Respondent 4 and 11 talked about supervisors who always tell them about the EAP. The excerpt below will support the above: **“we remember the other day the company showed us a video about EAP after discovering that one employee committed suicide due to problems” (Respondent 4 and 11).**

Respondent 9 learned about the EAP from the newsflash in the company and respondent 10 learned about the EAP from the pamphlets that were

distributed in the company. Respondent 10 who said that pamphlets helped him with his problems made the following statement: **“I lived with my problems for many years, I did not know where to go, I was afraid to inform my supervisor. I thought I would be dismissed, until I found a pamphlet about the EAP and that was the end of my problems” (Respondent 10).**

All the respondents can read and write and they indicated that they were able to understand what was written on all the material about the EAP. The majority of the respondents were happy about the way the EAP was introduced in the company except respondent 5. The following statement was extracted from the respondent’s response with regard to marketing of EAP: **“They should have informed us that its now the EAP not social work, I cannot say I am happy” (Respondent 5).**

- **THE GOAL OF MARKETING**

As with any marketing campaign, EAP promotional efforts must have clear and distinctive goals and objectives (Balloun, 1993:37).

**The respondents were asked to comment on what they think is the goal of marketing EAP services.**

The majority of respondents stated that the goal of marketing EAP services is to let people know about the EAP (**Respondents 1,5,6,7,8,9,10,11, and 12**). Respondents 2 and 3 talked about selling the EAP in the company. The following statement was extracted from the respondent’s response with regard to the goal of marketing: **“The goal of marketing EAP services is to help to reduce problems and stress and to go back to normal life and perform better”.** (Respondent 4).

Balloun (1993:37) says that the goal of marketing of an EAP is to increase employee's knowledge of the EAP its services, activities and the key concepts..

When asked about their family members who know about EAP services, the majority of the respondents stated that their family members know nothing about the EAP (**Respondents 1,2,3,5,7,10, and 12**). Respondent 11 stated that his family knows about the social worker not the EAP. The family of respondent 9 knows that the EAP is there to help people who have problems. Respondents 8,6 and 4 stated that their families know that there is an EAP in the company that helps to solve problems.

Myers (1984: 241) is of opinion that home mailing usually encourages family members to call the EAP if they believe an employed family member has a problem that needs attention. Usually family members are first to recognize that an employee is troubled. The researcher believes that it is important for family members to know about the EAP and its services. Family members of employees at Aventis Pharma know about social work, not the EAP.

Respondents were requested to give their opinion about the home mailings on the EAP. All the respondents stated that they don't receive any mail from the EAP. They only hear about the EAP when they are at work; at home they don't talk about it.



## SECTION C: REFERRAL

### • REFERRAL

Myers (1984:11) is of opinion that referral activity determines an EAP success because without sufficient referrals the programme becomes a dormant expense.

**In this section respondents were asked if they thought troubled employees should wait for supervisors to refer them to the EAP.**

Respondents 1,2,4,5,6,7,8,9,11, and 12 disagree with the fact that troubled employees must wait for supervisors to refer them to the EAP. Respondents had to motivate why they dislike going to the EAP office and below are the reasons provided by the respondents:

**“There is a stigma attached to the EAP office, if you go there, people say it means you have problems” (Respondents 3 and 10).**

**“We should not tell our supervisors that we are going to the EAP, we should just go on our own” (Respondents 1,2,4,5,6,7,8,9,11,and 12).**

Respondent 9 stated that they should not tell their supervisors that they want to consult the EAP because they are their colleagues and will ask them about their problems and they would not feel comfortable to discuss their problems with them. Respondent 4 stated that they must go voluntarily to the EAP but they must inform their supervisors in case they look for them for work purposes. **“I know I have problems and should go and consult on my own, I should not wait for someone to refer me to go and seek help” (Respondent 8).**

Respondents 3 and 10 are of the opinion that troubled employees should wait for supervisors to refer them to the EAP. They say it is important for

a supervisor to know where the employees are. The following reason was extracted: **“You cannot just leave your work station or department if your supervisor does not know where you are going, you must wait for him/her to refer you to the EAP for assistance (Respondents 3 and 10).**

To be accepted by employees, an EA practitioner must be viewed as a legitimate and confidential source of help (Franz, 1986:26).

**Respondents were asked to give their opinion about confidentiality on EAP services.**

All the respondents stated that the EA practitioner should be very confidential and this will help them to be free when they go for consultation. Franz (1986:5) continues by saying that it is especially important in EAP work that the issue of privacy and confidentiality be stressed in the initial contact.

The majority of respondents stated that they are happy about the way the EA practitioner treats them with regard to confidentiality. Respondents 8 and 12 stated that the EAP office is not confidential. They do not feel free to go to the EAP because they believe that other employees or supervisors will see them when they enter the EAP office. The following reason was extracted from their response: **“The EAP office is where everyone can see you when you go there, there is no confidentiality.”(Respondents 8 and 12).**

**Respondents were asked if they think employees prefer referral or supervisory referral to the EAP.**

Respondents 3,4,5,6,7,8,10 prefer self-referral because they do not want supervisors to know that they have problems. They believe that supervisors will undermine them if they know their problems. Respondents 1,2,11, and 12 stated that they do not want supervisors to know that they consult with the EAP. The following reason was extracted from the respondents' responses with regard to supervisory referrals:

**“My supervisor is my neighbour, I don't want her to refer me to the EAP, I will go on my own. If she refers me it will be clear that I have problems. (Respondents 1,2,11 and 12).**

Respondents 9 stated that she prefers to be referred because she does not like EAPs and social workers. This is how she put her statement: **“If my supervisor do not refer me, I will not go on my own.” (Respondent 9).**

**Respondents were asked to comment on their feelings when they consult with the EAP.**

Respondents 1,2,3,4,7,10,11 and 12 stated that they feel good when consulting with the EAP because they know that their problems will be solved. Respondents 8 and 9 also feel good because they are free to talk about their problems. Respondent 5 expressed the following statement to indicate how he feels when going to the EAP office. **“I feel good when I consult with the EAP and I am assured about confidentiality” (Respondent 5).**

According to Myers (1984:11) confrontation is the act of a supervisor informing an employee in a private interview setting of specific performance related deficiencies adversely affecting the individual's employment in the organization.

**Respondents were asked to comment on how supervisors confront troubled employees.**

The majority of respondents, 2,3,7,8,9,10 and 12 stated that supervisors confront employees by calling them to the office. **“I haven’t seen a supervisor doing confrontation, but I think he/she must call you to the office” (Respondents 1,4,5, and 11).** Respondent 6 stated that he does not know what supervisors should do when confronting troubled employees.

**Respondents were asked about their family members involvement with the EAP.**

The majority of respondents stated that their family members are not involved with the EAP. (Respondents 1,2,3,4,6,7,8 and 12). Respondents 5 and 11 stated that their family members consult with the EAP when they have problems. The following reason was extracted from the respondents’ responses with regard to family members’ involvement with the EAP. **”My family members are not involved because they know that EAP is for employees only”, (Respondents 9 and 10).**

Klarreick et al., (1985:19) state that a mandatory referral procedure is an option available to management to use during the latter stages of the disciplinary procedure. Respondents were asked to give their understanding of a mandatory referral and all the respondents stated that they knew nothing about a mandatory referral.

**Respondents were asked to give their opinions about problems that should be brought to the attention of the EA practitioner.**

Respondents 1,2,3 and 4 stated that all problems should be brought to the attention of the EA practitioner. Respondents 5,8,9,10,11 and 12 talked

about financial, marital, work-related and alcohol problems. They said that these are the only problems that employees should bring to the attention of the EA practitioner.

When discussing the types of referrals in the company, respondents 1,3,4,5,6,7,9,10,11 and 12 said that there are supervisory and self-referrals and respondent 8 talked about self, supervisory and union referrals. Most EA practitioners agree that the rate of self-referrals is a good indicator of an EAP success. Self-referrals occur when an employee initiates the counselling (Klarreick et al., 1985:18).

## **SECTION D: SUPERVISORY TRAINING**

### **• SUPERVISORY TRAINING**

Learning to deal with the problem employee has become a must in today's organization. Schneider, Colan & Googins (1990:41) state that the role of the supervisor in the constructive confrontation process has been established as central to an EAP. Supervisors are in a unique position to identify troubled employees and intervene in a meaningful way.

In this section, employees were asked about the training of supervisors. The question was:

**“Do you think supervisors should be trained on EAP?”**

In the following statements, respondents expressed their feelings on supervisory training. **“Supervisors should not be trained on EAP because they will take the social workers' jobs, they will leave their jobs and pretend to be social workers”.** (Respondents 4 and 7).

**“It is not important for supervisors to be trained on EAP, they will never help us and as employees, we don’t trust them” (Respondents 6 and 11).**

Half of the respondents stated that they do not have confidence in their supervisors and training will be a waste of time. **(Respondents 1,2,3,8,9 and 10)**. Respondents 5 and 12 agree that supervisors should be trained on EAP because they will be able to help them when the EAP is not there. Gerstein, Eichenhofer & Bayer (1989:16) state that supervisors should be trained to recognize workers in distress through the monitoring of attendance, productivity and co-worker relationships. To support the abovementioned statement, the researcher would say that training is very important because it gives the opportunity to learn how to identify and confront troubled employees.

**Respondents were asked about what they thought the purpose of supervisory training was.**

Respondents 2,6,7, 9,10 and 12 state that the purpose of supervisory training is to inform supervisors about EAP. Respondents 8 and 11 do not see the importance of training for supervisors. Respondents 1,3,4, and 5 mention that the purpose for supervisory training is to help the supervisors to be involved in addressing the problems in the workplace.

Gerstein et al. (1989:16) is of opinion that the purpose of supervisory training is to teach supervisors how to identify, confront and refer impaired workers to the EAP. Supervisory training helps to give supervisors a clear indication of what the EAP is, and also what is expected from them as supervisors.

**In this section, respondents were asked to comment on how they thought they could benefit from the supervisory training.**

The majority of respondents state that they will learn from their supervisors (**Respondents 1,3,7,8,9,11,and 12**). Respondents 2,4,5,6 and 10 state that they will not benefit anything because a supervisor's focus will be on production. The following statement supports the above: **“As supervisees, we will not benefit anything; supervisors will learn for their own benefit”**. (**Respondents 2,4,5,6 and 10**).

**Respondents were asked on how supervisors can enhance the effectiveness of an EAP.**

All the respondents stated that supervisors could enhance the effectiveness of an EAP through making referrals to the EAP.

### **3.4 CONCLUSION**

The researcher can conclude that based on the statements extracted from the responses, the majority of respondents do not want to be referred to the EAP and they also dislike supervisory training. They want to consult on their own. They believe that if a supervisor refers one, it means one has a serious problem. The researcher has realized that the reason why employees wait for supervisors to refer them to the EAP is that they are afraid to consult on their own.

In the next chapter, conclusions and recommendations based on the study will be presented.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter, the focus will be on the conclusions and recommendations based on marketing of the EAP, referral and on supervisory training.

#### **4.2 MARKETING OF AN EAP**

For most EAPs the marketing of its service is its bread and butter (Oher, 1999:91). Those who render services should be wise enough to track customers which can only be done through good marketing. The goal of marketing of an EAP is to increase employees' knowledge of the EAP and its services.

The researcher is of the opinion that marketing is the activity that is used to convince people to buy a product or service. People need to know about a service or product before they can utilize it. Most employee assistance services employ traditional promotional materials to meet many of the marketing goals.

Very often, employee assistance professionals' most effective strategies for promoting EAP and the acceptance of its services involve some form of oral presentation, written materials, electronic media and the individual EA professional as a marketing agent.



As a marketing agent, the EA coordinator should briefly explain what the EAP is, how employees can use it, what they should expect after they make an appointment and how confidentiality is protected. The researcher believes that being a marketing agent is more helpful for the employees because it gives them the opportunity to ask questions if they are not clear about some aspects.

The researcher is of the opinion that the marketing of EAP services is still lacking at Aventis Pharma because some employees do not know about EAP; they know only about social workers in the company. The researcher feels that employees need someone to clarify for them the difference between an EAP and social work.

An EA practitioner used to present talks to the employees as part of marketing. The researcher feels that talks were sufficient for employees but not for their family members who are normally the first to recognize that a family member has a problem and needs attention.

Electronic media can be used as part of marketing of services in the company. The researcher is concerned about employees who do not have computers to receive messages regarding the EAP in the company.

In the light of the above conclusions, the following recommendations can be made:

- The company must arrange with the EA practitioner to start again with the marketing of services in the company.
- Home mailings should be part of marketing. Family members need to know about the EAP services in the company.

- It should be stressed on the home mailings that the EAP is not only for the employees; it is also for their family members.
- The difference between the EAP and Social Work should be clearly stated in the home mailings.
- If a message is sent through e-mail, that message should be printed and be placed on the notice boards for employees who do not have e-mails.
- The company should have pamphlets and posters that should be placed on the notice boards for employees to get the message about the EAP.
- Some of the pamphlets should be inserted in the employees' pay slips so that they can take them home for their family members.
- Weekly sessions with the EA practitioner will also contribute to the marketing of the service.

### **4.3 REFERRAL**

The referral process is the key to the entire EAP. The majority of employees at Aventis Pharma do not want supervisors to refer them to the EAP, they want to go on their own. They believe that if a supervisor refers one to the EAP, it means one has problems.

Employees at Aventis Pharma believe in self-referral. They do not want supervisors to refer them to the EAP and on the other hand they do not consult on their own. They are afraid that they will be seen when entering or leaving the EAP office. The researcher has realized that the biggest obstacle to self-referring is the stigma that is attached to the EAP office.

Employees believe that if one goes to the EAP office it means one has problems.

The following recommendations are made in the light of the above-mentioned conclusions:

- Management should consider the location of the EAP office in the company. Employees do not want to be seen when entering or leaving the EAP office.
- Management should encourage the employees to utilize the EAP in the company.
- Employees know nothing about mandatory referral and this should be part of marketing.

#### **4.4 SUPERVISORY TRAINING**

The involvement of supervisors is required for an EAP to be effective in the organization. Supervisors should be trained on how to confront and refer troubled employees to the EAP. Some of the employees at Aventis Pharma believe that training is not necessary for supervisors. They say it is a waste of time to train supervisors because they would not be able to help trouble employees.

Employees do not trust their supervisors and this makes it difficult for them to see the importance of training. Employees do not have confidence in their supervisors, they know the purpose of training but they do not seem to understand it. The researcher is of opinion that supervisory training is very important. Supervisors are taught what the EAP is, how to confront troubled employees and how the referral

procedure works. The researcher can comment that supervisors are working close to the employees and they are able to recognize the troubled employee. After realizing that an employee is troubled, a referral to the EAP can be made.

In the light of the above conclusions, the following recommendations can be made:

- Management together with the EA practitioner must draft a manual for training that will help the employees to understand the importance of supervisory training.
- The manual should outline the role of the supervisor when working with troubled employees.

#### **4.5 CONCLUSION**

An Employee Assistance Programme is a work-based programme that is designed to identify problem employees and motivate them to solve their problems. This study focused on the research methodology and the literature study on marketing of an EAP, referral and supervisory training.

Interviews were held with 12 respondents at Aventis Pharma and the research findings indicate clearly that the goal and objectives of the study have been accomplished. According to the research findings, lack of knowledge, confidentiality regarding the location of the EAP office and lack of confidence in the supervisors are the reasons for the resistance of employees to utilize EAP at Aventis Pharma.

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## Semi-structured interview schedule

### Section A

#### 1. General information

##### 1.1 Gender

Male	Female
------	--------

##### 1.2 How old are you?

20-24	
25-29	
30-34	
35-39	
40-44	
45-49	
50-54	
55+	

1.3 Marital status

Single	Married	Separated	Divorced
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1.4 Qualification

Std 5-9	
Std 10	
Diploma	
Degree	
Other (specify)	

1.5 Home language

English	
Afrikaans	
Northern Sotho	
Tswana	
Zulu	
Other (specify)	

**Section B**

**2. Marketing of EAP**

2.1 Do you know that there is an EAP in the company? Yes / No

2.2 How did you hear about EAP?

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2.3 Explain how did the company introduce EAP.

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2.4 Did you understand what was written on the material? Yes / No

Motivate your answer

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2.5 Were you happy about the way EAP was introduced in the company?  
Yes / No

If no, why?

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2.6 What do you think is the goal of the marketing of the EAP?

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2.7 What kind of written materials about EAP are available in your department?

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2.8 What do your family know about EAP?

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2.9 What is your opinion on home mailing from the EAP office?

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2.10 Do you think the EAP practitioner in your company is well trained?  
Yes / No

2.11 How often do you receive talks from your EAP practitioner?

## **Section C**

### **3. Referral**

3.1 Do you think troubled employees must wait for supervisors to refer them to EAP?

Yes / No

Motivate your answer.

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3.2 What is your opinion about confidentiality concerning the use of EAP services?

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3.3 Do you think most employees prefer self-referral to EAP services?  
Yes / No

Motivate your answer.

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3.4 How do you feel about going to the EAP office?

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3.5 Do you think it is necessary to inform your supervisor if you want to consult with the EAP?

Motivate your answer.

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3.6 How do supervisors confront troubled employees?

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3.7 What is your family members' involvement in EAP?

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3.8 What is your understanding of a mandatory referral?

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3.9 With what kind of problems can a troubled employee go to the EAP practitioner?

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3.10 What kind of referral procedures are there?

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## **Section D**

### **4. Supervisory Training**

4.1 Do you think supervisors should be trained on EAP? Yes / No

Motivate your answer.

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4.2 What do you think is the purpose of training supervisors?

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4.3 How can supervisors enhance the effectiveness of an EAP?

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4.4 How can you benefit from supervisory training?

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Thank you for your participation.