THE FACTORS INFLUENCING SUPERVISORY REFERRALS TO THE EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME IN TELKOM PRETORIA AREA

by

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DECLARATION

I, CHRISTINAH HLAMALANE MAHLAHLANE, declare that the study on "The factors influencing supervisory referrals to the Employee Assistance Programme in Telkom Pretoria area" was concluded by me. I also compiled this research report and all sources used or cited are acknowledged by means of a complete reference.

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CHRISTINAH HLAMALANE MAHLAHLANE

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" GOOD BLESS YOU "
"INKOSI INI BUSISE "
"XIKWEMBU XI MEKATEKISA"

ABSTRACT

THE FACTORS INFLUENCING SUPERVISORY REFERRALS TO THE EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME IN TELKOM PRETORIA AREA

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The research study investigates the factors influencing supervisory referrals in Employee Assistance Programmes. An Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) is a work-site based programme that assists with the dealing of the employee's problem that impacts on job performance. Supervisory referral is a necessary component and contributes to the effective operation of Employee Assistance Programmes.

The study was conducted within the framework of a survey. The questionnaires were designed and distributed to supervisors who had daily contact with employees. From the result obtained it was evident that there is more than one factor that influences the supervisors to refer the troubled employees to the EAP. One factor mentioned to be important in addressing low supervisory referrals is that of a constructive confrontation strategy. Results from this study indicated that many supervisors are still uncomfortable with the constructive confrontation strategy. Further research into supervisory referrals is needed as this is considered to be the backbone of EAP utilisation. If designers of an EAP are fully aware of the factors influencing supervisors to refer the troubled employee, the EAP practitioner will be able to provide a framework clarifying the multifaceted process of supervisory intervention with problem workers.

KEY CONCEPTS/SLEUTELBEGRIPPE

Organisation	-	Onderneming
Supervisor	-	Toesighouer
Subordinate	-	Ondergeskikte
Factor	-	Faktor
Programme	-	Program
Referral	-	Verwysing
Work performance	-	Werksprestasie
Policy	-	Beleid
Social problems	-	Maatskaplike Probleme
Employer	-	Werkgewer
Employee	-	Werknemer
Troubled Employee	-	Probleem Werknemer
Employee Assistance Programme	-	Werknemerhulpprogram

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1.1   INTRODUCTION

Renewed interest in the assisting of troubled employees, coupled with increasing demands for effectiveness in the workplace has led to an upsurge in the development of Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs). Evaluation of job performance further led to the identification of the increase in workplace problems, which in turn led to the need for EAPs within the organisations. Implementation of an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) resulted in the expansion of the consultation base offered to employees, thus increasing the level of service provided by the human resource function. Services offered by the human resources function evolved to include consultation on education and aspects of a preventative nature such as the promotion of health and stress and supervisory coaching programmes. An EAP is the tool through which supervisors can supplement their concern for lower performance with an offer of assistance.

The EAP should be viewed as an organisational asset and an invaluable tool in the hands of employees who are positions of authority and though which they can resolve discrepancies in work performance. The need to offer EAP services to employees was also noticed by Telkom Pretoria and as a result is viewed as one of the organisations in Gauteng who have a well-established EAP. The aim of Telkom is to become a world-class Communication Company that offer a total communication solution to its customers. The context within which the duties required by the Telkom Pretoria employees in order to achieve this aim is performed, urged management to consider the implementation of an EAP in order to address the needs of the employees.

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After the EAP policy has been delineated and the roles of those within the organisation defined, the challenge is finding ways of promoting managerial and supervisory expertise to operationalise the process. The most effective way of achieving this is to orientate supervisors on the value of an EAP. Although some prefer to call this "supervisory training" a more generic and less threatening description such as "supervisory orientation" can be utilised (Klarreich, Francek and Moore, 1985:183). Although Telkom Pretoria provided supervisory training to the supervisors, no research was conducted to determine what would influence the supervisors to refer a troubled employee to the EAP.

The main objective of the supervisory orientation is to sensitise those who manage others to the fact that a wide range of factors can adversely impact on job performance and that it is not the responsibility of the supervisor to change and/or rectify all these situations. Since meeting the expectations of the job is the responsibility of the employee, the role of the supervisor is rather one of monitoring the performance and aiding employees to secure the assistance required to perform satisfactorily in their work. According to the EAP digest (1985: 07) it is estimated that 18% of the work force is affected by personal problems that can impact on job performance. Of the affected employees 12% have an alcohol and/or drug related problem and 6% have emotional related problems. Addressing these problems at an early stage can increase productivity by 25%. EAP digest (1985:50) also states that EAP orientation to supervisors who are in daily contact with employees can not only increase referrals by 98% but ensure that individual consultation is used to enlighten employees on the scope of the EAP. Yet, as for the long-term impact, experience has shown that most people forget at least 75% of what they heard at the training within a number of days.

The study was aimed at investigating the factors that influence EAP referrals by supervisors in the Telkom Pretoria area against the background that any attempt to establish an EAP in any organisation requires the involvement and co-operation of supervisors and managers at all levels.

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1.2   MOTIVATION OF THE STUDY

Lack of knowledge on the factors that influence supervisors to refer the employees to the EAP motivated the researcher to undertake this study. The researcher felt that, as the success of the programme relies on the involvement of management and supervisors, it is important to know what makes them the "driving force" for referrals. The researcher supports Sonnenstuhl and Trice (1986:21) and Chiabotta (1987:125) in their postulation stating that support and involvement of the management greatly improve the effectiveness of EAPs.

As *The Department of Public Service Administration requires all government departments to provide for an EAP for all public servants*, Telkom as a parastatal organisation was also required to provide EAP services for its employees. The researcher chose Telkom Pretoria because the organisation has a well-established EAP and has already provided supervisory training to the supervisors. Determining those factors that influence supervisors within Telkom Pretoria to refer employees can help practitioners to improve the quality of EAP supervisory training.

A further motivation for conducting this study can be found in the professional interest of the researcher in determining the factors that influence supervisors to refer employees to the EAP as well as the motivation behind these factors. Not only will the study be beneficial to the "future" of the EAP as this will make EAP Practitioners aware of the factors influencing supervisors to refer, it will enable Practitioners to highlight these factors during EAP orientation and assist them to determine additional requirements in order to enhance the quality EAP supervisory training.

1.3   PROBLEM FORMULATION

To solve the problem, a thorough study has to be done. The New Dictionary of Social Work (1995:45) states that problem formulation is the process of *"defining the phenomena into which research is carried out"*. Mouton and Marais (1990:38) and Mouton (1996) in De Vos (1998: 68) states that there are three factors that determine

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the manner in which research problems are formulated, i.e. the unit of analysis, the research goal and the research approach. Bless & Higson-Smith (1995: 29) refers to the research problem as general questions about relations between two or more variables that is stated in the form of a question.

It has been widely acknowledged that the use of EAP services in most organisations not only helped to sensitise employers to the social needs of their employees but to also consider aspects of their health. Masi (1992:1) states that as recently as 1980, many employees would have been reprimanded or even dismissed because of their personal problems. Traditionally employers felt that problems encountered by employees were to be dealt with privately and outside the working environment whilst employees in turn felt that their employers were disinterested in their personal concerns and difficulties. Major changes in these kinds of attitudes and perceptions have however occurred recently with the development of EAPs designed to deal with employee problems that may impact on performance at work (compare Masi, 1992:1).

The factors, which influence supervisors to refer to the programme, are a major concern for the growth of EAP in South Africa. The success of an EAP in an organisation lay with support of management and involvement of supervisors. The supervisors are the primary source of identifying and subsequently helping the troubled employees and the EAP is a resource and aid that can be utilised by supervisors to deal with the problem of poor work performance should it be associated with personal problems. As a result of the increase of personal problems impacting on performance at work, the EAP in most South-African organisations was developed to address these problems.

Schwartz (1987:22) supports the above statement by stating that many observers believe that the most important role of the supervisor is that of the leader. This viewpoint is probably an exaggeration as there are many more areas requiring the supervisor's immediate attention such as productivity and control of quality and costs. As modern day supervisors fulfil a more complex role and are deemed responsible for the end product, they should play an active role in encouraging employees to use the services of the EAP.

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Based on what has been mentioned, it is clear that the EAP can neither exist nor be successful without the involvement of the organisations top management and supervisors and this was also realised by Telkom Pretoria. The research problem is formulated as follows:

> Inadequate referral rate by supervisors to the EAP results in problems of troubled employees not being attended to.

Based on the research problem the study was consequently directed at exploring those matters that may influence the supervisor when considering the referral of a troubled employee to the EAP.

1.4   GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1.4.1   Goal

The goal of the study was to explore the factors that may influence supervisors when considering the referral of a troubled employee of Telkom in the Pretoria area to the Employee Assistance Programme.

1.4.2   Objectives

The following was set as objectives for the study:

- To describe the functions of the EAP and the role of supervisors in the EAP within Telkom Pretoria.
- To explore and describe, through a literature study, the factors influencing supervisory referrals to the EAP.
- To explore and describe, through an empirical study, the factors influencing supervisory referrals to the EAP of Telkom Pretoria.

1.5   RESEARCH QUESTION

The basis or motivation for research can either be in the form of one or more questions that need answered or a hypothesis. Questions are posed about the nature of a real situation while hypothesis are statements about how this can be. According to Cresswell (1998:99) research questions are open-ended, evolving, non-directional, they restate the purpose of the study in more specific terms and start with words such as what or how rather than why. Based on the above, the research question for this study was formulated as follows:

> What are the factors influencing supervisors to refer troubled employees of Telkom Pretoria to the Employee Assistance Programme?

The findings of this study, as outlined in Chapter 5 of this report, will serve as response to this question.

1.6   RESEARCH APPROACH

The research approach in this study will be of a quantitative nature. According to Mouton and Marais in De Vos (1998:15) the quantitative approach is that approach used in the social sciences that is more highly formalised, more explicitly controlled and which, in terms of the methods, is relatively close to the physical sciences. As the researcher explores the factors that influence supervisors to refer employees to the EAP through a structured questionnaire with close and open–ended questions as a method of data collection, it is deemed to fit the quantitative approach.

1.7   TYPE OF RESEARCH

The most appropriate type of the research for this study will be applied research. The goal of applied research is most often the scientific planning of induced change in a troublesome situation in order to develop solutions for problems and application in

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practice (De Vos 1998:8). As the researcher intends to explore and determine the factors influencing supervisory EAP referrals in order to enhance the quality of supervisory training by EAP professionals in practice, the research is classified as applied research .

1.8   RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is the planning of a research project through which data is gathered in order to investigate the hypothesis or to realise the aim (The new Social Work dictionary, 1995:63). Bless & Higson-Smith (1995:65) defines research design as a programme to guide the researcher in collecting, analysing and interpreting the observed facts. It is a specification of the most adequate operations to be performed in order to test a specific hypothesis under given conditions.

The research design for this study is explorative-descriptive research. According to Mouton and Marais (1990:43) the goal in exploratory studies is the exploration of a relatively unknown research question about which little is known. Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:65) indicates that the purpose of exploratory research is to gain insight into a situation, phenomenon, community or person. According to Neuman (1997:19) descriptive research presents a picture of the specific details of a situation, social setting or relationship. Descriptive research focuses on "how " and "who" questions – "*How did happen?*" and "*Who is involved?*". The purpose of combining descriptive and explorative research in this study is to describe the end results of the explored situation. The relationship between two variables, i.e. the unknown factors and the influence of supervisory referrals, will be explored. By describing the end results the percentage of factors influencing supervisors to refer or not to refer, will be known. Because the factors explored will be described, the EAP Practitioners at Telkom could utilise this to enhance their supervisory training on EAP.

1.9   RESEARCH PROCEDURE AND STRATEGY

The researcher used questionnaires containing both closed and open-ended questions as method of data collection. The New Dictionary of Social Work (1995:51) defines a questionnaire as "*a set of questions on a form which is completed by the respondent in respect of a research project*". The basic objective of a questionnaire is to obtain facts and opinions about a phenomenon from people who are informed on the particular issue. The questionnaire was distributed to the respondents to allow them the opportunity to complete the questionnaire in their own time after which it was again collected. The data collection phase was followed by the scientific analysis of the data.

1.9.1   Data analysis

According to De Vos (1998:204), whether the data is to be analysed manually or by computer, most statistical analysis as is often imperative for the quantitative approach, require that the data be coded. The data gathered was analysed, interpreted and is presented graphically as well as in numerical format and tables to facilitate ease of utilisation.

1.10   PILOT STUDY

1.10.1   Literature study

Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:22) states that the role of the literature study is to gather some background information on the research topic that will enable a clear formulation of the problem and hypothesis. Using the research topic as focus, a literature search was done to establish the availability of information. This process was facilitated by the familiarity of the researcher with the procedures to perform literature searches in a library and underscored the importance of the library as source of information. As the literature search revealed a limited availability of books on Employee Assistance Programmes in the South-African context, the researcher had to rely on international

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resources to conduct the study. Other sources that were utilised included articles from journals and the Internet.

1.10.2   Consultation with experts

The researcher was fully convinced of the necessity to include experts who have previous experience in this field or who were once exposed to EAP services as sources of information. The following experts were consulted:

- Mr. P Naidoo – EAP co-ordinator at Telkom. Mr. Naidoo has been co-ordinating the EAP at Telkom for about 5 years. As co-ordinator he was involved with certain EAP functions such as supervisory training, evaluation and marketing of the programme in Telkom.

- Mr. Bhoodram – EAP co-ordinator at the Department of Correctional Services and President of EAPA South Africa. Mr. Bhoodram is involved with all services of EAP at Correctional Services.

- Ms. C Snyders – EAP practitioner at Telkom. Ms. Snyders has been working for Telkom since the implementation of the EAP in 1995 as was deemed an important source as the practitioner is relied on by Telkom to get their EAP going. Furthermore, as practitioner, she is involved in all the referrals of troubled employees of Telkom to the external programme.

1.10.3   Feasibility of the study

According to Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:154) a feasibility study is "a study designed to determine whether a particular strategy or intervention is likely to reach its stated objectives". One should thus be as certain that a planned project is viable before investing a large amount of money.

The feasibility of the study was greatly dependent on the cooperation of Telkom and to secure this, a written request was submitted to Telkom to obtain permission to conduct the research study (see Annexure B). Personal contact was also made to further

improve the chances of securing permission to conduct the research and as a result of these efforts, written permission was granted by Telkom (see Annexure C). A second aspect that had an influence on the feasibility of the study was costs and as the researcher had no sponsorship support, the cost had to kept to such a level as could be covered by a student grant received by the researcher. To further keep the costs at bay, certain of the administration costs such as typing and copying could be absorbed as the researcher had access to a personal computer and printer and did not need to employ the services of a professional typist. Other factors such as travelling and fieldwork, which are usually huge cost drivers in research, were also minimised by selecting a target population in close proximity to the base of the researcher and making use of mail questionnaires to gather data. Both of these aspects saved on time and thus costs but were however managed in such a manner so as not to compromise the reliability and validity requirements of the research.

Although the overall results of the research were made available to the Program Manager of Telkom's EAP in case the respondents may need to have access to it, the information received by individual respondents were kept strictly confidential so as to guarantee honest participation and to thus ensure that the question of honesty did not threaten the feasibility of the study. In view of the fact that EAP supervisory referrals is such an important issue in Employee Assistance Programmes, the investigation of this factor was well received thus further strengthening the feasibility of the research and ensuring that the stated goal and objectives will be reached.

1.10.4 Pilot test of questionnaire/measuring instrument

To improve the success and effectiveness of the proposed study the suitability of the measuring instruments was tested. A pilot study is a process whereby the research design for a prospective survey is tested (New Dictionary of Social Work, 1995:45). The purpose of a pilot study is to investigate the feasibility of the planned project and to bring possible deficiencies in the measurement procedure to the fore (De Vos, 1998:178). During the pilot testing of the questionnaire the researcher presented it to three supervisors and all of them were returned. Evaluation of the returned questionnaires

made it clear that the respondents did not experience problems with the understanding of the questions.

1.11   DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH POPULATION, DELIMITATION BOUNDARY OF THE SAMPLE AND SAMPLING METHOD

According to Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:87) a population is the set of elements that the researcher focuses upon and from which the results are obtained by testing the sample. Seaberg (in De Vos, 1998:190) defines the term population as the total set from which the individuals or units of the study are chosen. The population includes the totality of persons, events, organisations, units, case records or other sampling units with which the research problem is concerned. Neumen (1997:202) describes the population as the large pool that has an important role in sampling. The researcher concurs that the population has an important role to play in conducting the research because without the population to select the sample from, no research can be performed.

The research population of this study was defined as all supervisors in the Telkom Pretoria area who have daily, direct and face-to-face contact with the employees. The sample included men and women of all age groups and with different experiences about the organisation. Only supervisors and first-line managers with at least one-year experience were included in the study. The population consisted of 61 supervisors from three sections but as this study is of limited extent, a sample was drawn from the population.

Sampling is the act of drawing a sample from a population. Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:87) defines a sample as a representative of a whole. According to the Dictionary of Social Work (1995:55) "*a sample is a number of units in the population concerned*". A sample is thus a representative portion of the population concerned.

The **stratified random sampling** method was used in this study. Stratification consists of the universe being divided into a number of strata. The stratum consisted of the tree

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sections identified during the demarcation of the population, i.e. the Billing, Operator Call Services and Sales and Marketing sections. The supervisors and the first-line managers were selected randomly from the list of names provided. According to De Vos (1998:197) this sampling method is mainly used to ensure that the different segments or groups of the population acquire sufficient representation. Using proportionate sampling ensured a 50% representation from each stratum.

The sampling was divided proportionally between 30 supervisors who interacted with employees on a day-to-day basis in order to get information on the factors that influence them to refer troubled employees to the EAP. From the 30 questionnaire distributed to the supervisors, 20 responses were received.

1.12   ETHICAL ISSUES

Ethical acceptability is a primary issue in any research study that involves disclosure of information of the client system. Grinnell (1997:58) states that client confidentiality is always a concern since many researchers request access to clients and/or the files of clients. According to De Vos (1998:24) ethics is a set of moral principles which is suggested by an individual or group, is subsequently widely accepted, and which offers rules and behavioural expectations about appropriate conduct towards experimental subjects and respondents, employers, sponsors, other researchers, assistants and students.

Different authors agree on ethical issues (Bless & Higson-Smith, 1995:103, Babbie 2001:439-445 and De Vos 1998:24-28). Babbie, (2001:439-445) mentions the following ethical issues applicable to social research, voluntary participation by respondents, no harm to the participants, anonymity, confidentiality, not deceiving subjects, analysis and reporting of all findings, negative as well as positive, as applicable. The issues identified by Bless & Higson-Smith (1995:103) are less comprehensive than that of Babbie (2001) identified above and only included privacy, voluntary participation, anonymity and confidentiality.

For this study the following ethical issues will be addressed.

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- Harm to respondents. In the execution of the study special care was taken to ensure that respondents came to any emotional or physical harm. Furthermore, as the research did not require of the respondents to engage in any dangerous situation and only factual information was required, the likelihood of respondents experiencing physical or emotional injury was nil.

- Confidentiality and anonymity. Respondents were not required to identify themselves on the questionnaire thus ensuring confidentiality as well as anonymity.

- Voluntary participation. Not only was voluntary participation encouraged and secured my means of a consent form to indicate that they participated on a voluntary basis, it was further entrenched as respondents had the option not to divulge certain information about themselves.

- Informed consent. Written consent from each respondent was obtained before they were allowed to participate in the study. Not only did the consent form elaborate on the purpose of the study it also contained the name and signature of the respondent and the name, signature and contact details of the researcher.

- Release of publication and findings. The findings of the study were reported in written format.

- Finally, care was taken to ensure that all parties were treated with respect and that a good working relationship was maintained at all times.

1.13   DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

1.13.1 Employee Assistance Programmes

According to Bruce (1990:4) an Employee Assistance Programme refers to a programme designed to meet specific needs or problems of troubled employees by utilising professional human services and personnel on either a contractual or an employment basis.

"An EAP is a work-site–based programme designed to assist in the identification and resolution of productivity problems associated with employees impaired by personal

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concerns including but not limited to: health, marital, family financial, alcohol, drug, legal, emotional, stress, or other personal concerns which may adversely affect employee job performance" (Standards Committee of EAPA, SA, 1999:4).

The primary function of the EAP is the prevention and treatment of psychological and social dysfunction (such as alcohol and drug dependency, marital and family malfunctioning, and emotional and behavioural malfunctioning), which has a negative impact on the employees job satisfaction, as well as the efficiency and quality of work rendered by officials employed by the organisation.

According to the researcher an EAP is a programme aimed at helping the employees deal with their social, emotional and psychological problems that may impair job performance.

1.13.2 Supervisor

A supervisor is defined as a knowledgeable professional, who empowers a supervisee with professional knowledge and skills (Munson, 1989:3). The role of the supervisor includes functions such as delegating tasks to employees and the planning, organising and controlling of these tasks. It emphasises leadership, whereby the supervisor influences, motivates and is actively involved on a personal level with the employee.

With regard to the EAP functions, the role of the supervisor comprises identifying troubled employees whose personal problems have a negative effect on their job performance, documenting instances of poor performance, confronting the employee with such incidents, making referrals to EAP services, helping the employee during reintegration into his work situation and giving feedback to the employee.

1.13.3 Employee

According to the researcher the employee is a person who engages in certain task aimed at getting remuneration at end of the day.

1.13.4 Troubled employee

According to Myers (1984:12) a troubled employee is an employee who is suffering from any one or a combination of problems, which may or may not result in performance deficiencies on the job. For the purpose of this study a troubled employee is defined as an employee who is experiencing a personal, emotional or any other problem, which negatively affects his/her job performance.

1.13.5 Referral

Referral is the process of directing a client to an agency, resources, or professional known to be able to provide required services. This process may include knowing what resources are available and what the needs of the clients are, facilitating the opportunity for the client to partake in the service, and following up to be certain that the contact was fulfilled (Barker 1988:26).

Referral of a troubled employee as a function of an EAP Professional is a determining factor in the success of the programme. Identification of the problem can be seen as an initiation phase and referral as a constructive continuation of the helping process (Thompson, 1990:170). The supervisor should be involved in the referral process and be trained to have a thorough understanding of the helping process.

1.14   LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The researcher experienced several problems due to the restructuring that were taking place in the organisation. This included the change in the EAP section, which falls under Safety, Health and Environmental – Wellness (SHE-Wellness), and resulted in a delay in data collection. The restructuring and pending retrenchments in the organisation also caused the other team in the SHE-Wellness Programme to show a lack of interest for the researcher to continue with the research. Despite the delay caused by this restructuring process, this constituted no threat to the researcher as prior discussions on the pros and cons were held with the manager of EAP section. The fact that the researcher was an outsider to the organisation made it difficult in the sense that the respondents did not simply agree to be part of the study and a concerted effort had to be made before getting through to the respondents.

CHAPTER TWO

THE COMPONENTS OF EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES AND TELKOM AS AN EMPLOYER

2.1   INTRODUCTION

Telkom established the EAP to provide employees with counselling services. The main objective of the programme is to help employees cope with occupational, personal and emotional problems.

In this chapter the components of an EAP, which includes, the goals, functions, objectives, core technologies, models, approaches to an EAP, the benefits of an EAP, factors which influence the effectiveness of an EAP will be discussed where after a brief description of Telkom as an employer will be provided.

2.2   GOALS OF AN EAP

Although the specific goals of an EAP for an organisation relates to the industry within which the organisation operates and this to a large extent determines the type and degree of social and other problems experienced by the employees, the core goals for any EAP will be fairly similar across the board as they are usually based on financial and humanitarian grounds. According to Dickman, Challenger, Hutchison and Enemer (1988:246) goals are action statements related to the mission of the programme. In any EAP four major goals usually emerge: Firstly an EAP will have as goal the identifying of employees whose personal or health problems are interfering with job performance. The second goal is usually the motivating of those individuals to seek and accept appropriate

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help whilst a third goal would be the addressing of underlying stressors in the workplace. In the final instance an EAP would have as goal the assisting of both management and the employers in achieving optimum health and productivity (Bruce, 1990:123). In addition to what Bruce (1990) has mentioned above, Telkom as an organisation, through their EAP, further try to prevent unnecessary dismissals and offer EAP training to the supervisors in an attempt to keep up with the standard of work and technology.

To achieve the above goals, dedicated individuals who are allocated the responsibility to help the troubled employees, must be properly trained about the contents of the EAP. In striving to achieve the above goals the EAP should work towards retaining healthy employees in the workplace.

According to Googins and Godfrey (1987: 144) a benefit resulting from the goal of the EAP is to provide a method to control the organisation's health care costs by providing cost effective treatment to employees before their condition deteriorates. Dickman et al (1988:7) add to what Googins and Godfrey has mentioned above by stating that an EAP is aimed at the reduction of costs, rehabilitation and the enhancement of labour relations and human functioning. From the perspective of Telkom its EAP is also aimed at assisting employees in coping with their problems, lightening the task of supervisors and the increase of productivity.

In conclusion it seems from the above that the main aim of the EAP is to enhance the productivity in the workplace by helping the employees to cope with personal problems that may impact on performance.

2.3   OBJECTIVES AND THE CORE TECHNOLOGIES OF AN EAP

EAPA (1990) has formulated the following objectives for an EAP:
- Firstly to serve the organisation, its employees, and their families by providing a comprehensive system from which employees can obtain assistance in addressing personal problems which may affect their work performance. It is thus the objective

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of the EAP to be a formal structure, which would address the needs of both the employer and the employee.

- Secondly, to serve as a resource for management and labour to intervene with employees whose personal problems affect job performance.
- Thirdly, to effectively and professionally provide assessment, referral and follow-up services for mental health and other drug related problems in the workplace.

The objectives of the programme are very important in the design of the EAP as they influence both which and how activities will be organised in the EAP, i.e. what kind of staffing arrangement is required and how will the activities be distributed within the organisation. Berridge et al (1997:54) states that it is claimed that the 'core technologies' represent the unique contribution of the EAP presence in the workplace. The table below lists the seven core technologies in EAPs as identified by Berridge et al (1997: 56).

Table 1   Description of core technology and commentary

No	Description of core technology	Commentary
1	Identification of problem employees via documented evidence of impaired job performance.	Clear performance standards are require to avoid vague 'labelling' of employees with supposed behavioural problems.
2	Provision of consultative assistance to supervisors, managers and shop stewards by the specialist designated to operate the EAP.	Training and education at all levels of employees prepares a climate in which the EAP becomes part of HR Policy.
3	Constructive confrontation of the problem employee by management to obtain recognition of troubles and willingness to act.	This unique aspect of EAP derives from the occupational alcoholism origins, but has of late taken on a 'softer' nature.
4	Creation of micro-linkages between the employee and community resources most appropriate to assist.	Both clinical and practical community knowledge can ensure effective direction of employees to source of help.

Table 1   Description of core technology and commentary (continued)

No	Description of core technology	Commentary
5	Creation of long-term macro linkages between workplaces and service provider system in the community.	Workplaces can thus become informed consumers of treatment – leading to more effective management care.
6	Promulgation of an organisational culture to provide constructive assistance in dealing with employee's problems.	Neither being neglect nor punitive discipline, but culture of responsible cooperative mutual help.
7	Evaluation of employee and EAP in terms of job performance adequacy	Resolution of job-related problems rather than judged on clinical or other criteria

This brief tabulation of the seven core technologies of EAP activities are seen as primary resources in an EAP, since in essence they could equally apply to a variety of employee services and labour relations procedures. These core technologies will help the employers to formulate the objectives of the EAP.

2.4   THE ELEMENTS OF AN EAP

The essential components of an EAP should reflect the provider's and the employer's preferred practice model, the resources available to the organisation, the needs of its employees as well as the size and configuration of the organisation (Berridge, Cooper and Highley-Marchington, 1997:19). All EAPs should be tailor-made to reflect the needs of the client organisation. Berridge et al (1997:19) lists the following elements that is required to distinguish the EAP by its integrated approach and its system design whilst meshing it with the administrative and social systems of the organisation and its environment.

- A *systematic survey* of the organisation is required to determine the nature, causes and extent of problems perceived by individuals while also taking the viewpoints of all the stakeholders and functional specialists in the organisation into account.

- A *continued commitment* by the top management of the employing organisation to provide counselling, advice and assistance to the 'troubled' employee on a no-blame, no-cost and totally confidential basis.

- An effective *promotional and publicity programme* of the EAP to all employees (potential clients) that emphasise in particular the programmes confidentiality, access and the scope of issues covered.

- An *education and training programme* based on the EAPs goals and methods to be used and that are provided to all staff members. Included into the curriculum should be aspects such as the definition of a 'troubled employee', the individual's responsibility for his/her own well being, the role of managers, supervisors and shop stewards within the design and implementation of the EAP as well as the duties, capabilities and limitations on activities of counsellors.

- The establishment of the procedure *for contacting the EAP and referral counselling* including the detail of procedures for self-referral and (if appropriate) managerial referral.

- Defining the *problem assessment procedures* including diagnosis routes, confidentiality guarantees, timelines, the scope of the counsellors' training as well as their accreditation, competencies and organisational knowledge.

- Development of a procedure for *follow-up and monitoring* of employees subsequent to their use of the EAP services which will also make provision for the necessary and appropriate utilisation and deployment.

- Establishment of an administrative channel to be utilised by the provider for the provision of *feedback of aggregated statistics* on the short- and long-term outcomes of the EAP.

- Development of *evaluation procedure of individual and corporate benefits* of the EAP ensuring as much impartiality as is practical (draws upon EAPA, 1994 in Berridge et al 1997: 19).

These are the key activities that make EAPs as an entity distinct from other forms of workplace counselling services, whether internal or external. These key activities highlight the functions performed in the EAP according to different organisational structures. For the EAP to operate successfully the following elements should be outlined in the procedures of implementing the programme in the workplace.

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2.5   EAP FUNCTIONS

The functioning of an EAP within an organisation will differ as a result of the EAP model selected by the organisation. Depending on the structures in the organisation they in the main have a choice between either an internal or an external model and the match between the prevailing structures and the model chosen will influence the effective functioning of the EAP. Since the organisation expects its employees to be productive and to perform well at work, this can be identified as one of the functions of the EAP. In support of this Francek (1985:1) indicated that the EAP was initially formulated in an attempt to assist employees in their job performance or to resolve behaviour problems related to the misuse of alcohol or alcoholism.

This function of an EAP was also realised by Telkom Pretoria since it helped their troubled employees to deal with their problems that may impact on their performance at work. The functions performed by an EAP constitute a saving to the organisation in monetary terms because, due to the preventative nature thereof, the organisation can increase its productivity with a minimum investment. Myers (1984:70) lists four major functions to be performed, not only to establish and maintain an EAP, but to also meet the needs of the client, these are: Planning, organizing and implementing, client services and control. Each function will briefly be discussed below:

2.5.1   Planning

Planning is the" how", and the "what" of doing things. The "how" is the strategy of doing it and the "what" is the procedures required for doing. Planning also means defining both the long-term and the short-term purpose (Myers 1984:70). Short-term plans describe operational and/or tactical plans and include policies and procedures whilst long-term plans include those goals of the organisation that the EAP should assist in achieving. It can thus be stated that an EAP is established to help the organisation to meet its long-term goals or purpose. To further help the organisation achieve these goals, EAP policies, which are the broad guidelines, must be established and linked to the policies of

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the organisation in order to stipulate for example how the EAP must operate. Procedures in turn, are prepared to specifically define daily details of, for instance, how EAP referrals will be made and what reports will be required.

2.5.2   Organising and implementation

Some of the key activities to be performed in organising and implementing the EAP include the training of managers and employees in the goals, policies and procedures of the EAP. Myers (1984:72) also points out that consultation arrangements must be made to assist managers, supervisors, counsellors and other systems of the organisation to address uncertainties that could arise during the early operation of the EAP.

2.5.3   Client services

According to Myers (1984: 74) this function relates to all the activities involving the client, beginning with determining the problem and concluding with evaluating the extent to which the needs of the client have been met through the services plan. The activities involved are:

2.5.3.1   ASSESSMENT

Assessment is the evaluation of the client's problem and the subsequent development of a programme for treatment. Elements of assessment include a medical and psychological evaluation, determination of the length of stay and the creation of an individualised programme. Assessment ends with the arrangement of a service for the employee. The next stage outline by Myers (198:72) is diagnosis.

2.5.3.2   DIAGNOSIS

Diagnosis is the detailed analysis of the client's problem and not only outlines the client's problem but enables the counsellor to make plans for the intervention process. According to Myers (1984:72) a diagnosis is especially necessary if the assessment was

made or conducted over the telephone, as this methodology may not constitute an accurate assessment.

2.5.3.3   CASE MANAGEMENT/PLANNING

This stage immediately follows diagnosis. Performing this function include the defining of the service plan, including the making of appointments for the delivery of services required, the determining of the service costs and arranging to pay for those services.

2.5.3.4   SERVICE DELIVERY

An EAP "*is a management tool paid for by the employer with the expectation that utilisation of the programme will decrease absenteeism, accidents, tardiness and mistakes, and increase on productivity*" (Ginindza, 2000:1). This statement concludes that service delivery as a function implies the rendering of EAP services through a broad and varying range of methods of assistance and at a monetary cost.

2.5.3.5   CASE MONITORING

Through case monitoring the counsellor monitors the progress of the individual client and provides information concerning the appropriateness and quality of services received. During this process the client gets the opportunity to outline whether the counselling process has met his/her needs. Case monitoring includes a statement of compliance by the service provider to indicate to what extent the client has kept his appointment(s) and what progress was made. Care should be taken to ensure that the discussion is conducted in a professional manner in order to avoid harming the working relationship between the counsellor and the client.

2.5.3.6   CASE CLOSURE

Case closure refers to the termination of the working relationship between the client and the counsellor. It is the termination of services that occur when the employee has concluded the service plan or when further intervention is not necessary, either because client's problem is solved or if the employee is not making progress. The case may also be closed and services terminated if the employee is dissatisfied with the service or because the client realised his/her problem is not solved.

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2.5.3.7 CASE EVALUATION

Case evaluation is the process of evaluating the helping process and includes a reviewed of the case to see whether the needs of the client where met. The treatment plan is also evaluated to determine whether it has worked. In instances where the case is evaluated and the treatment seems not to be working, the treatment plan is changed. Case evaluation may be conducted during the helping process as well as at the end.

2.5.3.8 CRISIS INTERVENTION

Crisis intervention is rendered in exceptional cases where there is a life-threatening situation or serious traumatic conditions. It is directed towards providing the emotional equivalent of physical first aid in order to rectify the social functioning of the employee lacking as a result of a crisis experienced. Crisis intervention it is an attempt to deal with an immediate situation.

2.5.3.9 AFTER-CARE

After-care is the continued treatment of an employee following in-patient care. According to Myers (1984:73) after-care include services such as group and/or individual therapy and orientation and assistance in obtaining members in self-help groups like Alcohol Anonymous. The researcher further states that after-care in EAP is the combined responsibility of the EAP Practitioner, the service provider and the client.

2.5.3.10 JOB RE-ENTRY

After the employee has undergone treatment, the EAP manager should convene a return to work conference involving the employee, the treatment counsellor and the employee's supervisor to discuss issues related to the reintegration of the recovering employee into the work group (Smith and Pace, 1989:65). Myers (1984:74) supports above authors in stating that job re-entry is similar to aftercare in that efforts should be made to facilitate the return to work. The supervisors may not be aware or understand the significance of stigmatisation and other concerns that the employees have about returning to work. Smith and Pace (1989) support Myers (1984:74) and further mention that by allowing the supervisor to visit the employee as an in-patient, it helps to alleviate the problem of re-adjustment and allay other fears.

2.5.4 Control

This function has to do with the control of the EAP in an organisation. According to Myers (1984: 74) control requires evaluations such as the establishing of written EAP performance data and the conducting of cost benefit analyses. EAP performance data should indicate the total number of employees using the EAP services, the type of problems they experience, hours spent on counselling and the employee's evaluation of the services provided to him/her. The report should be compiled in order to assist the organisation to realise the value of the EAP services for the organisation as a whole.

In conclusion it can be stated that the functions of the EAP must be aligned with the organisation as well as with the processes and procedures of the EAP and how it will operate. In the same manner as employers expect their employees to function productively, the EAP need to be concerned with both the effectiveness and efficiency of the programme and thus ensure that the right functions are performed at the right time and in the right manner in order for the programme to achieve its stated goals and objectives. The functions performed by the EAP need to safeguard its quality standards, it must be innovative enough to adapt to the changing demands of the workplace and it must adhere to the plan and implement process.

2.6 RATIONALE FOR EAP

The rationale for developing an EAP is diverse and it differs from organisation to organisation. Harper (1992:105) state that EAPs have been established for a variety of reasons, from seeking alternative ways of managing poor performance with an emphasis on programme effectiveness, to giving expression to the concept of internal social responsibility. Due to recent changes in South Africa the systems for dealing with many things has also changed and so also has organisations progressed to a more caring system in dealing with the health and welfare of their employees. Jones (1985:7) in Klarreich et al (1985) states that although the primary reasons may be humanitarian, to some it also makes good business sense to invest in the development of human resources. According to Berridge et al (1997:70) the efficiency rationale for EAPs is

based on a more or less precise calculation of financial return. The author further states that on one side of equation are the set-up costs and the annual operating costs of the EAP and on the flipside are firstly the hard demonstrable savings such as reduced insurance premiums and productivity increases. Secondly reduced costs as a result of a more or less closely causal link such as health care expenses, early retirements, staff turnover, accident costs and absenteeism and thirdly, intangible positive gains like enhanced quality, greater innovation and creativity and reduced presenters, are reflected.

The considerable numbers of problems that exist in the workplace is indicative of the great need for EAPs in the workplace. Telkom Pretoria also realised the need for using an EAP as reflected in the following aims that emphasized the need:

- Incorporate early identification and intervention
- Provide proactive education and prevention
- Utilize quality yet economically price treatment

In conclusion, an EAP can be seen as tool that will assist the employee to work on their problems and remain in their jobs. Allowing this will ensure that the principles of fair labour practice will be applied, as the employee will be given the opportunity to work through the problem in a fair and non-judgmental manner.

2.7   FACTORS WHICH INFLUENCE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF AN EAP

A number of aspects can be raised as reasons why employees are not effectively utilising EAP services in organisations where such services are available. According to Myers (1984:74) there are two types of factors that affect the effectiveness of an EAP and firstly include human factors such as ease of access to the services, anonymity, confidentiality, counsellor advocacy and employee and manager acceptance. The second type of factor is a management factor and includes confrontation of the troubled employee, support and continual interviewing.

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2.7.1   Human factors

Most employers have motives that fall somewhere on a continuum when establishing an EAP. Employers sometimes have a twin focus of enhancing the work contribution and providing an employee benefit whilst on the other hand disinterestedly helping troubled employees. How optimal the fit between the organisation and the potential EAP will be determined by the human factors outlined below.

2.7.1.1   EASE OF ACCESS

This factor determines the accessibility of the EAP services for the client. On-site EAP services were found to be more accessible for employees and they are also more encouraged to utilise the services. The location of EAP services will furthermore also determine the effectiveness of the potential users. To support the above-mentioned statement Collins (2000:44) states that the location of an EAP should be such that it is accessible to the users and the problem of accessibility could lead to under-utilisation of the programme. The researcher is also of the opinion that the accessibility of the services should be such that the confidentiality to the individual users of the programme is maintained.

2.7.1.2   ANONYMITY

Assuring the anonymity of the client will reassure the client to utilise the programme without fear of being stigmatised and implies that the worker cannot reveal any personal information about the client without the written consent of the client. Myers (1984:75) states that this aspect is considered by EAP practitioners and researchers alike to be an imperative requirement for the success of any EAP.

2.7.1.3   CONFIDENTIALITY

According to the researcher confidentiality is a principle that bounds most professions where clinical information is obtained from the client during counselling or within the professional relationship and whereby such information may not be disclosed to anyone without the permission of the person concerned. Dickman et al (1988:112) regards confidentiality as the cornerstone of an effective EAP. The researcher is of the opinion

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that a good rapport is based on trust and no employee will share his/her innermost feelings and thoughts, past and/or present circumstances or background information with anyone if there is no feeling of trust and assurance that the information will be kept strictly confidential. Clients will willingly share their problems with the person who will respect it and keep their personal concerns confidential. Myers (1984:75) states that the fear of the employees is that of "broken confidentiality" because it leads to management learning about their problems. No information about employees should be shared with anyone unless ordered to do so by a court of law or without the permission of the person involved.

2.7.1.4   COUNSELLOR ADVOCACY

The counsellor or service provider acts as advocate between the employee, with any social problem that may impact on his/her performance, and the employer. The counsellor must ensure that employees are treated fairly and that the procedures are in line with the Acts that are applicable to the workplace. Not only should the counsellor liase with other stakeholders to perform this role but also if lobbying and advocating, the counsellor should ensure that he/she is au fait with the workplace policies and Acts.

2.7.1.5   EMPLOYEE ACCEPTANCE

The first and foremost requirement for employees to accept the programme is that they must be informed about what the programme is offering as well as its aim, procedures and objectives. To successfully promote the programme the EAP coordinator must outline the importance of using the programme, as the success thereof is greatly dependent on the utilisation rate. Bruce (1990:122) states that loyalty of using the EAP is elevated when the employees have a positive perception of the employer's concern for their welfare.

2.7.1.6   MANAGERS ACCEPTANCE

Management support and commitment is very important for the success and utilisation of an EAP, as it will not flourish without it. EAPs still need to find a way of winning the trust of most organisations as prerequisite to ensure its success. Despite the fact that it is emphasised and expected of governmental institutions in South Africa to implement such a programme, general acceptance thereof by not only the public sector, remains slow. In an attempt to shed some light on the non-acceptance of the EAP by managers,

Myers (1984:76) sates that failure by managers to accept the EAP may be based on the fact that in some instances they resent the apparent cloud of secrecy that often surround EAP, while others are provoked by the fact that they will never be informed in detail about the nature of the intervention. For these reasons, the EAP practitioners have to implement a continued and concerted effort to explain the contents of the EAP and the importance of having such a programme in the organisation.

2.7.1.7   PRIVACY

The counsellor should ensure the privacy of the clients on all levels at all times. For instance, the counsellor must ensure that the contents of her/his diary remain secure when arranging appointments with the client and the employer. Furthermore, the office of the counsellor should offer the opportunity for private consultation with the employee without him/her having the fear of being seen. People in managerial positions should be handled with special care as they have the added burden of losing their positions should they disclose their problems and this then becomes common knowledge.

2.7.1.8   LABOUR UNION COOPERATION

Labour unions play an important role in EAPs as failing to involve labour unions could lead to non-acceptance of the service by employees. Myers (1984:77) states that some critics argue that cooperation between organised labour and management, to support EAPs, has not materialised. This state of affairs can be ascribed to the actions of both management and organised labour as, for instance, some managers are of the opinion that the involvement of labour will diminish the effectiveness of the EAP.

2.7.2   Programme Management

Myers (1984:78-82) outlined certain issues regarding the management of the programme that can influence the functioning and the effectiveness of EAP in the organisation.

2.7.2.1 CONFRONTATION SUPPORT

Confrontation is a key ingredient of a successful EAP. According to Myers (1984:78) provision of training and other technical EAP assistance will help supervisors to confront and refer deficient clients. To support this statement, Thoreson and Hosokawa (1984:223) mentions that the keystone of an effective EAP is the training of people who are to evaluate performance, confront the employee, and refer them to counselling. In order to ensure the success of the programme, supervisors must resume the responsibility of confronting the troubled employees.

2.7.2.2 CONTINUAL INTERVIEWING

The importance of this aspect lay in the fact that it may establish communication channels between employees and the counsellor. Although the initial interview between the employee and the counsellor is often nothing more than an "icebreaker", once the rapport is established, employees are more prone to refer themselves for counselling when they have problems. The concept of continual interviewing also help to resolve feelings of anxiety experienced by the employee as a result of fear of being seen entering or leaving the office of the counsellor. Myers (184:78) states that when employees are used to being continually interviewed, there is nothing unusual about a person being seen in a counselling office. Resolving this fear will increase all forms of referrals, as employees will more readily refer themselves, supervisors will find employees more amenable to referral in confrontation situations and unions will be willing to refer members who have problems.

2.7.2.3 CUSTOM DESIGNED

According to Myers (1984: 79) custom designed EAPs are specifically planned and structured to meet an employer's unique needs. Custom designing a programme can begin with small things like adapting general-purpose information for publication in brochures and pay slip inserts to ensure that they conform to the organisations unique characterises. Some of the more pressing decisions to be taken in custom designing an EAP are concerned with what client services should be offered and how much supervisory training should be given. The custom designing of an EAP will however be influenced and determined by the prevailing structures in the organisation.

2.7.2.4 FLEXIBILITY

As organisations change, there is the possibility that the EAP should be adapted to meet the changing needs. Programme flexibility means that the EAP structures, methods, services and even personnel should correspondingly change to accommodate the new demands.

2.8 EAP MODELS

According to Myers (1984:64) the EAP model is the structure that an organisation uses to plan, implement and serve the needs of the troubled employees. This implies that a model refers to a structural plan and explains the manner in which services will be rendered. Dickman, Enemer, Challenger and Hutchinson (1988:133) are of the opinion that several different EAP models have evolved. Part of the diversity comes from variation in the size of the organisation, the availability of internal resources to denote to employee assistance services and the willingness of the organisation to expand resources. No model can therefore be identified as the best model and referral of the best model will depend on the specific type of organisation. It will be to the advantage of the organisation to first assess various EAP models before finalising the decision on implementing the EAP.

There are various types of EAP models as described by various authors and one model cannot fit all organisations because of different organisational structures. Klarreich, Francek and Moore (1985:4) mentioned that no one model for the development of the programme would fit all work situations. In most cases the model to be used is determined by the size and location of the organisation and the nature and the socio-demographics of the workforce. There are two basic types of models in EAPs, i.e. the internal and the external model and is discussed below.

2. 8.1   The internal model

According to Klarreich et al. (1985:9) there are many good in-house programmes to be found and provided they are staffed by professional clinicians and supported by an organisation so that they are not just "paper" programmes, could be very effective. Attention must be given to the issues of staffing and programme services delivery.

The internal model is also referred to as an in-house or onsite programme. According to Myers (1984:70) employees of the organisation will staff the internal programme and includes social workers, alcoholism counsellors, psychologist and representatives of the personnel department. This model is commonly utilised where there is an exceptional need for confidentiality. Should the orientation be towards limited counselling the programme may utilise external resources for treatment and make inside counselling resources available to employees in this system that view themselves as different "civilians". Dickman et al. (1988:250) also indicates that large industries or organisations tend to opt for internal programme models where the EAP is organised as an integral part of the organisation. The reasons why larger organisations commonly use this model might be due to the costs involved as well as the larger number of employees within the organisation. With the internal model the resources for treatment can coordinate follow-up and feedback. According to Collins (2000:42) the internal model has higher utilisation rates and is most probably because the service is more accessible than with other models. This statement on accessibility is supported by Myers (1984: 91).

2.8.1.1   ADVANTAGES OF THE INTERNAL MODEL

The following advantages of the internal model were identified:

- The internal model has higher utilization rates.
- The counsellor can fulfil an advocacy role by protecting employees from supervisor's arbitrary actions.
- The internal counsellors can conduct independent investigations, maintain informal records of trouble spots and insure fair judgement.
- An unlimited number of evaluative or diagnostic sessions for clients can be provided because the programme is designed to only serve the specific organisation.

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- The organisation is more likely to invest in the counsellor's growth and development since the counsellor is an employee. This implies that the counsellor has an opportunity for career development, which might be conducive for the acquiring and introducing of newly learnt services of EAPs.
- The internal model facilitates communication within the organisation (Dickman et al. 1988:134 and Kunnes 1993:25) as it allows ample opportunity for the counsellor to communicate with supervisors, top management, the personnel manager, medical unit personnel and union representatives. This model also promotes dialogue between the supervisor, the troubled employee and the counsellor.
- Records are more accessible to the service provider and this makes it possible to identify the need for and commence with treatment before the supervisor makes an actual referral.

2.8.1.2 DISADVANTAGES OF THE INTERNAL MODEL

The following disadvantages of the internal model were identified:
- It requires a full-time staff compliment and as this might be very costly for small organisations, this model might be more economically viable for the larger organisation.
- Anonymity and confidentiality may be a problem and cannot be ensured. Since the location of the EAP office is on-site, employees might risk to be seen by peers who might question their presence in an EAP office.
- The programme based on an internal model may be difficult to terminate, as employees of the organisation staff the programme. In the event of termination of the programme, EAP personnel would thus have to be retrenched, placed-out or reassigned.

2.8.2   External model

External EAPs are operated and staffed by personnel employed by the organisation that provides EAP services (Myers 1984:10). An employer thus contracts with an independent EAP service provider to provide EAP services. This approach often enables the organisation wishing to implement the programme to purchase a programme

specifically tailored to their needs (Klarreich et al, 1985:10). With this model employees can receive treatment off the working site and makes it possible for the employees to utilise the programme without the fear of being seen. Chiabotta (1987:45) is of the opinion that with this model there is no actual diagnosis but treatment is provided directly by the contracted organisation. The service provider thus only offers assessment, short-term counselling and referral of the employee to the relevant resources. Three types of external models will be discussed below:

2.8.2.1   THE HOT LINE MODEL

According to Myers (1984:82) a hot line is either a local or a long distance telephone service. Employees experiencing problems dial the publicised number and talk to a listener who is trained to assess problems. After the assessment the employee will be referred to a relevant and listed service provider from his/her community.

The advantages of hot lines are that they're easily accessible to employees and ensure anonymity and confidentiality. Hot lines are also economical and can be terminated at any time with little or no effect on the organisation. This model can be useful in cases where employees who are experiencing problems are reluctant to make and maintain contact with the EAP staff.

The major disadvantage of hot lines is the possibility of inappropriate referrals of employees due to the fact that accurate assessment cannot be made via telephone or due to lack of knowledge about resources for referrals. In addition, hot lines may deny the clients the opportunity to express their emotions privately when they present their problem to the staff for crisis intervention or referral. Furthermore the clients my find it difficult to discuss the problem a second time or even in a face-to-face situation with the therapist that the client was referred to.

2.8.2.2   THE CONSORTIUM MODEL

According to Beugger (1987:11) consortium in terms of an EAP means that a group of employers in a given geographical area, join together in order to establish effective EAPs serving their common interest. Klarreich et al (1985:60) adds that the member of the organisation, which collectively owns the system delivery, governs the consortium. Organisations who for economic or other reasons, do not wish or cannot afford to initiate

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their own programmes, use it. In this model the costs of a full-time EAP coordinator tasked with the hiring of contractor services that will provide the participating organisations with EAP services, is split amongst the participants. Participating organisation is charged for services on a capitation basis, which is a fixed fee per employee per month and thus helps to reduce the financial responsibility of a single employer. By sharing the financial burden, organisations that cannot afford the services on their own can still manage to offer their employees a service at an affordable rate.

2.8.2.2.1 Advantages of consortium model

Because consortium offices are located off the working site, client anonymity, confidentiality and privacy are ensured. Apart from the confidentiality issue that is considered a big advantage of external programmes, Myers (1984:86-87) also identified the following advantages:

- Peers and supervisors do not see that the troubled employee is utilising the service if provided off-site.
- Employee's records are considered more secure in an external counselling site because it is not easy for the employer to gain access to the records of the employees.
- Through the consortium model employees may receive highly professional assistance.
- The consortium decreases costs for the organisation.
- It is easier to terminate the services as the consortium is usually assigned to several service contractors.
- It allows the employer to offer some degree of employee assistance.

2.8.2.2.2 Disadvantages of the consortium model

- Accessibility is a problem with the consortium model as the site for service delivery is located away from the workplace.
- The service providers may not have enough knowledge of the organisational structure and the dynamics of the organisation they are serving.
- The service providers may be viewed as outsiders making it difficult for them to establish rapport with management.

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2.8.2.3 THE CONTRACTOR MODEL

A contractor differs from a consortium in that a contractor is a profit-making agency whose services are paid for by the contracting organisation (Bruce, 1990:131). There are three versions of contractor models.

The first version involves the supplying of EAP services for one or two problems such as drug and alcohol abuse. The second version is an extension of the first in that additional services such as aftercare and assistance with job re-entry are also provided to employees. Version three again differs from the second in several distinct ways and can be considered a comprehensive service. In this version the contractor will provide the employer with expertise not only during the planning phase, which will include the integration of EAP goals with the goals of the organisation but even assist employees with aspects such as out-placement and career, financial and pastoral counselling.

The advantages and disadvantages of this model, according to Googins and Godfrey (1987:121), are as follows:

2.8.2.3.1 Advantages of the contractor model

- Confidentiality: The apparent independence of the contractor suggest that the rights of the employee are protected and information will not be compromised and used in support of decisions made by the organisation.
- Suitability for smaller organisations: This model allows the smaller organisation to take advantage of an array of services without having to pay for full-time staff.
- Network Opportunities: In such a programme there is better identification and utilisation of community resources and as a result better networks.

2.8.2.3.2 Disadvantages of the contractor model

- Limited scope for treatment: The scope of treatment is possibly too narrow and will only reflect the treatment preference of the agency.
- Lack of organisational knowledge: There is little understanding of the working environment that is being served and this can lead to the wrong interpretation of problems.

- Lack of ownership: Employers do not experience a sense of ownership resulting in some managers/supervisors being reluctant to deal with the "outsiders ".
- Limited access: The programme can be less accessible to the users as it is situated outside the workplace.

When deciding on the appropriate model for implementation, Bews and Bews (1988:22) states that the organisation must take factors such as confidentiality, credibility, accessibility, available of expertise, acceptance by employees, scope of services to cover all possible problems, costs and ability to monitor the programme into consideration. A selection between any of the models discussed above should thus be dictated by the needs and type of organisation as no single model can be earmarked as the best model for all organisations (Dickman et al, 1988:133).

2.9   THE APPROACHES OF AN EAP

Authors often use the concepts of 'approach' and 'model' in an interchangeable manner whilst in an EAP context different meanings are attached to these concepts. The two basic approaches used in an EAP are prevention and confrontation. Research on existing EAPs indicated that an approach based on prevention and confrontation are the most widely used as it conforms with the traditional management methods and ensures that troubled employees are referred for assistance. Myers (1984:12) identifies two types of approaches in an EAP, namely the preventive and the performance approach.

2.9.1   Preventative approach

This approach is also called primary prevention and in this context EAPs offer a new challenge to address the threat of job loss as it is specifically structured to include an intervention process that may correct the pattern of dysfunctional performance. EAPs address relationships and roles within the workplace. In the context of public health three levels of prevention are utilised to analyse health issues, i.e. primary prevention, which includes the interpretation or cause of the condition within the environment, secondary

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prevention and tertiary prevention and these levels are also applied in the process of helping troubled employees in the workplace. With regard to EAPs Vicary (1994:100) states that prevention is seen as a continuum of care, from preventing a problem before it starts (primary) to early intervention when the problems develops (secondary), to treatment for an established problem (tertiary).

2.9.1.1   PRIMARY PREVENTION

Employee Assistance Programmes are designed to instil stability and consistency in the workplace in order to establish positive work characteristics that will enhance the workplace. An issue of concern in many EAPs is the curative focus thereof and the importance of moving beyond this to include prevention (Mckendrick, 1990: 37). An approach of primary prevention in an EAP thus saves the employer time spent on disciplining the troubled employees in order to correct his/her deficient performance and thus can reduce the incidence of problems that occur in the workplace.

Programmes on stress and financial management, smoking cessation, eating disorders and other wellness programmes can serve as primary prevention in an EAP. Dickman et al (1988:219) indicates that the major goals of prevention programmes are to prevent dysfunction in those who are currently healthy and to prevent existing problems from becoming more serious. In short, primary prevention is thus a preventative measure that can be used to try to eliminate the problems before they get out of control.

2.9.1.2   SECONDARY PREVENTION

Secondary prevention comes in play when the problem has already occurred but is still in the developing stage (early stage) although treatment is required. This type of prevention is less costly and more effective than tertiary prevention but is more costly and less effective than primary prevention.

2.9.1.3   TERTIARY PREVENTION

Tertiary prevention is the rehabilitation that follows after disease and/or problem identification and diagnosis. As it involves cure rather than prevention it might be more costly and less effective than both primary and secondary prevention.

Any preventative approach can be made more effective by involving those who manage employees in education and training in order to improve their understanding of the problems, systems and distress faced by employees. Employees should also be informed on the course of action to be taken should they experience problems. With regard to prevention, education is considered as extremely important as it leads to new awareness and awareness leads to opportunity for change. The preventative approach in EAP provide educational, organisational and environmental interventions to reduce the risks of chronic diseases linked to lifestyle and in effect, improve the health conditions in the workplace.

2.9.2   Performance approach

The performance approach is also called the confrontational approach and focus on job performance. This approach is most widely used in an EAP because it conforms to the traditional management methods and ensures the eventual referral of the problem employee (Myers, 19984:116). This approach also makes use of the steps or procedures specified in most performance appraisals systems. Of the steps used are the establishment of job performance, informing employees was is expected of them, evaluating performance and making EAP referrals or following progressive disciplinary procedures. In this approach the troubled employee is helped to correct his/her deficient behaviour through a disciplinary process. Archambault, Doran, Matlas and Nadoski (1982:14) state that confrontation is based on the documented deterioration of job performance as observed by supervisors. The researcher also agrees with the above authors in that the confrontation of the troubled employee should be based on factual and well-documented evidence. If the supervisor is in possession of documented facts, the employee can hardly deny what he/she is being accused of but without it, there is no evidence. This approach can also help employees to take responsibility of their own actions and behaviour.

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2.10 THE BENEFITS OF AN EAP

The well-implemented EAP has benefits for the employees, management, supervisors and the labour unions. Employees who experience problems can cost the organisation huge sums of money in terms of loss in productivity, medical expenses and human suffering. Helping the troubled employee by means of implementing an effective EAP in the organisation may eliminate some of the problems and increase the well being and productivity of the employees. Dickman et al (1988:19) emphasises that a well-designed EAP has something of value to offer to an organisation and should therefore be granted the essential element of management support.

2.10.1 Benefits to management

When mutual involvement and trust pervade the co-operative activities of both labour and management. The benefits are listed as follows:

- **Increased cooperation**

  An important prerequisite for this benefit is that supervisors, management representatives, stewards and other labour representatives undergo training together. A training experience such as this facilitate closer cooperation and increased "togetherness " among leaders within the environment and is good for the organisation

- **Enhanced morale**

  Experienced has shown that when union and management cooperatively work together to help troubled employees and their families through difficulties under the auspices of an effective EAP, worker morale tends to be more positive (Dickman et al, 1988:126).

- **More troubled workers are helped**

  Constructive cooperation between the union and management on issues relating to the EAP will increase the likelihood of a higher penetration rate and hence the number of troubled employees assisted.

- **Enhanced productivity**

  Helping workers towards being more fully functional individuals will have a positive impact on productivity (Dickman et al, 1988:126).

- **Increased alternatives and options to problem resolution**

  Organisations become aware that employees requiring disciplinary action and/or arbitration are often troubled in some way. In many instances it is better, more effective and cheaper to explore a 'helping alternative' via the EAP than to immediately progress to a disciplinary and/or arbitration alternative. Basically it has been experienced that while it is not the only alternative, an appropriate 'helping alternative via the EAP ' is the preferred alternative.

All benefits provide compelling rationale for management to work cooperatively and closely with labour in initiating, planning, implementing, evaluating and refining EAPs for the employees. In effect, management has much to gain if they become involved with the welfare of their employees.

2.10.2   Benefits to the supervisors

The prevention and correction of employee problems require supervisory cooperation as supervisors correct employee problems through confrontation. Chiabotta (1987:12) states that supervisors cannot engage themselves in addressing the painful situations of the employee's personal life. The EAP provides the supervisor with the opportunity to help the troubled employee through confrontation thus relieving the supervisor of the burden to pry into the personal lives of employees and giving them the opportunity to work out their problems.

2.10.3   Benefits to the employee

In the ultimate sense, the vast majority of the previously discussed benefits resulting out of mutual cooperation and trust between labour and management will directly and indirectly result in benefits to the employee. At the onset it is important to realise that the

mere existence of a good EAP, in and of itself, is a meaningful employee benefit. When both labour and management jointly communicate and demonstrate that 'to be troubled is to be human' a more trusting environment will exist and employees will tend to feel more comfortable asking for and accepting help and assistance. Only employees who make use of the EAP will benefit from it and this benefit is derived from the fact that employees are afforded the opportunity to deal with their problems and rebuild their lives. Chiabotta (1987:11) states that the real winners in an EAP are those that use it.

In conclusion the researcher is of the opinion that an EAP is established mainly to ensure the well being of the working force. The resulting cooperation and upliftment of the relationship between labour unions and management however brings a lot of additional benefits to the organisation, the employees, management and supervisors.

2.11   TELKOM AS AN EMPLOYER

Telkom is undergoing significant changes in order to meet the current and future needs of all South Africans. Telkom is committed to treat its customers with dignity and respect and provide valuable information, technologically advanced products, reliable service, and quick and efficient problem resolution. Striving to become a world-class communications company, Telkom provides a wide array of telecommunication products and services to meet the world's communication needs (http//www.telkom.co.za).

2.11.1   Telkom's profile

Telkom has always been the leading communications operator in South Africa and has further solidified its market position in recent years by rapidly modernising and expanding its national network. These network modernisation and expansion programmes have been supported by internal drives aimed at entrenching world-class customer service and performance levels within the organisation. A host of new products, services and solutions continue to be made available to business and residential customers alike, supported by ever increasing cutting-edge technology.

Telkom will continue to maximise the strengths of their equity partners to meet the stringent targets outlined in the license it was awarded by the Ministry of Posts, Telecommunications and Broadcasting in 1997. The license grants the organisation the exclusive rights to provide public switched telecommunication services for a period not exceeding five years.

In return for being the only fixed line operator currently allowed to do business in South Africa, Telkom is committed to modernising over a million non-digital lines, adding 2,8 million new lines to the network and meeting demanding service quality targets. Telkom also owns a 50% equity stake in the country's leading cellular operator, Vodacom.

2.11.2   Telkom's philosophy

- **The vision of Telkom**
  The vision of Telkom is to become a world-class communications company and would achieve this should the customers perceive Telkom as being a Communications Company that offers total communication solutions to its customers, that Telkom is more than just a 'phone company' as their area of business includes a full spectrum of digital communications including voice, Internet and e-Commerce enabling technologies (http//www.telkom.co.za).

- **The purpose of Telkom**
  The purpose of Telkom is to enable present and future customers to telecommunicate and exchange information when, where and how they want to.

- **Telkom's value system**
  To move toward their vision, Telkom embraces the following four values:
  - Telkom value their people and their diversity
  - Telkom is performance driven
  - Telkom creates value for their shareholders
  - Telkom act with integrity in everything they are doing.

2.11.3   The business of Telkom

Due to rapid changes in technology and a vibrant business market Telkom finds itself in the situation where the telecommunication environment has reached a new crescendo. To keep pace with these changes Telkom intensified their focus on the varying market requirements and is keeping at the cutting edge of new technology. Telkom has the infrastructure, products, services and telecommunications technology to provide the solution that will enhance the efficiency of every business in the country.

2.11.4   Telkom's role in the community

Telkom has been involvement in social investment since 1993 and plays an active role in identifying projects to address the disparities that exist among disadvantaged communities. Telkom has established a foundation to further enhance their commitment to and to support the emphasis of education on the development of skills in mathematics, science and technology. As a major player in the technology arena, Telkom is committed to improving the quality of teaching around the country. The Telkom Foundation extends its scope of support to the areas of health and welfare, arts and culture and job creation.

The mission of the Telkom Foundation is to pro-actively identify, develop and implement community initiatives, in response to the needs of the communities that lack the necessary infrastructure, through sustainable community programmes. The Telkom Foundation focuses on education, job creation and childcare needs. Telkom supports the policy of black economic empowerment and actively and consciously implement procurement, employment and social enlistment policies.

2.11.5   Telkom's products and services

Telkom provides a wide array of telecommunications products and services to meet every customer's communications needs – from a basic single line residential service to

a complex business system. Telkom offers over a 100 products and services and includes the Large PBX, Jupiter and DIANA business systems, the identicall and TalkPlus voice services as well as other network solutions and international services (http//www.telkom.co.za).

2.11.6 Telkom's protection of the customer's privacy

Telkom is committed to the followings when considering privacy:

- Telkom will not disclose the contents of any communications over the network except where it may be necessary for maintenance or repair or when required to do so by law.
- Telkom endeavours to prevent any information about its customers, other than directory information, from being disclosed to unauthorised third parties.
- As a listing in Telkom's telephone directory is voluntary it provides the opportunity for additional privacy to the customer.

These important facts about Telkom as an employer, the services mentioned and the products offered is an indication of the functions that Telkom needs to perform as an employer in the communication channel (http//www. telkom.co.za)

2.12 SUMMARY

An EAP is there to serve a very broad and diverse target market and a prerequisite for the successful implementation thereof is that the purpose or goal, functions and objectives are clearly outlined from the onset of the planning and needs analysis stages. Furthermore, in order for the organisation to achieve the goal set for the EAP, it has to simultaneously link the EAP policies to the relevant labour Acts. Increasing and renewed interest in employee welfare has led to acceptance of the concept and the implementation of an EAP in many organisations. There are certain ingredients that are imperative for the existence of the programme and include support and involvement at all levels of management, confidentiality, accessibility and the professional conduct of

service providers. The end result of the spectrum of ingredients and functions of the EAP is to assist with the alleviation of problems affecting job performance and to increase productivity. The EAP models together with their advantages are valuable tools that will help the organisation to outline the structure of the EAP they wish to implement. Human factors that influence the effectiveness of an EAP must be taken into consideration when running an EAP. The approaches that were outlined also serve a preventative purpose in that they prevent the occurrences of problems and inadequate performance. In summary it can be stated that an EAP is an important tool to help employees correct their problems whilst the process outlined can be viewed as the procedure on how to use the services.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FACTORS INFLUENCING SUPERVISORY REFERRALS, EAP POLICIES AND MARKETING OF THE EAP IN THE ORGANISATION

3.1   INTRODUCTION

The effectiveness of any EAP relies on the efficient identification and referral of the troubled employees it serves. The role of the supervisor in the constructive confrontation process has been established as central to EAPs (Besenhofer, Gerstein, Jankowski, 1991:41, Scheider, Colan & Googins, 1991:41 and Gerstein, Jankowski, Bayer, Eichenhofer & Valutis, 1990:49). 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 supervisory skills in performing these tasks.

In this chapter the contents of supervisory training and the factors that influence supervisors to refer the employees to the EAP will be discussed. Furthermore, a number of recommendations will be offered to enhance the quality of supervisory training and to assist with the designing of new programmes to address the changing workplace environment.

3.2   EAP AND SUPERVISORY TRAINING

The EAP is designed to intercept an individual's problem at an early stage of its progress. The first step towards developing an EAP is to identify those components that are essential for a successful programme. Wrich (1984:9) states that supervisory training in an EAP may be the key to higher utilisation and greater programme visibility. Managers and supervisors play a key role in implementing an EAP since they are expected to identify and refer those employees who need assistance.

3.3   THE ROLE OF SUPERVISORS IN THE EAP AND IN THE WORKPLACE

As supervisors it is important to keep in mind that employees are human and that they will have problems, which from time to time can result in them having difficulties in their jobs. Chiabotta (1987:158) states that the task of the supervisor in EAP is two-fold, i.e. to bring the availability of the EAP to the attention of employees before social problems hamper their functioning and to refer employees to the EAP when necessary. This does not imply that with any sign of a problem the supervisor must rush them over to the EAP. Chaibotta (1987: 158) further states that the early identification and referral to the EAP requires that the supervisor be trained to recognize the symptoms associated with the troubled employee. These symptoms include things such as sullenest, tardiness, absenteeism, differences with subordinates and/or a sudden decline in the quality and quantity of work. The task of finding out what is causing this problem is not the task of any supervisor, but that of the professionally trained counsellor. To support the above Wrich (1982:23) is of the opinion that in some instances the supervisor could be part of the employee's problem rather than the solution. Said author further states that the supervisor should be neither judgmental nor moralistic, but simply show concern for the employee and act firmly in carrying out the organisational policy. Googins and Kurtz (1980:20) also supports the above statement by stating that it is the responsibility of supervisors to ensure that they understand the organisation's plan, that they know how to use the formal and informal organisational structures for carrying out the plan, that

they have the skills to motivate individuals and most importantly, that they are able to exercise the necessary control in performing the activity.

To perform the above task supervisors also need active involvement and support by top management in the programme. Active involvement will help the supervisors to understand the working environment and enable them to deal with the problems existing in the workplace. Through careful documentation, intervention and confrontation supervisors will be able to motivate the employees to acknowledge that the problem exists and subsequently refer to the EAP, those troubled employees who do not measure up to the prescribed criteria of job performance. Wrich (1982:11) identified six basic responsibilities of supervisors, namely:

- Recognition of a problem relating to poor job performance;
- Documentation of shortcomings directly related to job standards;
- Interviewing subjects dealing directly with the documentation;
- Offering of assistance to the employees;
- Motivation by ultimatum; and
- Following-up to insure the performance is up to the required standards.

By aligning the above responsibilities, it is realised that the key to successful motivation of employees to seek help rests in the fair and constructive use of supervisory authority. The employees must be made to understand that unless the problem is corrected and job performance is brought up to standard, they will be subjected to face existing procedures related to unsatisfactory job performance. Despite their role in EAPs, Bittel (1987:18) mentioned the following responsibilities of supervisors towards employees. The supervisor must:

- Develop good morale;
- Stand up for employees when they are being treated arbitrarily;
- Establish a warm and trusting working climate within the department;
- Handle employee's problem promptly;
- Be fair in all departmental matters;
- Explain to employees all matters connected to their jobs; and
- On occasion assume the role of a counsellor but not to diagnose.

The above-mentioned responsibilities show that the supervisor plays an important role in the organisation as a result of the gaining of commitment from his/her employees, staying in touch with the employees and the handling of problems that may arise with his/her subordinates. Thome 1990 in Chami (1995:13) states that in terms of an EAP, one of the following conditions is necessary for a supervisory referral to take place:

- The employee must share his/her problem with the supervisor;
- A job performance problem must exist; and/or
- The supervisor must observe behaviour which is unusual or out of character for a specific employee.

Although there are many factors that could contribute to supervisors being able to refer or not to refer the troubled employee, supervisors have a certain responsibility towards their co-workers in that the supervisor must:

- Coordinate paperwork that needs to be exchanged among supervisors;
- Communicate with departments about mutual needs and problems; and
- Give support as members of the same management team.

From the above it is clear that the supervisor has an important role to play in, not only the EAP, but in the workplace as well. It is also an indication of the importance of supervisors to learn to recognize job deterioration as the possible result of an employee's personal problems.

3.4 SUPERVISORY TRAINING

Training is an essential element for a successful EAP as one of the contributing factors towards the maintenance of productivity, is how well supervisors are trained to identify or deal with the troubled employee. Googins and Kurtz (1980: 203) support the above and elaborates that whether or not the EAP is successful utilised will largely depend on the supervisor's 'perceptions' of what the programme can provide and only partly on their knowledge of and attitude towards the programme. Swartz (1987:24) however warns that training alone produces only small changes in the supervisor's willingness to confront the troubled employees. The author emphasises that a combination of training

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and individual consultation with supervisors will ensure more willingness to refer the troubled employees. Supervisory training should focus almost exclusively on the techniques to be used by supervisors to document productivity failures rather than on being judgemental of such failures. Chiabotta (1987:123) states that even in cases where the supervisor becomes aware of the fact that the employee is drinking, if it does not affect his/her job performance, the supervisor has no right to confront the employee. The distinction between documenting and diagnosing is still a problem especially for supervisors who are not familiar with human services. Smith & Pace (1989:28) is of the opinion that the result of confusing and double message sent during training sessions is the reduction in the rate of supervisory training. The author further state that is important for the managers to be trained to understand, recognise and to refer those clients who fit the profile of the non-voluntary referral.

O'Connel (1987: 63) indicated that the initial training sessions should cover the following areas:

- General information about the programme and what is designed to do; and
- The specific programme functions to be carried out by the supervisor including –
  - How to evaluate job performance;
  - How to confront an employee with job performance problem; and
  - How to refer the employee to the EAP.

O'Connel (1987:66) argue that although the training procedure varies from one organisation to the next, there are several common elements present in the training provided by most programmes.

- Orientation to the organisation's policy regarding the EAP;
- Indication of why the programme originated in the first place, stressing the need for the programme and problems of the greatest concern;
- Emphasis on work performance as the criteria for referral;
- The role that the supervisor and the union occupy in the programme;
- Some information on alcoholism in general and specifically how it affects the industry;
- A description of the role of the programme counsellor and general functions of the EAP;

- Various aspects relating to the employee's participation in the programme e.g. confidentiality of information, insurance benefits for treatment and scheduling of sick leave if necessary; and
- An emphasis on programme follow-up with clients, their supervisors and the treatment agencies to which they are referred.

The researcher is of the opinion that training in identification and referral should be limited to people in the organisation expected to perform these roles. If these respective roles are kept clear during the training process, the problem of other personnel attempting to diagnose an employee's condition or underlying problem will be minimized.

3.4.1   Training and Education

Training of supervisor's can also advance the supervisor's use of practical problem solving by viewing intervention as a process. Training might also enable management to value, respect and genuinely understand the problems experienced by troubled employees and appreciate their willingness to receive help. Instead of scaring them off, discouraging them or preventing employees from using the EAP, a climate conducive for the utilizing of the programme might be created as a result of training. Googins and Kurtz as cited from Googins and Godfrey (1987:126) also emphasise the necessity of training both management and the supervisors in order for them to understand how best to utilise and work with the programme and thus ensure the effectiveness of the programme.

Training should equip supervisors with the knowledge, skills and attitude to recognize inadequate job performance and refer the employee to the EAP. To successfully refer the employee to the EAP the supervisor must possess the necessary skills to assess a troublesome situation and intervene in the most supportive and constructive manner possible (Oher 1999:42).

The overall goal of EAP supervisory training programmes is thus to enhance supervisory skills in order for them to identify employees experiencing personal difficulties through the evaluation of declining job performance and to facilitate intervention and referral

through supportive confrontation. Supervisors are encouraged to use the following guidelines (Masi 1984:43 and Chiabotta 1987: 145) in performing these duties:

- Monitor job performance and attendance.
- When talking to the employee, keep the discussion focused on the problem.
- Try to get the employee to understand that the reason for the discussion is to try and help him/her to wear out the problem and to remain in the job.
- Keep records. Employees tend to forget the detail of prior problems until they become aware that the supervisor has carefully documented the facts.
- Keep in mind that the purpose of the meeting is to convince the employee that there is a problem that needs attention and that you are willing to work within the problem to reach a mutually satisfactory solution.
- Convince the employee that a problem exists, that action is necessary and that it will be treated with respect and confidentiality.
- Show empathy, identify with the feeling of the employee and support these feelings, as it will motivate the employee to accept help and/or to explore his/her needs.
- Keep in mind that you are there only to discuss issues and facts related to job performance and that it is important to adhere to given time limits by which improvement must be demonstrated.
- If possible do not get involved in what turnover is expected or required.

The EAP can thus finally be viewed as a vehicle or mechanism through which the employee is given the chance and assistance to again become fully productive. The bottom line remains that the employees must bear the burden of correcting their problems but that the EAP is there to support them. Chiabotta (1987:105) also supports the above and further states that if employees fail to make the change, it is the responsibility of the supervisors to document the job deterioration in such a manner that it will uphold future disciplinary action.

3.5 IDENTIFICATION AND CONFRONTATION OF THE TROUBLED EMPLOYEE

There are many ways in which managers and supervisors can detect employee's problems through the assessment of their behaviour and performance. Whist detecting of the problem is the first and easier step, confrontation and referral as the next step have never been an easy task for supervisors to perform. Swartz (1987:21) support the above by stating that one of the most difficult duties of managers and supervisors is the effective confrontation of employees with performance problems. The author further states that although most supervisors prefer to take a leadership role, they also want to be liked by the people they supervise and this desire can immobilize the supervisor who needs to take action against the problem employee. Chiabotta (1987:108) states that a system of identification can help to ease the dilemma the supervisor is faced with. The author further elaborates that several of the personnel systems such as performance appraisals, disciplinary records and reports on absence, lateness and accidents already in use in the organisation are useful sources of information on employee behaviour changes and potential problem areas.

Observing performance is the most obviously way to detect employee problems. Chiabotta (1987:105) is of the opinion that a wealth of information is provided by a good performance appraisal system. Rating scales, comparative methods, critical incidents, essays, management by objectives or a combination of the mentioned methods are types of performance appraisal systems used by different supervisors to appraise the performance standard of their employees (Grobbler, Warnich, Carrell, Elbert & Hatfield, 2002:269). According to the researcher, the value of performance appraisal as performance standard will depend on whether the supervisor views the EAP as a threat or a helping hand. In cases where an EAP is viewed as a helping hand it will positively contribute to performance appraisal. Personal problems follow a steadily declining path until such stage that the well-being of the individual is seriously affected. When work performance steadily declines the chances are that it is a symptom of long-term personal problems and usually, as personal problems worsen, so does work performance. To prevent the above from happening Wrich (1982:20) is of the opinion that supervisors

should suggest the use of the EAP when the problem first arises and only refer employees to the programme as the severity increases.

Masi (1984:49) and Schneider, Colan & Googins (1981:41) states that confronting the employee is especially difficult when previous efforts to handle the situation have failed, when tension has built up and when communication have been blocked. Perhaps the crucial elements in confronting the employee may be found in the following do's and don'ts:

- Do focus solely on declining job performance, and offer to help.
- Do have on hand written documentation of the declining job performance, so you can let the record speak for itself.
- Do remember that alcoholism, drug and emotional problems are progressive without treatment; they get worse, never better.
- Do explain that the employee must decide for him or herself whether not to seek assistance.
- Do emphasise that all aspects of the programme are completely confidential.
- Do state that the employee's decision will be considered in the re-evaluation of his or her performance at later stage.
- Do not try to find out what is wrong with the employee and do not allow yourself to get involved in the employee's personal life.
- Do not preach. Restrict criticism to job performance or attendance.
- Do not be deceived by sympathy-evoking tactics and stay focused on your right to expect appropriate behaviour and satisfactory job performance.
- Do not 'cover up' for a friend. This misguided kindness can lead to a serious delay in real help reaching them.
- Do not threaten with disciplinary action unless you are able to carry out the threat.

If the above tactics are clearly outlined in supervisory training, supervisors will know what is expected of them and how to best conduct themselves when referring or confronting the troubled employee.

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3.6 REFERRALS IN EAP

Referrals to an EAP can be voluntary or involuntary depending on the situation and the provisions of the programme. Some clients come to an EAP because they want to save their jobs, other seek to safeguard their marriages, health and/or well-being. Regardless of what specific difficulties motivate the employee to seek help, the employee has to play an active role in receiving the help. Chiabotta (1987:123) mentions the following types of referrals.

3.6.1 Voluntary referral

Chiabotta (1987:123) state that voluntary referral is the best way to approach the problem and that it has been found that the voluntarily referred employees are better motivated to seek a solution for their problem. The employee might have talked about his/her problem with the supervisors, but the decision to follow through is their own.

To encourage the process of voluntary referral the programme management has to design an acceptable or attractive approach for the employees. This may entail marketing service to the employees and their families as well as providing education about the contents of the programme.

3.6.2 Involuntary referral

The second method of referral is involuntary or mandatory referral. With involuntary or mandatory referrals the supervisors earmark the employees through identification of job performance problems. The problem in this case is that the employee is exhibiting unaccepted performance levels with the end result being that the employee is referred to the EAP by his/her supervisor or manager. Duplesis (1990:36) supports Chiabotta (1987:123) by pointing out that self-referrals are the preferred point of entry into the EAP as this would imply that the development of the problem is not as advanced as when deteriorating job performance lead to referral. When an employee is referred, the

organisation is usually given full disclosure on all phases of the process including attendance at sessions and reports on the progression of the counselling. This might sometimes prove to be difficult for the client as valid reasons are required for non-attendance of a session.

3.6.3   Supervisory referral

The utilisation of EAP services involves different processes namely identification of the problem, documentation, confrontation of the employee with the problem and referral of the employee to an appropriate EAP service. Although there are different types of referrals in EAPs, for the purpose of this research only supervisory referral is discussed.

The supervisory referral is directly or indirectly linked to a supervisor's knowledge of the EAP, its uses and the skills required that would enable the supervisors to refer. To support the above mentioned statement Nord & Littrell (1989:24) states that it would be useful for EAP researchers to consider the following seven variables in relation to supervisors referral rate of subordinates to EAPs, namely (a) the education level of supervisors (capacity to learn), (b) the number of employees supervised (gaining of knowledge due to a possible increase in exposure to a greater number of subordinates with job performance problems), (c) the presence of intrinsic and extrinsic incentives for referring employees with job performance problems to the EAP (incentives and internal motivation), (d) the supervisors perceptions of the amount and type of feedback received on their performance (data in the form of performance feedback), (e) the supervisors recollection of printed sources of information about the EAP, (f) the EAP training received by supervisors (knowledge) and (g) the expressed need for training in EAP as indications of the supervisor's sensitivity towards their subordinates and the quality of the relationship between the employee and the supervisor. The study done by Googins and Kurtz (1981:208) found that the knowledge of the EAP with regard to "*basic things such as what it consists of and where the program is located, how to use it, act as major barriers to use*", supports the above statement (Gerstein et al, 1990:58). The training that they receive is a very important factor when considering the supervisor's knowledge in EAP and their willingness to use the services. Gerstein et al (1990:58) further states "*supervisors who had at-least five years experience in the same field and who managed*

sixteen or less employees, felt more positive about EAP than other groups". The researcher share the opinion of Gerstein (1990) in that the number of years that the supervisor has served the organisation and the number of employees supervised, could influence the supervisor's ability to understand employee's problems and to take effective action.

The factors mentioned might ensure a better understanding of some of the problems supervisors are faced with when considering a referral to the EAP. The EAP practitioner tasked with training should ensure that these aspects are explored before the trained is offered to guarantee that it can be dealt with better.

3.7   SUPERVISORY   RESISTANCE   AND   ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE EAP

Change in today's society is taking place at an amazing pace and whilst most employees can handle the change, it only takes the resistance of a few to create problems for the EAP. This is especially true for individuals in key supervisory positions as they can resist or have a negative attitude towards the implementation of an EAP. The major fear expressed by most employees is that the EAP is viewed as a threat. It is the role of the supervisor to anticipate these areas of resistance and through training address any issues that threaten the implementation of the EAP. Supervisors also share the concerns of employees in that they feel that referring an employee is an indication that they cannot do their job and that one referral to the EAP is all that is required to ruin an employee's career. They are reluctant to 'play God' and be responsible for the stigma they believe will follow the employee through the rest of his or her career (Chiabotta 1987:138) and Myers (1984:41) further state that supervisors also feel that whatever employees are doing outside their jobs is a personal matter and should it gives them problems, they do not have to become involved. Nord & Littrel (1989:32) also state that many supervisors think that they do not have the necessary knowledge of the EAP process itself to enable them to successful and sufficiently handle the troubled employees.

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If the above can be managed properly, the researcher is of the opinion that the positive attitude that the supervisors might develop could have an affect on the utilization of the EAP as it could motivate supervisors to make use of the available service to maintain productivity and therefore be less reluctant to refer the troubled employee. If this can be handled with an open mind supervisors may become aware of the losses an organisation can incur should they insist to cover-up for the troubled employees. The economic impact of the trouble employee on the organisation is discussed below.

3.8   THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE TROUBLED EMPLOYEE

Although EAPs are regarded as a humanitarian endeavour the primary motive for their development has been economic. Monetary considerations are a particularly strong driving force due to the considerable losses incurred as a result of absenteeism, increased health care costs and other costs associated with health insurance, grievances and declining productivity (Maiden in Holosko & Feit, 1988:192). A review of the literature suggests that 18% of the working population is loosing 25% of their productivity due to personal problems that affect their job performance (Masi 1984:135). Although losses in productivity are related to alcoholism and stress related illness, for employers medical costs are multiplied many times over due to the impact of absenteeism, productivity, disability insurance, workers compensation, turnover, retraining of personnel and declining morale.

EAPs have emerged as a successful and cost efficient method of prevention and intervention. Masi (1984:142) is of the opinion that the concept provides an opportunity for employers to make cost-effective allocations and to express a growing awareness that can address workplace social problems that impact on job performance. With ever-increasing budgets and belt tightening, EAPs must demonstrate their economic effectiveness or fall under the budget knife. Marketing of the EAP as a product to the organisation is essential to ensure a clear understanding of exactly what the EAP has to offer and how costs could be saved. Before the product can however be marketed, EAP

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policies and other policies relating to labour practices, referrals and identification of the troubled employee have to be clarified.

3.9   EAP POLICY AND THE ACTS THAT REGULATE WORKPLACE STRUCTURES

There is no programme, or organisation for that matter, that can function without being regulated by policies that guide its functioning. Sonnenstuhl & Trice (1986:9) emphasise that a policy is the cornerstone of an effective EAP and it serves as guide on the path though confusion. Whilst emphasising the importance of the policy, it is essential for the policy makers to ensure that there is a consistency between the EAP policy and the organisational policy in order to avoid confusion. For example, if the organisational policy enforces equal treatment or care for its employees, be it contractual, temporary or permanent staff, in terms of the availability of services in the organisation, then the EAP policy should strive to comply with that policy in the provision and rendering of their services.

Blair (1985:19) share the same view in that the length, style and detail of an EAP policy should be consistent with organisational policy and Acts, such as the Employment Equity Act, 1998 (Act No 55 of 1998), the Labour Relations Act, 1995 (Act No 66 of 1995), the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1997 (Act No 75 of 1997) and the Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993 (Act No 85 of 1993) applicable to the workplace. The Telkom EAP is also linked to above-mentioned Acts in order to ensure that the programme is in line, and remains in line, with the legislation guiding workplace policy. Over and above the legislative requirements, the EAP policy should be shaped by the organisation's existing policies on performance, discipline and medical practices. Consistency in policies will be a sign of cooperation and indicate support from the organisation towards the EAP and will help to ensure that employees will feel more comfortable to use the EAP. The EAP policy is further important because it helps to give direction in the role of the key-players of the programme.

3.9.1 The Role of the EAP policy in the workplace

The role of the EAP policy are summarised from Sonnestuhl & Trice (1986:31) and Foster (1989:9).

- The policy articulates the balance between the role of the supervisors, others in the workplace and the role of practitioners in the counselling component of the programme. This implies that the role of different role players becomes clear through the formulation of a policy.

- The EAP policy reflects the fact that an EAP is a job-based technique used for identifying troubled employees and motivating them to change their behaviour.

- The policy is a reflection of the organisation's commitment to help employees to work through their problems. This will also motivate the employees to utilise the EAP services since they will feel management supports it and they care about their social lives.

- The policy acts as a mechanism to provide employees with access to counselling services. The policy will guide supervisors on the correct procedures to refer the troubled employee and how to handle social problems.

- The policy underscores the importance of both social and economic interest in the workplace.

- Such a policy will create a forum through which labour and management can work out their differences concerning human problems that can be managed through the use of an EAP.

A well-formulated and entrenched policy is therefore imperative to run a successful EAP and will serve as guide for the marketing of the services within the organisation.

3.10 MARKETING OF THE EAP

Although the concept of marketing has traditionally been associated with products, more and more authors are beginning to appreciate the value of marketing in a services context and which would also include the marketing of EAPs. The marketing function denotes the introduction and maintenance of the EAP in all its facets, on a continual

basis and to all functionaries and consumers (employees with social problems) in order for the programme to remain highly visible at all times. Marketing and publicity is an important requirement for a successful programme because functionaries and consumers tend to forget about the existence of the programme (Mostert, 1986 in van Zyl, 1987; 69).

Marketing is a tool that is used to convince people to buy-in on ideas, products or services. Thorough research on what will interest the target audience is required before any attempt is made to approach prospective customers. Not only will successful research provide the consultant with a clear view of the consumer's behaviour, it will enable the consultant to formulate and implement a winning marketing plan.

The marketing plan, according to Klarreich et al. (1985:24), is a systematic tool for achieving the desired successes and must consist of at least the following three components. In the first place it requires a specific mission or purpose, secondly it must have measurable objectives and finally spell out the strategy or specific programmes to be implemented. A successful marketing plan should always be based on results obtained from an investigation into the organisations strengths and weaknesses and opportunities and threats identified in the marketplace. This so-called SWOT analysis will provide the detailed path for the successful formulation and implementation of the marketing plan. Klarreich et al (1985:25) is furthermore of the opinion that marketing has to be done internally as well as externally.

The ultimate success of an EAP is highly dependent on marketing efforts exerted during two distinct phases of the programme's 'life cycle'. During the pre-implementation phase marketing efforts should focus on securing the buy-in of decision makers of the organisation into the concept of EAPs. Marketing during the post-implementation phase will involve the promotion of programme activities. Francek (1985:25-29) refers to the marketing during the pre-implementation phase as 'external marketing' and during the post-implementation phase as 'internal marketing'. EAPA –SA (1999:32), in defining the standard for EAP marketing, states that; "*EAPs will ensure the availability and use of promotional materials and educational activities which will encourage the use of the programme by supervisors, managers, work representatives, peers, employees and family members*". The researcher is of the opinion that this description neglects to

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incorporate those elements that are essential to secure organisational buy-in into the programme by limiting it to the promotion of post-implementation activities. It is thus the view of the researcher that the concept of external and internal marketing as described by Francek (1985:25-29) is a more comprehensive description.

According to Francek (1985:25-29), external marketing is the process that defines the target population, leads to direct access to the decision makers and ultimately results in the contact to deliver services whilst "*internal marketing is the promotion of an EAP to a specified employee population*". These two strategies will help the marketer to promote EAP services so they become better known in the organisation and ultimately lead to better referrals. The entire marketing effort must be based on a mandate from management and employee organisations allowing that economic, humanitarian and pragmatic advantages of the EAP be promoted during the external and internal marketing phases.

3.10.1   Marketing plan

Beidel (1999:91) states that marketing supplemented by training has two aims, namely:
- That the employees and their dependants should know at all times why, when and how to use EAP; and
- When are the right times to facilitate or to use the programme so as not to impact on productivity at work.

For marketing to be successful the marketing plan is needed and according to Cronje, Neuland, Hugo & van Reenen (1991:136), the 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 . . . and is spelled-out according to a time schedule*". It is the marketing plan that provides the standards for service delivery as well as the norms by which one is able to measure the programme's ability to achieve its set goals and objectives. Francek (1985:24) states that, the marketing plan is the single most important element in the successful marketing of an EAP.

Cronje, Neuland, Hugo & van Reneen (1991:137-138) suggest adherence to the following steps when developing a marketing plan:

- The scanning of the internal environment: An effective marketing plan requires a thorough understanding of the environment wherein the programme will operate. The climate and culture within the organisation will not only determine the type of programme, services and activities but also the marketing strategies to be used and the format and structure of these strategies. According to Beidel (1991:94) "*the ability to formulate its marketing strategies into the language of the organisation . . . is vital to the integration and utilisation of the program within the organisation*".

- Scanning the external environment: A marketing plan for an EAP must further be based on an understanding of the resources available within a broader community so as to ensure that the programme has a referral and support network.

- Identifying an selecting the target market: Although the entire organisation is the target market of an EAP, an effective marketing plan should recognise that within the organisation there are various sub-groups with unique requirements and expectations that will command an individualised marketing strategy.

The objectives for external marketing includes identifying the target market, gaining access to the decision makers, convincing decision markers of the benefits of an EAP, breaking down resistance, facilitating the implementation process and integrating the programme with the procedures of the organisation.

Beidel (1999:92) formulated the following objectives for the internal marketing of the EAP:

- To increase employees and supervisors knowledge of the EAP, its services and its activities.

- To increase familiarity of and comfort with the programme at all levels throughout the organisation.

- To enhance integration of the EAP within the organisation and to promote a feeling of ownership for the programme.

- To maintain the visibility of the EAP and its presence as a vital contributor to the organisation's productivity and efficacy.

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EAPA –SA (1999: 32) shares this view but expands the internal marketing objectives to include "*the provision of regular information to employees aimed at increasing awareness of factors that affect their personal well-being and impact on job performance*".

Essential information that should be included in the marketing message is the value of an EAP in the workplace, the fundamental principles of the EAP as well as EAP policy. The communication could also include detail on the EAP structure and the unique function of each person in this structure. With EAPs under pressure to show their actual contribution to business efficiency and profitability, the marketing of EAPs becomes essential to hold programmes accountable for the promises made during the 'sales pitch'. As programme utilisation remains in the forefront of employee's reasoning, effective marketing strategies can help to improve utilisation figures. For this reason practitioners must plan ongoing marketing strategies, which are not only flexible enough to accommodate the changing needs of the target market, but are designed in such a way that they are tailor made for the uniqueness of the organisation.

Media to be used in the advertising of the EAP could include messages on the employee's payslips accompanied by brochures containing information on the EAP, what EAP services are available in the organisation as well as the contact numbers of people to contact when help is required. It is important to formulate the message in such a way that it encourages the voluntary use of the EAP and emphasises the confidential nature of the programme.

The awareness gained from publicity during the implementation phase should not be allowed to decrease over time, but should be continuously reinforced by utilising the following means and communication media:
- Posters
- EAP logos on stickers
- Internal newsletters and magazines
- Orientation course for the new employee
- Brochures
- Sending E-mails and Facsimiles to the management
- Presentations during meetings

The publicity campaign should also be continually updated in order to remain relevant. In this way shortcomings in the campaign will be revealed, which could then be corrected by improved marketing strategies (Cronje et al 1991:137).

3.11   SUMMARY

Because supervisory referral is widely considered the cornerstone of EAP utilisation, attempts to address the problem of low supervisory referral is done by investigating the factors that influence them to refer or not to refer. Supervisors, who are involved in referrals to the EAPs, must be properly trained. They should understand the programme's policies, procedures and services and be clear about their role in relation to the EAP.

Training, outlining the policy and marketing the programme is the starting points for communicating the importance of the programme to the organisation. Following the pre-implementation phase, the success of the programme will largely depend on the marketing efforts of the EAP practitioners. One sure way of increasing the number of referrals within the organisation is to base the marketing message on the successes achieved by the EAP.

CHAPTER 4

EMPIRICAL STUDY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter research results gathered from the empirical survey at Telkom Pretoria area as well as an analysis and interpretation of the data will be presented. The data assisted the researcher in delineating the actual facts that influence the supervisors to refer the employees to the EAP.

4.2 THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire was developed after a review of the literature on EAP and used as measuring instrument for a survey amongst supervisors at Telkom Pretoria area. The first page of the questionnaire was used to explain the aim of the research study and to provide guidance on how to respond to the questions. An assurance of the respondent's confidentiality was also provided, as this may have been an issue of concern for the respondents. A definition of an EAP was also provided on this page. It was decided that the respondents would remain anonymous in an attempt to ensure a high response rate and to increase the reliability of the information.

As only supervisors were selected as respondents, the questionnaire consisted of the following sections:

- Section A: Demographical details of the supervisor
- Section B: The relationship between the supervisor and his/her subordinates.

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- Section C: The factors influencing the supervisor to refer employees to the EAP and the supervisor's knowledge of EAPs.

The questionnaire was pilot tested amongst three supervisors from another section and did not form part of this study. The procedure that was followed during the pilot testing was duplicated during the actual collection of the data. A combination of closed- and open-ended questions was used in the questionnaire. With regard to the closed-ended questions care was taken to furnish all the possible options from which respondents could indicate their choice by making an 'X' in the column provided. Some questions provided the opportunity for 'other' responses and thus enabled the respondents to give their own responses. In other instances the respondents were required to elaborate on the answers they provided.

4.3 DESCRIPTION OF THE EMPIRICAL SURVEY

4.3.1 Procedure

The researcher utilised the list of the total population of 61 supervisors provided by the Telkom EAP coordinator to select the 30 respondents. The questionnaire was distributed either personally or electronically depending on the preference of the respondent.

Written permission to conduct the study at Telkom was requested and subsequently granted (see Annexures B and C) after which the EAP coordinator of Telkom assisted in the sampling of the respondents. The questionnaires were distributed on 14 October 2002 with a request for them to be returned by 8 November 2002. Despite the respondents having almost a month to complete the questionnaire, an extension was granted until 22 November 2002 in order to ensure a higher response rate.

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4.3.2   Sampling Method

The stratified random sampling procedure was used to select supervisors as respondents. According to De Vos (1998:197) this kind of sample is mainly used to ensure that the different segments or groups of the population is sufficiently represented. For this study supervisors were selected from three sections namely Billing, Operator Services and Sales and Marketing. The list of the universe that was provided contained the names of 32 supervisors belonging to the Operator Services section, 22 belonging to the Billing section and seven belonging to the Sales and Marketing section. From this list a random selection of supervisors who had daily contact with employees was made until a proportionate representation of 50% for each section or stratum was reached.

4.3.3   Sample size and response

Only supervisors who have daily contact with the employees qualified as respondents and thus received questionnaires. Of the 30 questionnaires distributed to supervisors, 20 questionnaires were returned thus bringing the response rate to close on 67%. This response was deemed satisfactory as each section was adequately represented.

4.4   PRESENTATION OF DATA

Data gathered from the respondents were collated and analysed for presentation in this section. The research findings are presented in the same sequence as that of the questionnaire (see Annexure A). Throughout this section the research findings is presented in the form of figures and or tables followed by a discussion of the information as presented.

4.4.1 Section A: Demographic and General Information

The aim of this section was to draw a profile of the supervisors that participated as respondents and to gather data on the personal detail of the respondents.

4.4.1.1 THE AGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE SUPERVISORS (Question A1)

Figure 1 The age distribution of the supervisors

56&above
5%

20-25
0%

26-30
15%

51-55
10%

31-35
10%

46-50
20%

36-40
25%

41-45
15%
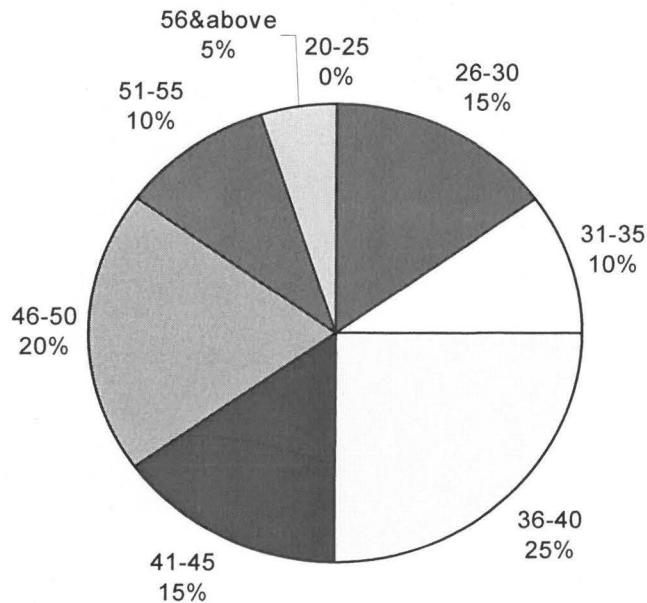
Presentation

The age of the responding supervisors ranged between 26 and 56 and above years with the majority of the respondents (25%) falling within the 36 to 40 years age group. The reason for a higher response from this age group might be because supervisors in their middle ages might be more knowledgeable to deal with workplace problems and referrals and that younger supervisors are still in the process of learning about the organisational structures and EAP referral procedures. The lower response rate from younger age groups might also be due to the fact that there are fewer young people occupying supervisory positions due to a lack of working experience and/or qualifications. The reason why only 15% of the respondents came from the 51 and

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above age group might be ascribed to the fact that, in parastatal organisations such as Telkom, depending on qualifications people in this age group usually occupy more senior positions and thus fell outside the sample. Googins & Kurtz, in Nord & Littrell (1990:34), argue that in the absence of other strong influencing factors, the older the supervisor, the greater the number of referrals, but should other factors which have a greater influence on referral preside, the impact of age on the rate of referral is significantly reduced.

4.4.1.2   THE HOME LANGUAGE OF THE SUPERVISORS (Question A2)

Table 2   The home language of the supervisors

Home Language	Frequency (N=20)	%
English	11	55
Afrikaans	2	10
Zulu	1	5
Xhosa	3	15
Sotho	3	15
Tswana	0	0
Other specify	0	0
Total	**20**	**100**

The distribution shows that the home language of the majority of the respondents is English. Although all of the respondents obviously mastered the English language, the researcher is of the opinion that the fact that this is not their home language could influence referrals negatively as it could hinder their ability to relate to issues communicated. The reverse could be true for supervisors for whom English is their home language.

4.4.1.3 GENDER DISTRIBUTION OF THE SUPERVISORS (Question A3)

Figure 2 The gender detail of the supervisors
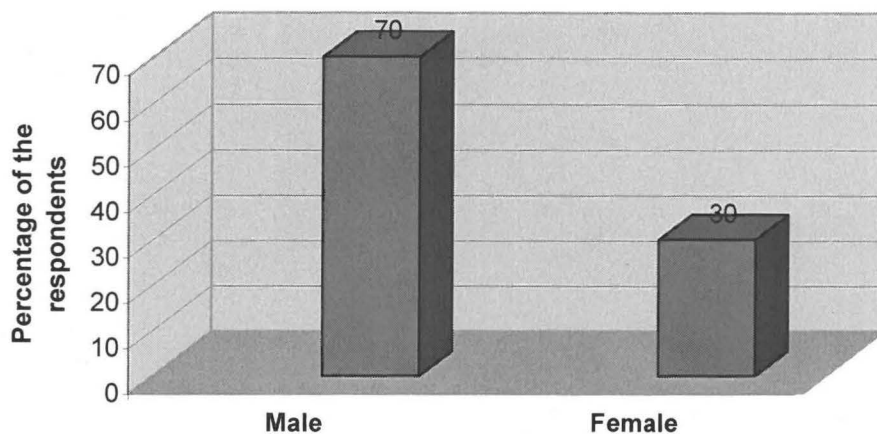
The number of males who participated in this study is relatively high and accounted for 70% of the respondents and may be an indication that there are more male supervisors than female supervisors. Further research is however required to verify this statement. The gender of both the supervisor and the employee with job performance problems can have either a positive or a negative influence on the referral of the troubled employee. To support the above Nord & Littrell (1989:24) in their identification of nine variables affecting referral to EAP states "*gender of supervisors, and gender of employees with job performance problem can impact on the referral of the troubled employee*". Above authors are supported by Besenhofer & Gerstein (1991:44) when they state that class (social status), racial and sex differences can impact on a supervisor's intervention with the troubled employee. This indicates that if the gender of the supervisor is the one favoured by the troubled employee there is a higher likelihood for a successful referral.

4.4.1.4 THE MARITAL STATUS OF SUPERVISORS (Question A4)

Table 3   The marital status of the supervisors

Marital Status	Frequency (N=20)	%
Married	12	60
Divorced	1	5
Widowed	0	0
Single	2	10
Living together	3	15
Separated	2	10
Total	**20**	**100**

The distribution shows that the majority of respondents (60%) are married. There is a great uncertainty as to whether the marital status of supervisors who supervise employees could influence the referral of the troubled employees and requires further research to determine whether such a correlation does exist. It was however interesting to note that all of the respondents indicated a willingness to refer the troubled employee regardless of their marital status (see Table 11).

4.4.1.5 THE NUMBER OF YEARS EMPLOYED BY TELKOM (Question A5)

Table 4   The numbers of years employed by Telkom

Years employed by Telkom	Frequency (N=20)	%
4	1	5
5	4	20
7	2	10

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Table 4   The numbers of years employed by Telkom (continued)

Years employed by Telkom	Frequency (N=20)	%
8	2	10
10	1	5
15	1	5
17	2	10
19	1	5
20	1	5
21	1	5
26	1	5
31	1	5
35	1	5
36	1	5
TOTAL	20	100

The length of service reported by the respondents ranged between 4 and 36 years and it can be postulated that this is a long enough time for most of the respondents to become quite aware of job related problems experienced by employees. It is therefore quite obvious to conclude that the longer they stayed at this organisation, the more they will be confronted with troubled employees that need referral to the EAP. The length of service at this organisation may therefore help them to better understand the work related problems experienced by employees of this organisation and thus assists with the decision to refer the troubled employee to the EAP.

4.4.1.6 THE EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF EMPLOYEES WHO PARTICIPATED IN THIS STUDY (Question A6)

Table 5   The level of education of the supervisors

Educational Level	Frequency (N=20)	%
Below grade 12	0	0
Grade 12	6	30
Diploma	8	40
Degree	1	5
Honours degree	1	5
Masters degree	4	20
Total	**20**	**100**

The level of education of all of the respondents ranged between a Grade 12 and a Masters degree with the majority of the respondents (40%) having completed a Diploma. Apart from these high levels of education being an indication that the respondents might not have experienced any problems with the completing of the questionnaire, it is a valuable variable in determining the willingness and rate of referral of troubled employees. According to Nord & Littrell (1989:24) the educational level of supervisors (capacity to learn) is related to supervisor's referral of their subordinates with problems to an EAP. The level of education enhances the ability to understand job performance problems that may occur in the workplace and can thus influence the referral of the troubled employee to an EAP.

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4.4.1.7 THE JOB CATEGORY OF SUPERVISORS (Question A7)

Table 6 Job categories within which the supervisors fall

Job Category	Frequency (N=20)	%
Supervisor	8	40
Line Manager	2	10
Manager	8	40
Senior Manager	1	5
Other (Executive)	1	5
Total	20	100

This table is an indication of the distribution with regard to different categories of managerial positions of the respondents who have daily contact with employees under their supervision. The majority of the respondents fell within the job categories of either supervisors or managers with both having a 40% representation. This may imply that these two categories have the most daily contact with the employees, which could thus contribute to their referral of the troubled employee. The model of Bayer & Gerstein (1988) in Besenhofer & Gerstein (1991:45) indicate that upper level managers will be less likely to refer the troubled employees than middle or front-line managers. It can thus be concluded that the management level of the supervisor may influence the referral process of the troubled employee.

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4.4.1.8 NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES BEING SUPERVISED BY EACH SUPERVISOR (Question A8)

Table 7   The number of subordinates per supervisor

Number of subordinates per supervisor	Frequency (N=20)	%
5	1	5
6	1	5
7	2	10
8	2	10
9	1	5
10	2	10
11	3	15
13	3	15
16	1	5
30	1	5
40	1	5
45	1	5
108	1	5
Total	20	100

The number of employees supervised by each respondent range between 5 and 108. Nord & Littrell (1990:24) state that the number of employees supervised by each supervisor can impact on the referral of the troubled employee in that there is a possibility that the increased exposure to a greater number of subordinates with job performance problems can disable the supervisor to effectively attend to those requiring attention. On the flipside it may also be possible that the increased exposure to problems due the larger number of subordinates may lead to an increase in knowledge and this could thus help with the identification of the problem areas and as a result

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facilitate the referrals. It can thus be concluded that supervisors with a manageable number of employees to supervise will most likely be able to function more effectively in the facilitation of referrals of employees to the EAP.

4.4.2   Section B: The relationship between the supervisors and their subordinates

4.4.2.1   THE SUPERVISOR'S ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE EMPLOYEE'S BEHAVIOUR CHANGE (Question B1)

Table 8   The supervisor's acknowledgement of the employee's behaviour change

Do you as the supervisor acknowledge employee's behaviour change	Frequency (N=20)	%
Yes	20	100
No	0	0

From this table it is evident that 100% of the supervisors acknowledges employee's behaviour change .The literature review confirmed the importance of this to be present for supervisors to refer employees to the EAP (Schneider, Colan & Googins, 1990:48). Not only is acknowledging the behaviour change an indication that the supervisors will be able to refer the troubled employee, it also implies that supervisors can act as the first line of assistance for troubled employees to help them to deal with problems impacting on their job performance.

4.4.2.2 THE DO'S AND DON'TS OF SUPERVISORS (Questions B2 & B2.1)

4.4.2.2.1 The focus of the supervisor on either job performance or the personal problems of the employee (Question B2)

Table 9   The focus of the supervisors

A supervisor should focus on job performance, and not engage himself or herself in employee's personal problems	Frequency (N=20)	%
Yes	4	20
No	16	80
Total	20	100

This table provides a picture of the focus of the supervisors when they are confronted with an employee experiencing problems with job performance. Eighty percent of the respondents were of the opinion that they should not exclusively focus on job performance but that they should also become part of the employee's personal problems. This is an indication of the concern the supervisors feel for the impaired employee and will have a positive influence on the referral rate to the EAP. To support the above Harley (1990:53) states that a decline in productivity provides both the means and the rationale for a management-initiated intervention into the employee's personal life, resulting in a more or less involuntary and coerced involvement with the EAP. The author further argue that, in theory, little is required of the supervisor in that "*the supervisor must 'only' recognise impaired job performance and confront an employee using increasingly insistent demands that the employee address and remedy the problems by seeking help through an EAP referral*". It can thus be concluded that the supervisor's focus on job performance problems can help the supervisor to recognise the need for referral to the EAP.

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4.4.2.2.2 The focus of the assistance provided (Question B2.2)

Eighty percent of the supervisors indicated that they should acknowledge the employee's effort to improve, redirecting the employee's focus, encourage employees to self-correct their mistakes and also support the employees to the next step. This is an indication of the understanding that exists between the subordinates and the supervisors and can lead to referral to the EAP in times of impaired job performance.

4.4.2.3 AN EXPLORATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SUPERVISOR AND THEIR SUBORDINATES (Questions B3 to B3.2)

In terms of building a healthy relationship between the supervisors and their subordinates 100% of the respondents indicated that is important to care for the employees whilst supervising them (Question B3). All of the respondents also indicated that while supervising the employees, they should be able to discuss their personal problems with the supervisor (Question B3.1) and that and open relationship between the employees and the supervisor is important (Question B3.2). It can be concluded that a positive and open relationship between the supervisors and their subordinates can lead to an increase in the referral rate of the troubled employee.

4.4.2.4 HOW SUPERVISORS HANDLE PROBLEMATIC REACTIONS OF EMPLOYEES (Question B4)

Table 10   Reaction of the supervisor to the problematic reactions of employees

As a supervisor how do you handle employee's problematic reactions	Frequency (N=20)	%
Reduce the employee's tension	10	50
Listen	15	75
Address the problem	10	50
Ignore what is happening	0	0
Anger	1	5
Depressed	0	0
Despondent	0	0

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The supervisor's reaction to the problematic reactions of troubled employees is predominantly positive with only 5% of the respondents indicating they react in anger. This correlates with the findings of Question B5 (see below) where 100% of the supervisors indicated they are willing to help the troubled employee. These results indicate a great concern for handling the employee's problematic reactions and can lead to better referral rates of the troubled employee.

4.4.2.5 THE SUPERVISOR'S WILLINGNESS TO HELP THE TROUBLED EMPLOYEE (Question B5)

Table 11 The supervisor's willingness to help the troubled employee

Are you willing to help the troubled employee	Frequency (N=20)	%
Yes	20	100
No	0	0

This table is a clear indication that all of the supervisors are willing to help the troubled employees to deal with their personal problems that may hamper job performance. The bottom line of this is that supervisors are convinced that their efforts in referring the troubled employee are in the best interest of both the employee and the organisation. (Compare Table 4.9.)

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4.4.2.6 THE ATTENDANCE OF THE SUPERVISOR TO WORK RELATED PROBLEMS (Question B6)

Figure 3   **The attendance of supervisors to work related problems**
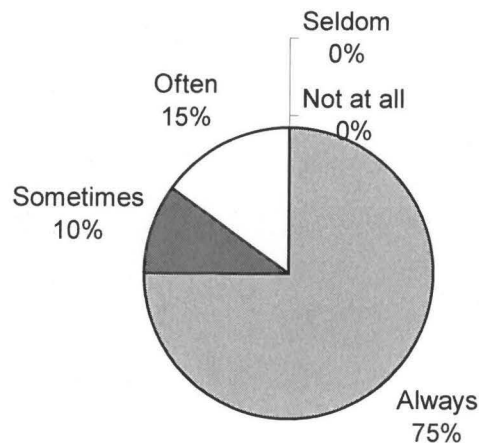
Figure 3 is a clear indication that 75% of the respondents always attended to the work related problems of employees. This overall high attendance rate to the employee's personal problems can help the supervisor to recognise the need for a referral to the EAP.

4.4.2.7 THE SUPERVISOR'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THEIR EMPLOYEES (Question B7)

Question 7 in Section B offered to respondents the opportunity to select one or more action that they performed thus giving the researcher an indication of their attitude towards their employees. Ninety-five percent of the respondents indicated that they chatted with and/or greeted the employees. Eighty-five indicated that they are willing to know about the concerns or problems of the employees whilst only 24% indicated that they involve them in decision-making.

From the results it is clear that each supervisor has a different relationship with his or her employees. Above actions can however contribute either positively or negatively to the referral of the troubled employee who experiences a personal problem, which might hamper job performance. For instance, too much of a positive attitude might decrease

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the referral rate due to feelings of camaraderie whilst on the other hand an overly negative attitude might lead to unwarranted referrals. A positive attitude towards employees will however have a positive impact on the working environment.

4.4.3 Section C: The factors influencing the supervisors to refer employees to the EAP and the supervisor's knowledge of the EAP

4.4.3.1 THE ORGANISATION'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE EMPLOYEE'S WELFARE (Question C1)

Table 12 Taking responsibility for the employee's welfare

Should Telkom take responsibility for the employee's welfare	Frequency (N=20)	%
Yes	18	90
No	2	10
Total	**20**	**100**

It is clear from these findings that 90% of the supervisors are of the opinion that it is the responsibility of the organisation to look after the welfare of the employee and that this might happen through an EAP. It can be postulated that as more importance is attached to the concept of the organisation taking responsibility for the employee's welfare, the better the chances that the referral rate of troubled employees to the EAP will increase.

4.4.3.2 THE SUPERVISOR'S VIEW ON THE VALUE OF AN EAP TO INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY (Question C2)

Table 13   The supervisor's view on the value of an EAP to increase productivity

Does EAP increase productivity	Frequency (N=20)	%
Yes	19	95
No	1	5
Total	20	100

The high response rate of 95% of the respondents agreeing with the statement shows that most supervisors see the EAP as an aid that may increase productivity. As the majority of supervisors are of the opinion that the EAP is an instrument that may increase productivity it will certainly impact on the number of referrals as the supervisors are expected to enhance productivity.

4.4.3.3 THE SUPERVISOR'S KNOWLEDGE OF EAP SERVICES OFFERED IN THE ORGANISATION (Question C3)

Table 14   The supervisor's knowledge of EAP services offered in the organisation

Do you have any knowledge of EAP services in your organisation	Frequency (N=19)	%
Yes	18	95
No	1	5
Total	19	100

One respondent failed to answer this question leaving only 19 respondents to this question. This table indicates that 95% of the respondents felt that they have knowledge of the EAP services of the organisation. It is encouraging to note that 80% of the supervisors indicated that they should not solely focus on job performance but get involved with the personal problems of the employee (see Section 4.4.2.2.1) and a

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prerequisite for this is an extensive knowledge of the EAP services offered by the organisation, which it appears that they have. In this regard Chiabotta (1987:124) is of the opinion that the supervisor has the right to intervene when the employee's problem is affecting job performance. It can thus be concluded that the connection between identification of the troubled employee and knowledge of the EAP is thus essential processes in performing the referral task.

4.4.3.4   THE PURPOSE OF THE EAP (Question C4)

Table 15   The purpose of Employee Assistance Programmes

What is the purpose of Employee Assistance Programs	Frequency (N=20)	%
Reduces health risks	8	40
Resolves management problems	5	25
Promotes wellness	18	90
Minimises health care costs	8	40
Improves employee's production	20	100

The respondents were allowed to select more than one of the purposes that were provided. It is evident that most of the supervisors felt that the purpose of an EAP is to promote wellness and to improve the employee's production. It can be concluded that if the supervisors see a certain purpose of the EAP, they will refer the troubled employee who they believe can profit by that purpose. Nord and Littrell (1989:24) also state that the belief of supervisors in the effectiveness of an EAP can increase referral.

4.4.3.5 THE WAY IN WHICH SUPERVISORS WERE INFORMED ABOUT THE EAP FOR THE FIRST TIME (Question C5)

Table 16   The way in which supervisors were informed about the EAP for the first time

In what way have you been informed for the first time about EAP	Frequency (N=20)	%
In EAP orientation (Supervisory training)	5	25
Marketing of an EAP at Telkom	5	25
Induction Training	2	10
From Colleagues	4	20
Other: Website	4	20
Total	**20**	**100**

The variation that exists between the different manners in which initial information about the EAP was obtained is a worrying factor and especially since it appears as if a relatively high percentage of supervisors (40%) seemed to have 'stumbled across' information by gaining it from colleagues and the website. The gaining of first-hand information from a reputable source plays an important role in referrals. Not only will the way in which supervisors get to know about the EAP for the first time impact on referrals to the EAP but so also will the type of message. With regard to the latter the researcher is of the opinion that if a negative message about the EAP is conveyed it will negatively impact on the EAP and if the message is positive, positive results can be expected.

4.4.3.6 THE SUPERVISOR'S VIEW ON EAPs (Questions C6 to C6.2)

Table 17   The view of the supervisors of the EAP

How do you view the EAP as a supervisor	Frequency (N=20)	%
Helping hand to assist the troubled employee	19	95
As the program that stigmatise the employees career	1	5
As the program that enhances productivity	18	90

This table indicates that 95% of the supervisors felt that the EAP helps the troubled employee, 90% felt that it enhances productivity and only 5% felt it would stigmatise the employee's career. Two follow-up questions (Questions 6.1 and 6.2) required of the respondents to indicate what would influence them to refer and not to refer. Enhancement of productivity was stated by 80% of the respondents as a reason for referral and the view that the EAP is a helping hand to assist the troubled employee was sited as a reason for referral by 70% of the respondents. Fifty percent stated that their opinion that the programme will stigmatise the employee's career is what makes them not to refer. To support this view of the supervisors, Besenhofer and Gestein (1991:45) are of the opinion that a supervisor may be reluctant to refer an impaired employee to a company-based EAP for fear of compromising the subordinate's confidentiality (see Table 19 below). The authors further state that the supervisor could also be concerned with the potential stigma attached to an employee being seen at the EAP service site. The view of the supervisor of the EAP will thus impact on the referral.

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4.4.3.7 THE MOTIVE TO INTRODUCE AN EAP AT TELKOM (Question C7)

Table 18   The motive to introduce an EAP at Telkom

Why did Telkom introduce an EAP	Frequency (N=20)	%
Education aimed at prevention of social problems	8	40
Early identification of troubled employees	16	80
Constructive assistance to all employees	15	75
Training supervisors to assist with identifying troubled employees	10	50
Unsure	0	0

This table shows that a significant number of supervisors (80%) see Telkom's motive for introducing the EAP as an instrument for early identification of the troubled employee and 75% feel that the motive was to provide constructive assistance to all employees. This implies that the motive for the introduction of the EAP is because it is viewed as an important tool to assist troubled employees in this organisation. It can be concluded that should supervisors realise the importance of and the need for an EAP in this organisation, it can certainly assist in persuading them when they consider the referral of a troubled employee.

4.4.3.8   LOCATION OF THE EAP (Questions C8 & C8.1)

Table 19   Preferred EAP location

Where will you prefer EAP services to be located	Frequency (N=20)	%
On-site (the workplace)	6	30
On-site (by the external agency)	4	20
Off-site (away from the workplace)	8	40
Off-site (by the external agency)	2	10
Total	**20**	**100**

No overwhelming preference for a specific model could be identified. The preference of 40% of the respondents for an off-site model away from the workplace may be due to confidentiality issues. According to Beugger (1987:11), this preference might be because of the fact that the client's anonymity, confidentiality and privacy is being better protected. Myers (1984:86) also confirm this by stating that confidentiality is considered a big advantage of external programmes. The 30% of the respondents who favoured service delivery on-site cited accessibility of the services to the employees as the main reason for their choice. The second part of the question (Question 8.1) established that the location of the EAP does influence the decision of the supervisor whether to refer or not. Forty percent of the supervisors stated that the location of the EAP has a strong influence on their decision whether to refer the troubled employee whilst 60% stated that the location has no impact on their decision. Besenhofer and Gerstein (1991:45) confirm the above issue when they argue that the location of the EAP might affect the supervisor's perception and therefore his/her decision of making a referral. For instance, a supervisor might be reluctant to refer a troubled employee to a company-based EAP for fear of compromising the subordinate's confidentiality.

4.4.3.9 ATTENDANCE OF SUPERVISORS TO EAP SUPERVISORY TRAINING (Questions C9 & C9.1)

Table 20 Supervisors who attended EAP supervisory training

Have you attended EAP supervisory training	Frequency (N=20)	%
Yes	5	25
No	15	75
Total	20	100

Only 25% of the respondents attended supervisory training and 75% did not and is an indication that there is still lot to be done in the area of EAP supervisory training at Telkom. The 15 respondents who indicated that they did not attend any training on EAP were not required to complete the questions up to and including Question 12. Schneider, Colan and Googins pointed out that supervisory training can be regarded as effective when a variety of goals such as an increased awareness of the EAP by the supervisor, an increased willingness of supervisors to consult with the EAP and an increased ability of supervisors to identify the troubled employee have been achieved. The authors further found that EAPs combined with supervisory training on the subject had a higher referral rate and are a clear indication of the impact of supervisory training on referrals.

Question 9.1 required of the respondents who indicated that they did attend training to stipulate the methods utilised. Of these 33% indicated that they used self-teaching as a method, 50% attended seminars and only 17% attended presentations at a workshop.

4.4.3.10 QUALITY OF EAP TRAINING (Questions C9.2 to C10)

This figure below clearly indicates that 60% of the supervisors who attended supervisory training felt that the training was good while 20% each indicated that the training was either very good or moderate. It can therefore be concluded that the majority of the supervisors who had supervisory training did gain something from the training and this can have an influence on the referral process of the troubled employee.

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Figure 4   Views of supervisors on the quality of the EAP training
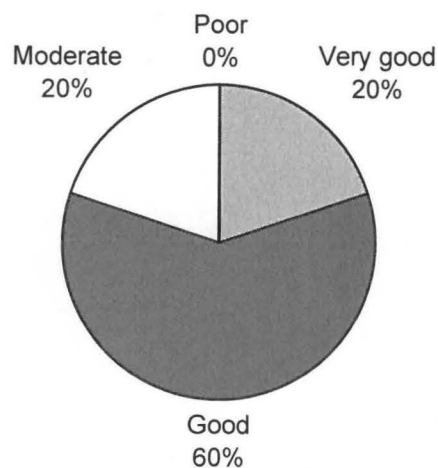
Question 9.2.1 inquired on the contents of training interventions and in this regard 30% of the respondents were of the opinion that the training was adequate in that it sufficiently addressed the knowledge and skills required for the programme. Sixty –five percent were of the opinion that it was clear meaning that it was easy to follow and understandable whilst only 5% stated that it did not meet the standard in that it was unclear and not understandable.   The respondents who received training were also required to report on whether the training helped them to identify the troubled employee (Question 9.2.2). Eighty percent of the supervisors claimed that the training they received assisted them in identifying employees who should be referred to the EAP. Said respondents were also required indicate whether what they have learnt in the training is supported in the work environment through services, availability of facilities, adherence to referral procedures and the maintenance of confidentiality. The results are shown in Table 21 on the following page.

The respondents had the option to execute more than one choice and 100% of the respondents agreed that both the services and facilities were available and supported by the working environment. Only 40% were of the opinion that the referral procedure taught during the training were adhered to and 60% felt that confidentiality were maintained as propagated. The inconsistencies with regard to the referral procedures

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taught and those in practice places some doubt on whether the supervisors are au fait with the prescribed procedure for referring a troubled employee. These results further indicate that confidentiality is a concern and in this regard Dickman et al. (1985:14) states that confidentiality is an imperative ingredient for a successful EAP. To ensure the long-term success of the EAP Telkom must ensure that the issue of confidentiality remain credible and above suspicion. It can be concluded that the delivery of the work environment of those issues taught during training will positively impact on the referral of the troubled employee.

Table 21   Support of the work environment in relation to what was learned during training

Does the work environment support what you have learned on the training regarding:	Frequency (N=5)	%
Are the services available	5	100
Are the facilities available	5	100
Is the referral procedure adhered to	2	40
Is confidentiality maintained	3	60

4.4.3.11   MANAGEMENT SUPPORT OF THE EAP (Questions C11 to C11.1)

Table 22   Management support of the EAP

Does the management support the EAP program	Frequency (N=5)	%
Yes	5	100
No	0	0
Total	**5**	**100**

All five supervisors who attended supervisory training are fully convinced that management gives their support to the EAP. This finding is also an indication of the

importance attached to the EAP in the organisation and is a positive factor that can influence the supervisors to refer the troubled employees to the EAP.

Although only the five respondents who attended training on EAP were required to compete Question 11.1, which attempted to determine whether management support influences the supervisor to refer the troubled employees to the EAP, 11 respondents responded to this question. Of these, 9 respondents (78%) indicated that management support does influence their decision to refer the troubled employees whilst 22% stated that their decision is not influenced by management support.

4.4.3.12 SUPERVISOR'S UNDERSTANDING OF THE POLICY AND PROCEDURES OF THE EAP (Question C12)

Table 23   Understanding of the policy and procedures of the EAP

Do you understand the policy and procedures of the EAP	Frequency (N=9)	%
Yes	7	78
No	2	22
Total	9	100

Although only those supervisors who attended training on EAP were required to respond to this question, nine responses were received. Seventy-eight percent of the respondents declared that they have an understanding of the policy and procedures of the EAP and 22% indicated that they do not. An understanding of the policy and procedures of the EAP is a prerequisite for effective and efficient referrals and those supervisors that do possess this knowledge will not only be better equipped to refer but will most probably be more inclined to do so.

4.4.3.13   LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE ON EAP (Question C13 to C13.1)

Respondents were required to indicate their level of knowledge of the EAP on a four-point scale ranging from '*no knowledge*' to '*have enough knowledge*'. The following meanings are attached to the levels of knowledge:

- '*No knowledge*' means that respondents do not know anything about the EAP;
- '*Limited knowledge*' means the respondent has very limited knowledge of all the services and procedures related to the EAP;
- '*Average knowledge*' means that the respondent is not completely familiar with all the procedures related to the EAP; and
- '*Have enough knowledge*' means that the respondent is clued-up with the procedures related to the EAP.

Figure 5 below is a breakdown of the extent to which the 20 respondents were knowledgeable about the EAP.

Figure 5   Level of knowledge of the EAP
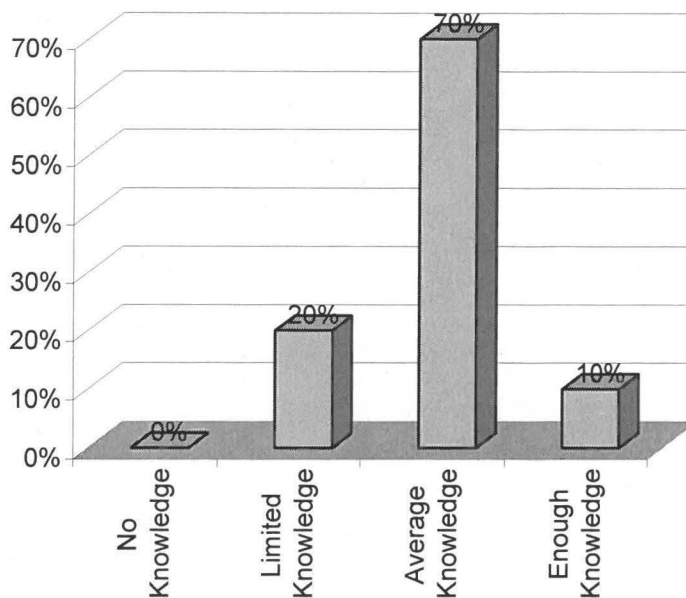
All of the respondents indicated that they have some knowledge of the EAP with the largest portion (70%) claiming to have '*average knowledge*' on the subject. Nord and Littrell (198:25) are of the opinion that supervisor's knowledge of the EAP can influence them to refer the troubled employee. The follow-up question (Question C13-1) required of the respondents to indicate whether enough knowledge about the EAP will help them to refer a troubled employee and to which 80% answered positively. It can thus be

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concluded that familiarity with the services and procedures related to the EAP can be positively linked to the rate of referral.

4.4.3.14 EXPERIENCE OF CONFRONTATION OF A TROUBLED EMPLOYEE (Question C14)

Table 24   The supervisor's experience of confronting the troubled employees

How did you experience confrontation of a troubled employee	Frequency (N=20)	%
Easy	5	25
Not easy	15	75
Total	**20**	**100**

The results indicated that 75% of supervisors do not find confronting of the troubled employee easy while 25% mentioned that it is easy of them to confront the troubled employee. Chiabotta (1987:124) state that many supervisors make confronting the employee more difficult than it needs to be by assuming that it is their responsibility to diagnose and prescribe treatment. Masi (1984:49) and Schneider, Colan & Googings (19981:41) state that it is especially difficult when previous efforts to handle the situation has not worked. Once confrontation becomes a problem for supervisors as it seems to be in this case, the EAP will be faced with lower referral rates from the supervisors in this organisation.

4.4.3.15 THE OPTIONS CONSIDERED IN HELPING THE TROUBLED EMPLOYEE TO KEEP UP WITH THE STANDARDS OF WORK PERFORMANCE (Question C14.1)

Only the 15 respondents who indicated that they did not find confronting the employee easy were required to respond to this question and had the opportunity to choose one or more of the options provided. The majority of the respondents (67%) indicated that they prefer to let the employee decide for him-/herself whether he/she needs to go for help. This way of approaching the problem, although initiated by the supervisors, helps to

make the referral "easier" especially in cases where the supervisor finds it difficult to confront the employee as it places the decision on the shoulders of the employee.

Table 25 The options considered in helping the trouble employee to keep up with the standards of work performance

If the confrontation was not easy what do you consider, helping the employee keep up with the standards of work performance	Frequency (N=15)	%
Focus on declining job performance	6	40
Keep written documentation, so you can let the record speak for itself	8	53
Explain that the employee can decide for him/herself whether to seek help	10	67

4.4.3.16 INDICATORS THAT HELP IN IDENTIFYING THE TROUBLED EMPLOYEE (Question C14.2)

Table 26 Indicators that help in identifying the troubled employee

Which of these indicators help you to identify the troubled employee	Frequency (N=20)	%
Low productivity	16	80
Unnecessary absence	16	80
Bad relationship at work	12	60
Change in appearance	11	55
Change in behaviour	15	75

Each respondent could select more than one indicator and is the reason why the total number of responses exceeds the actual number of respondents. The results indicated

that 80% of the supervisors identified low productivity and unnecessary absence as the two most important indicators that help them to identify the troubled employee. It can be concluded that if these indicators are noticeable that action resulting in the referral to the EAP will be taken.

4.4.3.17 SOURCES OF INFORMATION IN PERSONNEL SYSTEMS USED TO HELP THE TROUBLED EMPLOYEE TO CONSIDER PROFESSIONAL HELP AND THE IMPACT THEREOF ON THE RATE OF REFERRAL (Questions C14.3 and C14.4)

Table 27 Sources of information used to help the employee in his/her decision to acquire assistance

Which sources of information in personnel systems do you use to help the troubled employee to consider the need for professional help	Frequency (N=20)	%
Performance appraisals	14	70
Lateness report	12	60
Accidents report	2	10
Previous disciplinary records	7	35
Other	2	10

Each respondent could select more than one indicator and is the reason why the total number of responses exceeds the actual number of respondents. From the results it is evident that performance appraisals are used 70% and lateness reports 60% of the time as sources of information to help the troubled employee to consider the need for professional help. Accident reports and previous disciplinary records are the two lesser-valued sources of information to help the troubled employee to consider the need for professional help. Of the 'other' sources indicated included court cases and attendance reports. Disciplinary action is most probably not considered a valuable source because

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the incidence thereof can be low. 80% of the supervisors confirmed, and 12% denied, in the follow-up question (Question C14.4) that these records did prompt them to consider the referral of the troubled employee. These results show that records kept in the personnel system are of importance to influence the referral of the troubled employee by the supervisors.

4.4.3.18 EAP AS SOURCE OF HELP (Question C15)

All of the respondents (100%) mentioned that they consider EAP as a source of help when they are faced with employees with personal problems that hamper their performance. This is very encouraging for the organisation especially since Wrich (1984:9) is of the opinion that managers and supervisors play a key role in the EAP and are expected to identify and refer those employees who need assistance. For them to consider EAP as a source of help can therefore lead to more referrals in assisting the troubled employee.

4.4.3.19 FAMILIARITY WITH THE REFERRAL PROCESS OF THE TROUBLED EMPLOYEE (Questions C16 to C16.2)

Table 28   Familiarity with the referral process of the troubled employee

Are you familiar with the referral process of the troubled employee	Frequency (N=20)	%
Yes	17	85
No	3	15
Total	**20**	**100**

The results show that 85% of the respondents are familiar with the referral process of the troubled employee to the EAP while 15% is not. Of the 17 respondents who indicated that they were familiar with the referral process, 83% said they knew and 17% said they did not know where to go for assistance with the troubled employee (Question C16.1). Based on these results it can be concluded that familiarity with the referral process can facilitate referrals.

On the question (Question C16.2) whether knowledge of the referral process of the EAP helps them to refer the troubled employee, all 17 respondents required to answer this question agreed with the statement. This is positive factor since more referrals can be expected if the supervisors are trained correctly on the procedures of referring the troubled employee.

4.4.3.20 PROBLEMS ADDRESSED IN THE EAP (Question C17)

Table 29   Problems addressed in the EAP of Telkom

Which of the following problems are addressed in the EAP of Telkom	Frequency (N=20)	%
Work related problem	14	70
Behavioural problem	19	95
Interpersonal problem	18	90
Emotional problem	18	90
Alcohol dependency	19	95
Drug	18	90
Depression	17	85
Family related problems	15	75
Marital problems	9	45

As respondents were allowed to indicate more than one problem the total number of responses exceeds the actual number of respondents. The results indicate that all of the problem areas listed are addressed by the EAP in Telkom although some of them, such as work related problems and marital problems are addressed to a lesser degree. It can be concluded that not all supervisors are clued-up with the range of problems that the EAP can address and this can hinder the referral of the troubled employee confronted with a problem to which the solution is not known.

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4.4.3.21 RECOGNITION OF JOB DETERIORATION AS THE POSSIBLE RESULT OF AN EMPLOYEE'S PERSONAL PROBLEM (Question C18)

Table 30 Recognition of job deterioration as the possible result of an employee's personal problem

The supervisor must learn to recognize job deterioration as the possible result of an employee's personal problem	Frequency (N=20)	%
Yes	18	90
No	0	0
Uncertain	2	10%
Total	**20**	**100**

The results show that the majority of the supervisors (90%) agree that they must learn to recognise job deterioration as a possible result of an employee's personal problem. This implies that when job deterioration is noticed, the possible link between this and the existence of a personal problem should be made and the employee must therefore be convinced to seek professional help through the supervisor's initiation of a referral to the EAP.

4.4.3.22 METHOD OF APPRAISAL USED TO MEASURE JOB PERFORMANCE (Question C19)

The respondent had more than one option to choose from and in view of the results shown in Table 31 below, it is evident that supervisors attached different values to the performance appraisal methods used to measure job performance. Management by objectives was selected by 55% of the respondents as the preferred method of performance appraisal to measure job performance. The researcher is of the opinion that any appraisal system can help to detect problems with employees, which in turn can lead to the referral of the troubled employee to the EAP.

Table 31   Methods of appraisal used to measure job performance

Which one of the following types of performance appraisal do you use to measure job performance	Frequency (N=20)	%
Rating scales	4	20
Comparative method	3	15
Critical incidents	5	25
Essay Methods	0	0
Management by objectives	11	55
Combination Methods	3	15
Other Specify	2	10

4.4.3.23   THE SUPERVISOR'S ACTION WHEN JOB PERFORMANCE IS POOR (Questions C20 to C20.1)

Table 32   The supervisor's action when job performance is poor

If employee's job performance is poor, what do you do	Frequency (N=20)	%
Confront the employee about the performance	16	80
Keep quiet as if there is no problem	0	0
Try to help the employee to keep-up with the standard of work performance	14	70
Dismiss the employee from work	0	0

The results indicate that supervisors do in fact bother themselves when there is a problem regarding job performance. The actions usually taken not only imply that a referral to the EAP is a possibility but the preferred actions would help them to make such a referral should this prove to be necessary.

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On the question (Question C20.1) whether referrals for assessment and intervention to the EAP should be based strictly on unsatisfactory job performance, 94% of the respondents disagreed with the statement. This can be linked to the fact that only 25% (or five) of the supervisors attended supervisory training (see Section 4.4.3.9) and might imply that knowledge of when (the policies) and how (the procedures) to refer the troubled employee is still lacking and can thus impact negatively on the referral rate.

4.4.3.24 THE SUPERVISOR'S UTILISATION OF EAP SERVICES FOR THEIR SUBORDINATES (Questions C20.1.1 and C20.1.2)

Table 33   The supervisor's utilisation of EAP services for their subordinates

Do you as supervisor use the services of EAP for your subordinates	Frequency (N=16)	%
Yes	15	94
No	1	6
Total	**16**	**100**

Four respondents did not respond to this question and of the 16 who did respond, 94% indicated that they do utilise EAP services for their subordinates. Utilisation figures are usually a good indicator to measure the success of a service. Based on these results it can be concluded that the high utilisation figures are indicative that the service is successful and that it has a favourable image, which can lead to even more referrals from supervisors who use the service. The second part of the question (Question C20.1.2) required of those supervisors that did utilise the service to indicate at what stage they would do so. 69% of the supervisors indicated that they will refer the troubled employee at the early stage of the problem, 31% referred at the secondary stage and none referred at the advance stage. Chiabotta (1987:159) state that the supervisor often cannot solve employee problems that impact on the job but have their root in situations off the job and thus need to refer such employees to the EAP. The author further states that it is a good supervisor who knows when to let go of a problem and refer it to the EAP. These results are an indication of the willingness of the supervisor to use the EAP services and can have an impact on the referral of troubled employees.

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4.4.3.25 PROVISION OF FEEDBACK REGARDING THE PROGRESS OF THE EMPLOYEE (Questions C20.2 to C20.2.2)

Table 34 Provision of feedback regarding the progress of the employee

Was the feedback about the progress of the employee communicated to you	Frequency (N=15)	%
Yes	9	60
No	6	40
Total	15	100

Only 15 responses were received for this question and the results show that 60% of the respondents were given a progress report following the referral of the troubled employee while 40% were not given any feedback. Results obtained from the follow-up question (Question C20.2.1) inquiring from those that did get feedback whether the progress will encourage the referral of other troubled employees to EAP showed that 60% is encouraged to refer other troubled employees. Question C20.2.2 inquired of the respondents who did not receive any feedback on the progress of the employee whether the lack of feedback prevented them from referring. Of the six respondents, 33% said that the lack of feedback did prevent them from referring and the remaining four respondents (67%) feels that if feedback is not communicated to them, it will not prevent them from referring the troubled employee. These results led to the conclusion that the provision of feedback on the progress of the referred employee can influence referral either negatively or positively.

4.4.3.26 NOTICING OF CHANGES BY THE SUPERVISOR FOLLOWING REFERRAL AND THE IMPACT THEREOF (Questions C21 to C22.1)

Of the 12 respondents responding to the question on whether any changes were noticed after the referral (Question C21), eleven (92%) respondents mentioned that they do see changes with the troubled employee after referral, and only one (8%) said no changes were noticed after the referral. The follow-up question (Question C22) required of those

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respondents who did notice changes to indicate any one or more of the changes listed and the results are provided in the table below.

Table 35 Specific changes noticed by the supervisor following referral

Changes noticed	Frequency (N=11)	%
Increased productivity	10	91
Happy employee	11	100
Good moral	10	91

It is evident from the results that each individual supervisor noticed different changes although all three of the possible changes listed were to a large degree noticed by most of the respondents. It can be deduced that these results serve as a further motivating factor for considering referral of the troubled employee. These 11 respondents were also required to indicate in Question C22.1 whether the changes they noticed influenced them to refer. Ninety-two percent of the respondents confirmed that the changes they see in employees following referral urges them to consider the referral of other troubled employee whereas only 8% said it has no influence. It can thus be concluded that the visual difference the EAP makes in the life of the referred employee has a huge influence on the likelihood of referral of other employees.

4.4.3.27 THE INFLUENCE OF THE LABOUR ACTS OR WORKPLACE POLICIES ON THE REFERRAL OF THE TROUBLED EMPLOYEE BY THE SUPERVISOR (Questions C23 and C23.1)

70% of the respondents to this question stated that the labour Acts does influence them to refer whilst 30% said it has no influence. Question C23.1 required of those respondents that indicated that they are influenced by the various Acts to refer, to identify any number of the specific policies and/or Act(s) that compel them to refer and the results are as provided in Table 36 below.

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Table 36   Labour Acts or workplace policies influencing supervisors to refer the troubled employee

Which one of the this policies/Acts compels you to refer the employees to the EAP	Frequency (N=14)	%
Labour Relations Act	8	57
Basic Condition of Employment Act	11	76
Occupational Health and Safety Act	6	43
Constitution of the Republic of South Africa	3	21
Employment Equity Act	3	21

The data indicates that the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1997 (Act No 75 of 1997) has the most influence on the supervisors in their decision to refer the troubled employee to the EAP. In every workplace certain procedures and process need to be followed before an employee can be dismissed and many of these procedures and policies follow the guidelines and regulations provided by the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1997 (Act No 75 of 1997). The labour Acts propagate the referral of the employee to an EAP to correct his/her problem as one of the procedures to be followed before outright dismissal is considered.

4.4.3.28   MARKETING OF THE EAP (Questions C24 to C24.2)

Question 24 required of the respondents to indicate whether the EAP were marketed to the organisation they are working for and to which 65% of the respondents replied that it were and 35% said it was not marketed. In a follow-up question (Question C24.1) the respondents had the opportunity to state whether they were of the opinion that the marketing was adequate. Only 25% of the respondents were of the opinion that it was marketed enough whilst 75% said that the EAP was not marketed enough and this is most probably a true reflection of the situation in the organisation. As this situation could

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lead to the fact that other supervisors are unaware of the contents, or even of the existence of the EAP in the organisation, it can impact on the referral of the troubled employee. In section 4.4.3.13 it was reported that only 10% of the supervisors felt they had 'enough knowledge' of the EAP and this is most probably a direct result of this state of affairs. Question 24.2 required of the respondents to identify the marketing strategies they found useful to the referral of the troubled employee and the results are as provided in Table 37 below.

Table 37   Marketing strategies found useful for the referral of the troubled employees

What kind of marketing strategies do you find useful to the referral of the troubled employees	Frequency (N=15)	%
Posters	8	53
Pamphlets	4	27
EAP orientations	6	40
Home mail outs	3	20
Presentations on the departmental meetings	5	30

Five respondents did not respond to this question. From these results it is evident that the supervisors are of the opinion that all of the methods listed has some use although posters, EAP orientations and presentations at departmental meetings proved to be the most valued methods in helping them to refer the troubled employees.

4.4.3.29   THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE EAP IN THE SAVING OF COSTS IN THE ORGANISATION (Questions C25 to C25.1.1)

The respondents were required to firstly indicate whether they think the EAP saves the organisation any costs or not (Question C25) and secondly whether the saving of costs would influence them to refer (Question C25.1). Seventeen respondents (85%) indicated that the EAP does save costs and three respondents (15%) said it does not save costs. It was interesting to note that exactly the same percentages were recorded in the follow-

up question in that 85% of the respondents indicated that the saving of costs does influence them to refer. The final part of the question (Question C25.1.1) required of the respondents to identify any one or more of the costs listed that have an influence on the referral of the troubled employee and the results are provided in Table 38 below.

Table 38   Costs that have an influence on the referral of the troubled employees

Which of these costs have an influence on the referral of the troubled employees	Number (N=20)	%
Personal costs (sick leave, absenteeism)	13	65
Health costs (accident benefit)	10	50
Hidden costs (damage of equipment)	7	35
Additional costs (grievance and disciplinary action)	9	45

Although all of the costs listed has some influence on referral, personal costs were viewed as being the major cost factor that influences referrals.

4.4.3.30   ADDITIONAL FACTORS INFLUENCING THE REFERRAL OF EMPLOYEES TO THE EAP (Question C26)

It is evident from these results that the employee's willingness to use the EAP services is the factor that has the single biggest influence on the decision of the supervisors to refer the troubled employee with 74% of the respondents selecting this option. Influencing factors trailing this were knowledge about the EAP services (63%), the involvement of management in the programme and good relations with the employees (both 53%) and finally the employee's attitude towards the supervisor (47%).

Table 39 Additional factors influencing the referral of troubled employees to the EAP

Does any of the following influence you to refer the employees to the EAP	Frequency (N=19)	%
Good relationship with the employees	10	53
Employees attitude towards you as a supervisor	9	47
Management involvement to the program	10	53
Employees willingness to use the EAP service	14	74
Knowledge about the EAP services	12	63

4.5   SUMMARY

Through the use of a single questionnaire as method of collecting the data, comprehensive and reliable results were accumulated in order to establish the validity of the research question, which read: '*What are the factors influencing supervisors when considering referral of the troubled employee*'. Resulting from the variety of factors influencing supervisors to refer the troubled employee that were identified in the empirical study and discussed in this chapter, it can be stated with confidence that the research question was answered.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1   INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of this study was to investigate and identify the factors that influence supervisory referrals to the EAP and this formed the basis of the previous chapter. Based on the research data presented in the previous chapter, certain conclusions and recommendations will be made in this chapter. This chapter is structured along the same lines as the sections found in the questionnaire and in each section the researcher will firstly focus on the conclusions where after certain recommendations will be presented.

5.2   THE SUPERVISOR'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THEIR SUBORDINATES

5.2.1   Conclusions

There are a number of indicators that point to deteriorating work performance and are marked by problems such as low productivity, bad relationships at work and changes in appearance and behaviour experienced by employees in this organisation. Not only are these problems costly to the organisation but also contributes to low production. Communication around above-mentioned problems can also be influenced by the relationship between the supervisors and their subordinates. It is important for the employee to be able to communicate freely with the supervisor, without being afraid that what is said will jeopardise his or her work. Fortunately the results indicated that the majority of the supervisors have a good relationship with their subordinates and care for them and this can be construed as very positive. Not only did they cite to have positive and open relationships with the junior staff but also declared their willingness to refer

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employees in order to help them to face the problems that may hamper job performance (see sections 4.4.2.2.1, 4.4.2.4, 4.4.2.5 and 4.4.2.7). It can be concluded that the existence of a good relationship between the supervisors and their subordinates is an important factor when considering the referral of the troubled employee. The situation in this organisation dictates that supervisors not only focus on the employee in relation to his/her work but also that they should exhaust all means to attend to their social needs as well. Finally it can be concluded that the involvement and support of key people such as supervisors and managers is important for the success of the EAP.

5.2.2   Recommendations

Based on the information gathered the researcher recommends that:
- The relationship skills between supervisors and managers must be developed in order to create a better understanding of the employee's behaviour.
- Supervisors must be made part of the Employee Assistance Programme and supported when referring troubled employees to the EAP.
- The organisation is encouraged to acknowledge the effectiveness of the EAP in helping the troubled employees and urged to accept it as part of their business and their responsibility.
- Supervisors should be charged with the responsibility of identifying the troubled employees since they are expected to form part of the task support team.
- Through sufficient supervisory training that the supervisors become well informed on the referral process, the procedures and the policy of the EAP.
- A formal policy regarding the assistance to troubled employees and linked to the requirements of the labour Acts is formulated.

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5.3 CONFRONTING AND REFERRAL OF THE TROUBLED EMPLOYEE

5.3.1 Conclusions

The single most important person in confronting the troubled employee in any EAP is the supervisor. It is evident that an employee should be confronted only on issues relating to poor job performance that would result in low productivity (see sections 4.4.3.15 and 4.4.3.17) and is an important factor when considering referral of the troubled employee. Performance appraisals, lateness reports, accidents reports and previous disciplinary records are sources of information found in personnel system and used by supervisors to assist the troubled employee to consider the need for professional help. These documented records help the supervisor to identify subordinates that are either wrongly placed or who are experiencing personal problems. To identify and/or confront the troubled employee and/or to make a referral the supervisor has to be properly trained in EAPs. As about 75% of the supervisors do not find it easy to refer the troubled employee it can be placed at the door of training since the results indicated that a limited number of supervisors had received training in Employee Assistance Programmes (see sections 4.4.3.8 and 4.4.3.13).

5.3.2 Recommendations

The researcher recommends that:
- The supervisors receive proper training on issues relating to the confrontation of the troubled employees and the referral procedures to be followed in the EAP.
- Each supervisor is issued with referral forms stipulating the procedures that have to be followed when making a referral of a troubled employee.

5.4   TRAINING WITHIN THE EAP

5.4.1   Conclusions

It was evident from the findings that a very low number of supervisors were exposed to training on the EAP. Training on EAP should be included amongst other pertinent aspects such as recruitment, selection and performance management. Knowledge of the EAP, identification, confrontation and referral procedures should form part of the EAP training curriculum. The research also found that the training of supervisors is an important factor to enhance the referral of the troubled employees to the EAP. A worrying factor is the fact that a limited number of supervisors underwent EAP training and since their years of service range between 4 and 32 years, it is questionable whether such training will ever happen. Training is seen as an essential means for the supervisor to become knowledgeable about the above-mentioned aspects of the EAP.

5.4.2   Recommendations

The researcher recommends that:
- Since supervisors are key in identifying the troubled employees they should be trained in order to enable them to offer the kind of assistance that may be required of them.
- The training be made compulsory to all supervisors who has everyday contact with employees as this will help them to become well-informed about the procedures to be followed in the referral of the troubled employee.

5.5   COMMUNICATION OF FEEDBACK AFTER REFERRAL

5.5.1   Conclusions

From the data analysed it is evident that an Employee Assistance Programme is the best method to deal with a broad range of employee problems, which affect the

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employee's well-being, behaviour and capacity to performance on the job. The EAP practitioner should therefore work hand in hand with the supervisors by providing them with progress reports on the referred troubled employee in order to increase referrals.

5.5.2   Recommendations

- It is recommended that good teamwork be established between the supervisors and the EAP practitioners so that referrals can increase.

5.6   MARKETING OF THE EAP

5.6.1   Conclusions

It was also evident from the research that the EAP marketing efforts did not reach all the people in the organisation as the high number of supervisor felt the marketing of the EAP was inadequate. Marketing is a tool that is used to convince people to buy-in on products, ideas and/or services.

5.6.2   Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- Practitioners or consultants involved in marketing initiate personal contact with supervisors when marketing the EAP in the organisations (refer Section 3.3 page 49).
- Information should also be distributed through newsletters, posters and notice boards to keep the supervisors updated on issues relating to the EAP.

5.7 MODELS AND APPROACHES OF AN EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME

5.7.1 Conclusions

Initially an internal model was used in the organisation and this was later changed to an external model. Although small, there is a certain disagreement between supervisors on which is the best model or best locality of the EAP and since a certain percentage of the supervisors still prefer the previous model, this preference may impact on the referral of the troubled employees to the EAP.

5.7.1 Recommendations

The researcher recommends that:

- A combined model that has an internal as well as external component be adopted. Not only may this model prove to be more helpful to the potential users but it may also accommodate the needs and preferences of both parties. It might free the minds of those who are concerned about the confidentiality issue and allow for the provision of better services, as expertise will be increased thus adding value to the end product provided to the organisation.

5.8 FINAL CONCLUSIONS

Final conclusions are drawn in terms of the goal and objectives of the study and the research question.

5.8.1 Goal of the study

The goal of this study was to explore the factors that may influence supervisors when considering the referral of a troubled employee of Telkom Pretoria area to the EAP.

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The results from this study showed that despite job deterioration as factor influencing referral there are also several factors that influence referral of the troubled employee. The factors that were identified and analysed in Chapter 4 include the age of the supervisor compared to that of troubled employee required to be referred, the gender of the supervisor in relation to the gender of employee with the performance problem, the length of service at the organisation, the educational level of the supervisor, the job category of the supervisor, the number of employees being supervised by each supervisor, the relationship between the supervisors and their subordinates, their willingness to help the troubled employee, the supervisor's attitude towards the employees, the training received, the knowledge of the EAP, the supervisor's view of the EAP, management support and the location of the EAP. Of all the factors mentioned here that would influence their referral only 'management support' and 'willingness to help the troubled employee' as a factors obtained a 100% response with 'supervisory training' as a distant second with an 80% response.

It is clear from the vast amount of factors identified, reported and quantified through the literature review and the empirical study that the goal of the study was achieved. This also served to prove that the supervisors in this organisation are convinced that their efforts in referring the troubled employee are in the best interest of both the employee and the organisation.

5.8.2   Objectives of the study

As a first objective the researcher wanted to explore reasons influencing supervisory referrals to the EAP through a literature review. Nord & Littrell (1989:24) states that it would be useful for EAP researchers to consider the following variables in relation to supervisor's referral rate of subordinates, namely educational level of supervisors, number of employees supervised, the presence of intrinsic and extrinsic incentives for referring employees with job performance problems to the EAP, training received in EAP and the supervisor's recall of printed information about the EAP. All of these factors were tested in the empirical study and were confirmed as factors that influence referral of troubled employees by 70% of the respondents.

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The second objective was based on the empirical study and focused on the factors influencing referral of the troubled employee. The questionnaire that was distributed to supervisors was utilised to explore the factors influencing supervisory referrals. The empirical study enabled the researcher to collect supportive data and to reach the conclusion that there are a variety of factors that influence the referral of the troubled employee.

The third objective was to describe the functions of the EAP and the role of supervisors in the EAP in this organisation. This objective was also achieved as Telkom not only acknowledges the role of the supervisor in the EAP but also the fact that having an EAP helped them to deal with the problems of troubled employees, which may impact on job performance.

5.8.3   Conclusion with regard to the research question

From the information contained in this report it can be concluded that the research question formulated as; '*What are the factors influencing supervisors to refer troubled employees to the Employee Assistance Programme in Telkom Pretoria area*' (see Section 1.5 page 6) is answered in full. Through the research it became clear that all of the mentioned factors could have either a positive or a negative influence on referral to the EAP. A huge motivating factor for Telkom Pretoria is that, although the supervisors indicated that they provide the employees with the opportunity to seek for help by themselves, a 100% of the supervisors declared their willingness to assist the troubled employee. In retrospect it can be concluded that even more research into supervisory referrals is needed as the design and/or implementation of an EAP is dependent on the debate around the usage of the programme. Supervisory referral is but one of the issues currently polarising the EAP field.

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ANNEXURE A

Telkom Pretoria Area
Pretoria
0001

To all respondents

Dear Sir /Madam

The student is registered for the Masters of Social Work in EAP (MSD EAP) at the University of Pretoria. The title of research is "**The factors influencing supervisory referrals to the Employee Assistance Programme in Telkom Pretoria.** The goal of the research project is to explore factors, which may influence supervisors when considering referral of a troubled employee to the Employee Assistance Programs in Telkom.

The research would like to use 20 minutes of your precious time in completing this research questionnaire. The questionnaire is prepared for completing the Masters of Social work In Employee Assistance Programs and also helping the EAP UNIT at Telkom to know what factors influence supervisors to refer the employees to the EAP.

Every response given in this study will be highly appreciated, and it will benefit the researcher, the supervisors of Telkom, management services and employees who encounter psychosocial and work-related problems.

Interested participants who wish to have feedback from this study will get the results from the Wellness manager of Telkom: Mr Prashant Naidoo.

Signature of the researcher: C.H. MAHLAHLANE

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The Factors influencing supervisory referrals to the Employee Assistance Programme in Telkom Pretoria.

Instructions

Thank for your willingness to complete this questionnaire. Please respond to each question as honest as possible.

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Please tick the box next to the response, which is closest to your own personal views, or write your response (where applicable) in the space provided.
2. Where you have been asked to motivate or specify your response, please do so.
3. Kindly answer every question.
4. Certain questions require only one response, except where stated otherwise.
5. **Please note: This is an anonymous questionnaire and the information gathered would be treated** confidentially.

An EAP (employee assistance programs), is a worksite –based program to assist in the identification and resolution of productivity problems associated with employees impaired by personal concerns including but not limited to; health, marital, family, financial, alcohol, drug, legal, emotional stress, or other personal concerns which adversely affect employee job performance. In Telkom it is called (EAS). Employee assistance services

Thank you for participating.

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Section A

Complete section A by making a cross in the appropriate block

General information

1. Age of the respondent

20-25	
26-30	
31-35	
36-40	
41-45	
46-50	
51-55	
56 & above	

2. Home language

English	
Afrikaans	
Zulu	
Xhosa	
Sotho	
Tswana	
Other Specify	

3. Gender

Male	
Female	

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4. Marital status

Married	
Divorced	
Widowed	
Single	
Living together	
Separated	

5. Numbers of years employed by Telkom

Years

6. What is your highest qualification?

Below grade 12	
Grade 12	
Diploma	
Degree	
Honours degree	
Masters degree	

7. Job category

Supervisor	
Line Manager	
Manager	
Senior Manager	
Other specify	

8. Please state the number of employees you supervise

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SECTION B

Instructions

This section focuses on the relationship of the supervisor and their subordinates at Telkom Pretoria. Make a cross (x) in the appropriate block and explain in the space given if required.

1. Do you as the supervisor acknowledges employee's behaviour change?

Yes	Yes
No	NO

2. A supervisor should focus on job performance, and not engaging himself or herself in employee's personal problems.

Yes	Yes
No	NO

2.1 If yes ,what of the following do you usually consider as the supervisor (You can tick more than one answer)

Acknowledging employee's negative feelings	
Redirecting the employee's focus	
Acknowledging that mistakes will occur	
Encouraging employee's to self –correct the mistake	
Acknowledging the employee's effort to improve	
Supporting the employee's to the next step	
Acknowledging the employee's compliance with rules	
Citing positive impact	

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3. The supervisor should care for his/her employee, while supervising them

Yes	
No	

3.1 Employees should be able to discuss personal problems with their supervisors

Yes	
No	

3.2 A positive, open relationship should exist between the employees and the supervisor

Yes	
No	

4. As supervisor how do you handle employee's problematic reactions (You can tick more than one answer)?

Reduce the Employee's tension	
Listen	
Address the problem	
Ignore what is happening	
Anger	
Depressed	
Despondent	

5. Are you willing to help the troubled employee?

Yes	
No	

6. Do you as supervisor attends to employee's work related problems?

Always	
Sometimes	
Often	
Seldom	
Not at all	

7. Do you as supervisor do some of the following?

Chatting with an employee	
Greeting the employee	
Willing to know about their concerns or problems	
Involving them in decision-making	

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Section C

To be completed by all supervisors at Telkom. Please make a cross on an appropriate answer. This section consists of the factors influencing the supervisors to refer employees to EAP and the supervisor's knowledge on EAP.

1. Do you think Telkom must take responsibility for the employee's welfare?

Yes	
No	

2. Do you think EAP increase productivity?

Yes	
No	

3. Do you have any knowledge on EAP services in your company?

Yes	
No	

4. If yes what is the purpose of Employee Assistance Programs (You can tick more than one answer)

Reduce health risks	
Reduce safety risks	
Resolve management Problems	
Promote wellness	
Minimise health care costs	
Improves employee's production	

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Other

specify………

……

5. In what way have you been informed for the first time about EAP?

In EAP orientation (Supervisory training)	
Marketing of an EAP at Telkom	
Induction training	
From colleagues	

Other specify

……

……

6. How do you view EAP as supervisor (you can tick more than one answer)

Helping hand to assist the troubled employees	
As the program that stigmatise the employees career	
As the program that enhances productivity	

6.1 Which of the above influence you to refer the troubled employee?

Please state …………………………………………………………………………………………………

6.2 Which of the above influence you not to refer the troubled employee?

Please state …………………………………………………………………………………………………

7. Why did Telkom introduce EAP? (More than one answer could be selected).

Education aimed at prevention of social problems	
Early identification of troubled employees	
Constructive assistance to all employees	
Training supervisors to assist with identifying troubled employees	
Unsure	

8. Where will you prefer EAP services to be located

On-site (the workplace)	
On-site (by the external agency)	
Off-site (away from the workplace)	
0ff –site (by the external agency)	

8.1 Does the location of EAP influence you to refer employees to the program?

Yes	
No	

9. Have you attended EAP supervisory training (If no move to question 13)

Yes	
No	

9.1 If yes please state method of training

Self teach training programme	
Attended Seminar	
Presentations in the workshop	

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Other please specify

....

....

9.2 Evaluate the quality of training offered to you in EAP

Very good	
Good	
Moderate	
Poor	

9.2.1   In your opinion was the contents of the training intervention (tick yes or no)

Adequate (i.e. sufficiently addressed the knowledge and skills required to the program	Yes	No
Clear (i.e. it was easy to be followed and understandable)	Yes	No
Did not meet the standard (i.e. unclear and not understandable	Yes	No

9.2.2   Did the training help you to identify whether a troubled employee in your work Unit should be referred to EAP?

Yes	
No	

9.2.3   If no what more should be covered in the training (elaborate on answer)

....

....

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10. Does the work environment support what you have learned on the training regarding (You can tick more than one of these options stated below)

Are the services and facilities available	
Are the referral procedures adhered to	
Is confidentiality maintained	

Please Comment

………

………

11. Does the management support the EAP program?

Yes	
No	

11. 1 Does the management support influence you to refer the troubled employees to the EAP

Yes	
No	

12. Do you understand the policy and procedures of the EAP?

Yes	
No	

13. Indicate the level of knowledge you have about EAP

No knowledge	
Limited knowledge	
Average knowledge	
Have enough information	

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13.1 If you have enough knowledge about EAP, does it help you to refer the troubled employee?

Yes	
No	

14. How did you experience confrontation of a troubled employee?

Not easy	
Easy	

14.1 If the confrontation was not easy what do you consider, helping the employee keep up with the standards of work performance?

Focus on declining job performance	
Keep written documentation, so you can let the record speak for itself	
Explain that the employee can decide for him/herself whether to seek help	

Other specify …………………………………………………………………………………………………

14.2 Which of these indicators help you to identify the troubled employee? (You can tick more than one answer)

Low productivity	
Unnecessary absence	
Bad relationships at work	
Changes in appearance	
Change in behaviour	

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Other Specify ....

14.3 Which sources of information, in personnel systems do you use to help the troubled employee to consider the need for professional help?

Performance appraisals	
Lateness reports	
Accidents reports	
Previous disciplinary records	

Other specify ....

14.4 Do any of these records make to consider referral of the troubled employee to the EAP?

Yes	
No	

15 .If you are faced with the complexities of an employee with personal problems that hamper work performance, do you consider EAP as source of help?

Yes	
No	

Motivate your answer

....

....

16. Are you familiar with the referral process of the troubled employee?

Yes	
No	

16.1If yes, do you know whom to go to for assistance with the trouble employee?

Yes	
No	

16.2 Does the Knowledge of referral on EAP help you to consider referral of the troubled employee?

Yes	
No	

17. Which of the following problems are addressed in the EAP programme of Telkom (You can tick whether yes or no)

Work related problems	Yes	No
Behavioural Problems	Yes	No
Interpersonal problems	Yes	No
Emotional Problems	Yes	No
Alcohol dependency	Yes	No
Drug	Yes	No
Depression	Yes	No
Family related problems	Yes	No
Marital Problems	Yes	No

Other specify

....

18. The supervisor must learn to recognize job deterioration as the possible result of an employee's personal problem

Yes	
No	
Uncertain	

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19. Which one of the following types of performance appraisal do you use to measure job performance?

Rating scales	
Comparative Methods	
Critical Incidents	
Essay Methods	
Management by objectives	
Combination Methods	
Other Specify	

20. If employee's job performance is poor, what do you do (you can tick more than one answer)?

Confront the employee about the performance	
Keeping quiet as if there is no problem	
Trying to help the employee to keep-up with the standard of work performance	
Dismissing the employee from work	

Other, please comment

....

20.1. Referrals for assessment and intervention to EAP will be based strictly on unsatisfactory Job Performance

Yes	
No	
Uncertain	

20.1.1 Do you as supervisor use the services of EAP for your subordinates?

Yes	
No	

20.1.2 If yes when

Early stage of the problem	
Secondary stage of the problem	
Advanced stage of the problem	

20.2   Was the feedback about the progress of the employee communicated to you?

Yes	
No	

20.2.1   If yes, does the progress encourage you to refer the other troubled employees to EAP

Yes	
No	

20.2.2 If no, does lack of feedback prevent you to refer?

Yes	
No	

21. Do you see any changes after referrals?

Yes	
No	

22. If yes what kind of changes? (You can tick more than one answer)

Increased productivity	
Happy employee	
Good Morale	

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22.1 Does the result you get after referral influence to consider to refer?

Yes	
No	

23 Do any of the labour acts or workplace policies influence you to refer the employees to the EAP?

Yes	
No	

23.1 If yes which one of the this policies / acts compels you to refer the employees to the EAP

Labour relations act	
Basic condition of employment act	
Occupational Health and safety act	
Constitution of the republic of South Africa	
Employment equity act	

Other please specify

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

24 Has EAP being marketed to the organisation you are working for?

Yes	
No	

24. 1 Do you feel EAP is marketed enough?

Yes	
No	

24.2 If yes, what kind of marketing strategies to you find useful to the referral of the troubled employees

Posters	
Pamphlets	
EAP orientations	
Home mail outs	
Presentations on the departmental meetings	

25. Do you think EAP saves the company any costs?

Yes	
No	

25.1 Does saving of costs influence you to refer the troubled employee?

Yes	
No	

25.1.1 If yes, which of these costs

Personal costs (Sick leave, absenteeism etc.)	
Health care costs (Accident benefit)	
Hidden costs (damage of equipment)	
Additional costs (Grievance and disciplinary action)	

Other specify

....

....

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26 Does any of the following influence you to refer the employees to EAP

Good relationship with the employees	Yes	No
Employee's attitude towards you as the supervisor	Yes	No
Management involvement to the program	Yes	No
Employees willingness to use the EAP services	Yes	No
Knowledge about the service provider	Yes	No

Thank you, for your participation

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Mr. P Naidoo
Management and EAP committee
Telkom SA
Private Bag X780
PRETORIA
0001

Our ref.	Ms C H Mahlahlane	2001-08-15
	Prof L S Terblanche	
	Tel. (012) 420-3292	
	e-mail: terblanche@postino.up.ac.za	

Dear Mr Naidoo,

REQUEST TO DO RESEARCH BY AN EAP MASTERS STUDENT AT TELKOM

The Department of Social Work is hereby requesting that Telkom management and the EAP committee grants Ms CH Mahlahlane the opportunity to do research in pursuing her final year in masters studies (Dissertation: year 2002). The research will be an EAP related topic, which will be discussed with the EAP committee of Telkom. The research will be done under the mentorship of Prof. L.S Terblanche from the Department of Social Work.

Gaining an entry to Telkom will be a great pleasure for my student. The student is prepared to undergo orientation to gain a better understanding of the company should access be granted.

Thanking you in anticipation

Yours faithfully
Program co-ordinator
PROF L.S TERBLANCHE

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ANNEXURE C

OFFICE OF CLAUDIA OTTERMANN
EXECUTIVE: SHE Wellness
Tel: (012) 311-3960
Tel (012) 311-6762

28 February 2002

To Whom It May Concern:

This is to certify that Christina Mahlahlane had approached the Telkom SHE –Section division with a request to utilize Telkom as a case study for her Master's dissertation project. This is in her capacity as a student at the University of Pretoria.

Permission has been granted to her to utilize the information given, with the condition that all information is kept confidential and is for research purposes only. Approval must be given by Telkom before any publications can be made with regard to Telkom information.

Christina has also been informed of the current restructuring that the Wellness program is undergoing and this could have an effect on the timelines and roll-out of her project, which she has agreed to.

Yours sincerely

CLAUDIA OTTERMANN
EXECUTIVE: SHE-WELLNESS