

**PERCEPTIONS OF SUPERVISORS REGARDING THEIR
REFERRAL ROLE WITHIN THE EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE
PROGRAMME**

BY

SMANGELE NOMKHOSI SIMELANE

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

**MSD (EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES)
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK AND CRIMINOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA**

**SUPERVISOR: DR FM TAUTE
SEPTEMBER 2007**

TABLE OF CONTENTS		PAGE
1.	DEDICATION	6
2.	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	7
3.	ABSTRACT	8
4.	LIST OF KEY CONCEPTS	10

CHAPTER 1 GENERAL INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.1	Introduction	11
1.2	Problem Formulation	13
1.3	Goal and Objectives	15
1.3.1	Goal	15
1.3.2	Objectives	16
1.4	Research Question	17
1.5	Research Approach	17
1.6	Type of Research	18
1.7	Research Design and Methodology	19
1.7.1	Data Collection	20
1.7.2	Data Analysis	20
1.8	Pilot Study	21
1.8.1	Pilot Test	22
1.8.2	Feasibility of the study	22
1.9	Research Population, Sample and Sampling Method	23
1.9.1	Research Population	23
1.9.2	Research Sample	24
1.9.3	Sampling Method	25

1.10	Ethical Aspects	26
1.10.1	Ethical issues before the research commence	26
1.10.2	Ethical issues during the research	27
1.10.3	Ethical issues after data has been collected	29
1.11	Definition of Key Concepts	30
1.12	Limitations of the study	31
1.13	Contents of the Research Report	32
1.14	Summary	32

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW – ROLE OF SUPERVISORS WITHIN THE EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME

2.1	Introduction	33
2.2	Benefits of an EAP	34
2.2.1	Support for the employer	34
2.2.2	Support for the employee	36
2.3	Responsibilities of the Supervisor	36
2.3.1	Identifying troubled employees	38
2.3.2	Constructive confrontation	40
2.3.3	Referral	41
2.4	Types of EAP Referrals	43
2.4.1	Self Referrals	43
2.4.2	Informal Supervisor Referrals	43
2.4.3	Formal Supervisor Referrals	44
2.5	Resistance to Use EAP by Supervisors	45
2.6	Addressing Supervisor referral problems	48
2.6.1	Supervisor Orientation sessions as a means of addressing referral problems	49
2.6.2	Supervisory Training as means of addressing referral problems	50

2.6.3	Consultation as a means of addressing referral problems	53
2.6.4	Feedback as a means of addressing referral problems	54
2.6.5	Integrating EAP into ongoing training to address referral problems	55
2.7	Summary	55

CHAPTER 3 THE EMPIRICAL FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

3.1	Introduction	57
3.2	Goal and Objectives	57
3.3	Presentation of Data	58
3.3.1	Demographic Details	58
3.3.2	Central Themes	60
3.4	Summary	75

CHAPTER 4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1	Introduction	76
4.2	Conclusion and Recommendations	76
4.2.1	Conclusions	76
4.2.2	Recommendations	78
4.3	Summary	78
	Reference list	80

ANNEXURES	PAGE
A. Letter requesting permission to conduct research	86
B. Permission to conduct research from Careways	87
C. Permission letters from three companies	88
D. Informed Consent	91
E. Interview Schedule	93
F. Letter from the editor	94

List of Tables

	Page
Table 1 Years of experience as a supervisor	59
Table 2 Employees under supervision	59
Table 3 Themes and sub-themes	60

List of Figures

	Page
Figure 1 Gender of respondents	58

Dedication

This work is dedicated to my dearest mother Ntombifuthi Ruth Hadebe, who managed to make me who I am today, in spite being a single parent.

Thank you, for encouraging me to study,
For your words of wisdom and
For your strength and amazing love.

Without your presence in my life I would not have been able to make it this
far.

Thank you for being a woman of strength in my life.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude and appreciation to my dear God Almighty for the strength to complete this study against all odds. My gratitude also goes to the following people for making this dissertation a reality:

- my dear husband Mangena Simelane for his support, love and understanding;
- dr Florinda Taute, my supervisor, mentor who kept on encouraging me, leading me throughout; thank you for your guidance and for making it possible;
- my dear parents Ntombi and Cargo Hadebe for their continued love throughout the years of my studies and for their encouragement;
- my beloved kids Mukelwa and Sandiso for being patient and understanding;
- The Careways Group for allowing me to do the study using their clients;
- Mayshree Amaidas, Annelize Du Plessis and Mimmette Van Niekerk, I extend my gratitude for going an extra mile in showing your support;
- supervisors from different companies who agreed to participate in this study;
- my work colleagues for their support and encouragement and finally
- my friends for their support and motivation.

Smangele Simelane

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the research has been to explore perceptions of supervisors regarding their referral role within the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP). Traditionally supervisors are expected to identify troubled employees and refer them to the EAP. Therefore, the study will help in identifying perceptions on the part of the supervisors and improve knowledge as to how they perceive their referral role within the EAP.

The researcher did an exploratory study in this qualitative applied research, since her intention was to gain understanding of the perceptions of supervisors regarding their referral role within the EAP. It is the aim of the qualitative approach to understand the meaning that individuals attach to their everyday lives. The population consisted of 30 EAP client companies of The Careways Group in Gauteng. The researcher interviewed 12 respondents from three client companies, who had 20% or fewer supervisory referrals. The 12 respondents were selected as the sample through non-probability sampling, utilizing a purposive sampling method. Five of the respondents were working for Nashua Mobile, four were working for Computer Share and three were working for New Vaal. The empirical data was gathered by means of a semi-structured interview schedule. A tape recorder was used to record the interviews and put data into transcripts. All respondents signed an informed consent form (Appendix D). An in-depth literature review was conducted about the benefits of an EAP, types of referrals, responsibilities of a supervisor, resistance to utilise the EAP and addressing supervisors' referral problems.

Findings indicate that supervisors need comprehensive training regarding the EAP, which should also be linked with other management trainings. Supervisors believe that they are the key figures in implementing the programme because they work closely with employees, but they are not confident enough to implement the programme due to lack of knowledge.

Supervisors indicated that the EAP plays a minimal role as a management tool and there is a need to re-position the programme based on the needs of the organisation. There is a general view that as the needs of the organisations is changing, so should the focus of the EAP.

LIST OF KEY CONCEPTS

Perceptions

Supervisor

Employee Assistance Programme

Referral

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

To ensure that an Employee Assistance Programme (hereafter EAP) functions as an integral part of an organisation, the EAP must assist management in addressing organisational issues which may impact on employee well-being as well as having to report and comment on trends identified in service rendering and utilisation, (EAPA SA, 2005:20).

Blair (2004:34) claims that the supervisor is the key role player because of the daily contact with employees; therefore, supervisors should identify problem employees early. Supervisors have a working relationship with employees and can detect changes in employees, and, as performance managers, they can observe deteriorating job performance. While self-referrals to the EAP are the key indicator of the acceptance of the programme by the workforce, and thus its success, referrals by managers and supervisors are important if the referred workforce members are to receive the help they need.

In the opinion of Schneider, Colan and Googins (1990:99), without the supervisor, the EAP becomes a counselling programme similar to any community-based programme dealing with emotional, family and substance abuse problems. What differentiates the EAP is not only its organisational identity but also its incorporation of the unique properties of the work environment.

As the EAP is designed to assist in early identification and referral, supervisory referral does not have to happen only when there are severe problems. According to Emener, Hutchison and Richards (2003:39), supervisors frequently have concerns about referring an employee to the EAP.

Some are frequently afraid of hurting an employee and others feel that they may be perceived as not doing their job.

The Careways Group is a service provider to different client companies, and the researcher believes that it is important to explore supervisors' perceptions and understanding of their referral role in the EAP. Statistics taken from the Care Centre's records showed that 80% of referrals to the Care Centre are self-referrals while supervisory referrals amount to 20% or less (Jones, 2006). He adds that it has been accepted as a norm that self-referrals, should be higher than supervisory referrals. This was justified by the statistics received from the Care Centre, where self-referrals were normally higher. He believes there is a need to know what supervisors think of the programme and to obtain their views, as their utilisation of the programme is low.

Myers (1984), as cited by Oher (1999:145), has stated that supervisors sometimes prefer to regard EAP issues as none of their business, whereas an important part of supervising employees is to ensure that there is cooperation with employees in order to remove any barriers that may have an effect on performance and productivity. Blair (2004:19) indicates that supervisors believe that what an employee does outside the organisation is personal and, therefore, if they become involved, it is intruding. Emener *et al.* (2003:57) suggests that some employees can hide problems for a long time; therefore, supervisors should be particularly concerned with the pattern of job performance deterioration.

The role of the supervisor today is considerably more complex than in earlier days, where the focus was mainly on alcoholism. Schneider *et al.* (1990:102) mention that, within the quickly changing environments of the corporation and the EAP, the role of the supervisor in EAPs has shifted and it continues to shift. Schoeman (2005) states that low utilisation of the programme by supervisors is a matter for concern because the programme represents a management tool.

She has emphasised that it is therefore important to establish how supervisors perceive their referral role and whether they see the programme as a management tool.

The researcher believed that it is time to move away from simply expecting supervisors to play a specific role in the EAP, and rather to explore their perceptions of the referral role they are expected to play in the EAP. Therefore, the study will help in identifying perceptions on the part of the supervisors and improve knowledge as to how they perceive their referral role within the EAP. The study will benefit The Careways Group through feedback from supervisors on how they perceive their referral role in the EAP. This study will assist the organisation in recommending to client companies how to improve supervisory referrals, which will in turn improve the credibility of the EAP.

1.2 PROBLEM FORMULATION

Fouché and De Vos (2005a:99) indicate that the identification of the problem could be viewed as the first effort by the researcher to mould the problem into a formulated form. According to Bless and Higson-Smith (2001:19), problems are special kinds of questions that arise for which knowledge is needed. Welman and Kruger (1999:67) mention that the first step in any research project is to choose a research area, and this process requires the delineation of a problem area and the description of one or more research problem(s).

The Careways Group is an independent service provider of EAP and wellness solutions to companies in South Africa. There are currently more than 350 client companies that are serviced by The Careways Group. These client companies are contracted to The Careways Group for EAP, HIV/Aids or other health and wellness solutions. The Careways Group assists these client companies in implementing and maintaining their programmes. There are various client companies from various industries that are contracted to The Careways Group.

The researcher is employed by The Careways Group as a Corporate Well-being Consultant, one of her duties is to report back to clients on the utilisation of the services by the employees.

One of the issues that is reported on is referral types. It concerns The Careways Group that the trend indicates that supervisory referrals are lower than self-referrals. In this study the problem was the fact that there was only limited information or explanation as to why supervisors' utilisation of the programme in referring employees was lower than self-referrals. Klarreich, Franchek and Moore (1985:38) indicate that a concern in the EAP field has been the relatively low rate of programme use by supervisors and managers.

The researcher believes that, if the programme is not well utilised by the supervisors, it means that the programme is not as well aligned as a management tool as it should be, or supervisors are not familiar with the referral procedure. Klarreich *et al.* (1985:37) state that the benefit of using the EAP for supervisors is that it is a tool to assist in supervising troubled employees. According to Klarreich *et al.* (1985:38) integrating EAP into regular company processes is essential in order to communicate to supervisors that appropriate referral of problem employees to the EAP is a key aspect of their supervisory duties. Blair (2001:37) also indicates that employers view EAPs as strategic partners in handling human factors in workplace productivity.

The Careways Group, as a service provider of the EAP, is expected to make management from different client companies realise that having an EAP is an investment in their employees. In view of the above, it is relevant to emphasise that additional knowledge is needed to gain better understanding of the supervisors' perceptions of their referral role within the EAP and the particular dynamics of that role.

Ross and Altmaier (1994:225) claim that EAP is valuable because it gives supervisors a mechanism for identifying problem employees early.

By focusing on research based on the roles of the supervisor, The Careways Group can improve their understanding of the referral process and the supervisor can effectively assist in positioning the EAP within the work organisation. This can be done by addressing the issues raised by supervisors as well as the challenges that the EAP should address.

The researcher was of the opinion that there is a need to align the EAP with the vision and mission of the organisation. In other words, EAP must be part of the core business of any organisation and, therefore, it is imperative to know how supervisors view their referral role.

Bruce (1990:125) contends that early identification is an important function of the EAP and supervisors are the ideal people to play that role and refer to the EAP. If their roles are investigated, it will help to improve the services provided to clients, with particular reference to supervisor's intervention when referring. An EAP will have credibility and thus make business sense. It is thus necessary to explore the perceptions of supervisors of their referral role in the EAP.

If no investigation is done on the rationale behind the low rate of supervisory referrals, there is a risk that supervisors will not utilise the programme at all. This may indicate lack of confidence in seeing the programme as a business initiative and it may harm the credibility of the EAP.

1.3 GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

1.3.1 Goal

Fouché and De Vos (2005b:104) discuss that the terms, goal, purpose and aim are used as synonyms for one another.

The meaning of these terms implies the “broader, more abstract conception of end toward which effort or ambition is directed”. Maxwell (1998:73) describes purpose as the inclusion of motives, desires and goals; what the research will accomplish. Fouché and De Vos (2005b:104) further state that research goals can be exploratory, explanatory or descriptive.

Babbie (1998:43) describes how research goals provide a broad indication of what researchers wish to achieve in research. Bless and Higson-Smith (2001:31) emphasise that exploratory studies aim to become conversant with basic facts and to create a general picture of conditions.

Exploratory research seems appropriate for this study, since the researcher aims to understand and interpret the meaning that subjects provide. Exploratory studies are most typically done to satisfy the researcher’s curiosity and desire for greater understanding so as to develop methods to be employed in any subsequent study (Babbie & Mouton, 2002:80).

The goal of this study can be formulated as follows:

to explore the perceptions of supervisors regarding their referral role within the Employee Assistance Programme.

1. 3. 2 Objectives

Fouché and De Vos (2005b:104) view objectives as the more measurable and more speedily attainable conception of such an end and toward which effort or ambition is directed.

The objectives of the study were as follows:

- to conceptualise theoretically the referral role of the supervisor in the EAP;
- to investigate perceptions of supervisors regarding their referral role through an empirical study; and

- to formulate conclusions and recommendations to The Careways Group regarding the referral role of supervisors in the EAP to enhance service delivery.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION

Fouché and De Vos (2005b:101) state that qualitative researchers generally formulate a working hypothesis or research questions to guide them in the study. A research question refers to some difficulty which the researcher experiences in the context of either a theoretical or a practical situation to which he/she wants to obtain a solution (Welman & Kruger 1999:11). “What specifically you want to understand by doing the study” (Maxwell, 1998:80).

Since this study is exploratory in nature, the researcher would like to formulate a research question, which seems appropriate for the study (Fouché, 2005a:116). The research question was stated as follows:

What are the perceptions of supervisors from client companies that are contracted with The Careways Group regarding their referral role within the EAP?

1.5 RESEARCH APPROACH

There are two approaches in social research; namely qualitative and quantitative research (Neuman, 1997:68; Fouché & Delport, 2005:73). Creswell (1998:130) defines qualitative research as the study of people in their natural environment as they go about their daily lives. This type of research seeks to gain an understanding of the phenomenon.

Bless and Higson-Smith (2001:34) define qualitative research as research conducted using a range of methods which use qualifying words and descriptions to record and investigate aspects of social reality.

A common thread running through the research settings, in the category of qualitative research, is the need for developing an initial understanding of something, (Struwig & Stead, 2001:19).

In this study, a qualitative research approach was the most appropriate, since the researcher's intention was to gain understanding by exploring the perceptions of supervisors concerning their referral role in the EAP. It is the aim of the qualitative approach to understand the meaning that individuals attach to their everyday lives. According to Babbie and Mouton (2002:271), the goal of studies using a qualitative approach is defined as describing and understanding, rather than explaining, human behaviour.

1.6 TYPE OF RESEARCH

Neuman (1997:67) identifies two types of research: applied and basic research. Basic research, also called pure research, seeks an understanding of the fundamental nature of social reality, and applied researchers principally want to apply and tailor knowledge to address a specific issue.

Bless and Higson-Smith (2001:37) describe basic research as aiming at contributing to human knowledge and understanding of a particular phenomenon, while applied research aims at finding solutions to specific concerns or problems facing particular groups of people. The researcher utilised applied research as she did not seek to formulate or refine theory as with basic research, but in order to explore the perceptions of supervisors of their referral role in the EAP, she sought to apply the knowledge to address this specific issue in practice.

1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Babbie and Mouton (2002:277) define a research design as a blueprint or a plan of how the researcher intends conducting the research. Kumar (2005:84) indicates that a research design is a plan, structure and strategy of investigation so conceived as to obtain answers to research questions or problems. This author continues by saying that research design has two main functions, which are: firstly the identification and development of procedures and logistical arrangement required to undertake a study; and secondly function is the importance of quality in these procedures to ensure validity, objectivity and accuracy.

Creswell (1998) identifies five strategies of inquiry or traditions that could be used to design qualitative research namely; biography, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography and case study. According to Creswell (1998:61), a case study can be regarded as an exploration or in-depth analysis of a bounded system, or single cases or multiple cases over a period of time. The emphasis is on arriving at a complete description and understanding of the constructs being studied, despite the small numbers of persons involved (Struwig & Stead, 2001:8).

Fouché (2005b:273) asserts that the collective case study furthers the understanding of the researcher about a social issue or population being studied. The researcher will gain an understanding of the supervisors' perceptions of their referral role in the EAP through the use of a collective case study as the design for the study. According to Fouché (2005b:272), the case being studied may refer to a process, activity, event, programme or individual, or multiple individuals.

1.7.1 Data Collection

In exploring and describing the case, detailed data collection methods are required. These may include interviews, documents, observations or archival documents (Fouché, 2005b:272). The term qualitative data refers to any information that the researcher gathers that is not expressed in numbers (Struwig & Stead, 2001:13).

Bless and Higson-Smith (2001:95) define interviews as a qualitative data collection method that attempts to understand the world from the participant's point of view, and to unfold meaning of participant's experiences. The researcher utilised semi-structured interviews in order to gain insight into the perceptions of supervisors regarding their referral role in the EAP.

In the case of semi-structured interviews, a researcher will have a set of predetermined questions in an interview schedule, but the interview will be guided by the schedule, rather than being dictated by it (Greeff, 2002:302). With the semi-structured interview, participants are also given the opportunity to discuss issues beyond the questions confines (Struwig & Stead, 2001:98).

Greeff (2002:302) adds that semi-structured interviews are used to gain a detailed picture of a participant's belief about, or perceptions or accounts of, a particular topic. Semi-structured interviews were appropriate for the study, since the researcher was available to follow up aspects that might emerge during the interview and allowed the respondents to present a full clear picture.

1.7.2 Data Analysis

Data analysis is a process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data (De Vos, 2002:339).

Data analysis in a qualitative inquiry involves a two-fold approach: the first aspect involves data analysis from the site following a period of data collection, whereas the second aspect is data analysis away from the site.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher utilised the aspect of analysing data away from the site. In analysing data away from the site, the researcher was guided by the steps of Creswell (1998:170) for analysing data which involve collecting and recording data, managing data, reading and memoing data, describing, classifying and interpreting as well as representing and visualising.

The researcher utilised a tape recorder to record the interviews and put the data into transcripts. The researcher took notes while listening to the tape-recorded interviews. According to De Vos (2002:343), it is important that the researcher read the transcripts several times to become familiar with the information.

During the reading process, the researcher was making memos and was also looking for similarities and differences. Writing memos in the margins of field notes or transcripts helps in this initial process of exploring a database (De Vos, 2005:337).

The researcher classified information by grouping together similar responses. Creswell (1998:144) states that classifying means taking apart the text or qualitative information and looking for categories, themes or dimensions of information. In grouping similarities, the researcher utilised abbreviations of key words to code categories and themes. The researcher presented a research report according to the themes that emerged during the study.

1.8 PILOT STUDY

The *New Dictionary of Social Work* (1995:45) defines a pilot study as the process whereby the research design for a perspective survey is tested.

Strydom (1998:179) maintains that a pilot study can be viewed as the “dress rehearsal” to the actual investigation. Strydom and Delport (2005:331) state that the pilot study is informal where only a few respondents possessing the same characteristics as the respondents in the main study are used.

1.8.1 Pilot test

According to Strydom (2002a:211), a pilot study is a pre-testing of a measuring instrument which consists of trying it out on a number of persons having characteristics similar to those of the target group of respondents. It is important that a pilot study should take all heterogeneous factors into consideration. In this way the researcher tries out the research instrument on a small number of people who have characteristics similar to the target group. Pilot testing is done to refine the measuring instrument so that respondents will have no problems in answering the questions and there will be no problems in recording data. Pilot testing assists in identifying potential problems that could be encountered during the main study (Strydom, 2002a:212).

In this study the researcher conducted a pilot test of the semi-structured interview with two respondents who were also supervisors who had the same unit of analysis as the sample, but did not form part of the main study. After doing the pilot testing the researcher identified the need to request more time for the actual study because during the pilot testing some of the respondents exceeded the time scheduled for the research.

1.8.2 Feasibility of the study

Welman and Kruger (1999:265) claim that the acceptability of a research topic may be judged by giving consideration to its feasibility and value. Feasibility involves the availability and accessibility of the information and subjects of the study.

Trochim (2001:26) also indicates that when determining the project's feasibility one needs to bear in mind several practical considerations. First, one has to think of how long the research will take to accomplish. Secondly, it is important to determine whether one will succeed in gaining cooperation to complete the study and finally to determine whether financial costs will be manageable.

As an employee of The Careways Group, the researcher was directly involved with companies and the assessment of respondents was therefore not difficult. The researcher received permission from the Careways Group to conduct the study, and information on client companies was made available to the researcher (Annexure B).

The researcher believed that the study was feasible because the focus was on a sample of The Careways Group EAP client companies in Gauteng where 12 supervisors from three client companies were interviewed (Annexure C).

The researcher incurred costs such as the computer costs involved in qualitative data analysis and interpreting. There were no additional costs in terms of travelling, since it was part of the researcher's duties to visit client companies as a consultant. In terms of the costs of the study these were within the researcher's reach and were, therefore, feasible.

1.9 RESEARCH POPULATION, SAMPLE AND SAMPLING METHOD

1.9.1 Research Population

Strydom and Venter (2002:197) describe the universe as all potential subjects who possess the attributes in which the researcher is interested. Population on the other hand, refers to individuals in the universe who possess specific characteristics.

According to Trochim (2001:44), population is the group from which the researcher wishes to generalise the study and sample. Babbie (1998:201) describes the population as the theoretically specified aggregation of the study elements.

The research universe for this study was the client companies of The Careways Group in Gauteng who have contracted for the EAP. This group consisted of 62 client companies that are spread out in Gauteng. These were companies from different industries such as government departments, retail, and mining. The research population for this study was The Careways Group client companies in Gauteng with low supervisor utilisation rate in EAP. That consisted of 30 client companies.

1. 9. 2 Research Sample

According to Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:85), the subset of the population which is actually investigated by a researcher and whose characteristics will be generalised to the entire population is called the sample.

Trochim (2001:20) describes a sample as being a group of people the researcher selects to be part of the study. Neuman (2003:211) indicates that for qualitative researchers, “it is their relevance to the research topic rather than their representativeness which determines the way in which the people to be studied are selected”.

The boundary of the sample was a sample of three client companies in Gauteng Region with the characteristics listed below.

- They had had the EAP for more than two years with The Careways Group.
- Those client companies had to have utilisation rate of the EAP of less than 20%.

- Five supervisors from each client company were to be interviewed and those supervisors had to have been in their supervisor positions for more than two years.

1. 9. 3 Sampling Method

There are two basic methods of sampling: probability and non-probability sampling. If the research is aimed at drawing conclusions or make predictions affecting the population, then one must use probability sampling. On the other hand, if the researcher is only interested in seeing how a small group, perhaps even a representative group, is doing for purposes of illustration or explanation, then non-probability sampling can be used (Bless & Higson-Smith, 1995:88).

For the purpose of this study the researcher utilised non-probability sampling using purposive sampling. According to Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:90) this sampling method is based on the judgement of the researcher regarding the characteristics of a representative sample. Strydom (2005:202) adds that the sample is composed of elements that contain the most attributes of the population.

The researcher selected three client companies who had less than 20% supervisory referrals, and selected five supervisors from each company to be respondents. The researcher focused on client companies that had had the Employee Assistance Programme in place for two years or more. The client companies that participated in the study were Nashua Mobile, Computer Share and New Vaal. The supervisors who were selected as respondents were those who had been with the company for at least two years. The researcher further selected supervisors with the lowest referral rate to form part of the sample. The researcher also targeted line supervisors and supervisors from Human Resources.

1. 10 ETHICAL ASPECTS

In the opinion of Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2003:129), ethics refers to the appropriateness of one's behaviour in relation to the rights of those who become the subject of one's work is affected by it. *Webster's New World Dictionary*, as quoted by Babbie (2004:63), defines ethics as conforming to the standards and conducts of a given profession or group. Strydom (2002b:63) sees ethics as "a set of moral principles that are suggested by an individual or group, are widely accepted and offer expectations about the current conduct towards experimental subjects and respondents".

McLaughlin (2007:55-70) distinguishes between ethical issues before the research commences; during the research; and after the data collection has been completed.

1.10.1 Ethical issues before the research commences

✓ **Research Governance Framework**

Prior to the research being undertaken, approval had been granted by the necessary committees of the Faculty of Humanities and the Department of Social Work and Criminology at the University of Pretoria.

✓ **Informed Consent**

Sieber (1998:130) indicates that the researcher should make sure that the information is clear and written in everyday language. Trochim (2001:24) indicates that prospective research participants must be fully informed about the procedures and risks involved in research and must give their consent to participate in the study.

The researcher compiled a written consent form (See Appendix D) and asked all respondents to sign informed consent before they participate in the study. The researcher gave respondents a complete explanation of the entire investigation in a written form, using clear and understandable language.

✓ **Privacy, Confidentiality and anonymity**

Strydom (2005:61) sees violation of privacy, the right to self determination and confidentiality as being synonymous. Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:34) reveal that mostly respondents are prepared to divulge information of a private nature on condition that their name is not mentioned. Babbie (2004:66) emphasises that the researcher should never use the term anonymous to mean confidentiality. Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:35) add that, in the case where data is collected using interviews, anonymity cannot be maintained because the researcher has direct contact with the respondents and can identify them.

The respondents were assured of confidentiality and that the information would only be used for the purpose of the study. Kumar (2005:130) indicates that the handling of subject's identity is an important ethical consideration. The respondents were informed that a tape recorder would be used solely for the purpose of obtaining all the facts. The researcher protected the identity of participants as Mc Laughlin (2007:61) suggested.

1.10.2 Ethical issues during the research

Mc Laughlin (2007:61) indicates that there is very close interaction between the researcher and the researched.

✓ **Voluntary Participation**

According to Babbie (2004:64), the principle of voluntary participation requires that participants must not be coerced into participating in the study. The researcher informed respondents that their participation in the study was voluntary and they would be allowed to withdraw from the study.

✓ **Deception of respondents**

Deception involves deliberately withholding information, or offering incorrect information to ensure participation of subjects who would otherwise possibly refuse (Babbie, 2001:474). The researcher made use of an informed consent form to describe the goals of the study and confirmed that the information would only be used for the purpose of the study.

✓ **Competence of the researcher**

Strydom (2002b:71) believes that researcher have an ethical obligation to ensure that they are competent and adequately skilled to undertake the investigation they have in mind.

The researcher explained to the respondents that permission was granted by The Careways Group to conduct this study and that the researcher was under the supervision of the Chief Operating Officer as the senior manager at The Careways Group. The researcher had also successfully completed her research methodology module at the University of Pretoria.

✓ **Avoidance of harm and debriefing of respondents**

Strydom (2002b:58) stresses that respondents should be thoroughly informed beforehand about any potential impact of the investigation. Such information allows the respondents to withdraw from the investigation should they so wish.

In some situations where a qualitative approach is used, the problem could arise that respondents become involved in the research to such an extent that they may suffer harm after the completion of the research (Strydom, 2002b:73).

Due to the nature of this study no harm was inflicted and consequently no debriefing of respondents necessary after the interviews.

✓ **Cooperation with contributors**

Strydom (2002b:71) states that research projects are often so expensive and comprehensive that the researcher cannot handle them financially and, a sponsor may be required. For the purpose of this study the researcher was responsible for all costs, no contributors were used.

1.10.3 Ethical issues after the data collection has been completed

✓ **Analysis and reporting**

Neuman (1997:465) states that research findings should be released in written form to the scientific community. Babbie (2004:68) points out that the researcher should be more familiar than anyone else with the study's technical limitations and failures. The researcher has an obligation to make such shortcomings known. Negative findings should be reported if at all related to the analysis. The findings of the study must be introduced to the public in written form (Strydom, 2002b:71).

The researcher explained to the respondents that the research findings would be made available to the University of Pretoria, the management of The Careways Group and would also be incorporated in a scientific article.

1.11 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

✓ Perceptions

Perceptions are impressions made by the four senses (sight, smell, taste and touch), and the way these impressions are interpreted cognitively and emotionally, based on one's life experiences (*New Dictionary of Social Work*, 1995:321). According to *The American Dictionary* (2000:21), in psychology and the cognitive sciences, perception is the process of acquiring, interpreting, selecting and organising sensory information. According to the researcher, perceptions refer to a person's way of perceiving something, based on one's experience of the situation. In other words one's perception is determined by one's recognition and interpretation of the event.

✓ Supervisor

De Beer, Rossouw, Moolman, Le Roux and Labuschagne (1998:10) state that supervisors are managers at the first level of the management hierarchy. They have often been promoted from the body of workers, where management identify employees with suitable skills and appoint them to supervisory activities. According to the EAPA SA (2005:9) a supervisor is a person in a position of authority who oversees the performance of subordinate staff. Thus the researcher sees a supervisor as a senior person who has a person(s) reporting to him/her at the workplace and manages the performance of that person(s).

✓ **Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)**

EAP is a worksite based programme designed to assist in the identification and resolution of productivity problems associated with employees burdened by personal concerns including, but not limited to, health, marital, family, alcohol, drug, legal, emotional, stress or other personal concerns which may adversely affect employees' job performance (EAPA SA, 2005:6). The *New Dictionary of Social Work* (1995:20) characterises EAP as a programme offered to the employees by employers to prevent, relieve or eliminate work-related and social problems with a view to promoting job satisfaction, productivity and general social functioning. Thus the researcher defines EAP as a worksite initiative of the early identification of troubled employees, to assist them in resolving their work-related or personal problems in order to improve their work performance.

✓ **Referral**

Klarreich *et al.* (1985:70) claim that referral is the interpretation of the problem by the EAP counsellor, or dependent to the employee, which results in acceptance of the preliminary treatment plan. Hepworth, Rooney and Larsen (2002:42) characterise referral as a process where others have identified a need for help at the best interest of the troubled person. Thus the researcher sees referral as being when one offers assistance by finding appropriate help for another person who is in need of help.

1.12 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The limitations of the study are listed below.

- The researcher could not reach all supervisors as intended because of their busy schedule and because they had other plans.

Initially it was intended to interview 15 supervisors but only 12 supervisors were interviewed at the end.

- Fifty eight percent of the respondents had been working in their supervisors' position for a period 1-5 years which could have had an impact on the results because that meant they are new in their positions and might not have knowledge of the EAP.
- Some of the respondents were supervising more than 20 employees, which might have had an impact on their knowledge in some of the EAP information because they were supervising a lot of employees.

1.13 CONTENTS OF THE RESEARCH REPORT

The research report was divided into the following chapters:

Chapter 1: General introduction and research methodology;

Chapter 2: Literature study on the dynamics of the referral role of supervisors within the EAP;

Chapter 3: Empirical study, analysis and interpretation of data; and

Chapter 4: Conclusions and recommendations.

1.14 SUMMARY

This chapter focused on a general introduction to the research project. A goal and objectives were identified arising from the problem formulated as the low utilisation rate of supervisory referrals which is a risk that supervisors will not utilise the EAP.

In the next chapter the focus will be on the benefits of EAP in the company and the specific role the supervisor has to play in enhancing the credibility of the EAP.

CHAPTER 2

THE ROLE OF SUPERVISORS IN THE EAP

2.1 INTRODUCTION

At any given time, a portion of the employee work force is experiencing personal problems. Troubled workers may suffer anxiety, depression, low self-esteem and preoccupation. Their problems may affect their families, friends, supervisors and work performance, (Maynard, 2003:18).

The EAP is a confidential work-life resource to assist supervisors and employees with personal problems that may affect job performance. The EAP allows the supervisor to stay in the role of the supervisor by focusing on job performance issues. For an EAP to be effective in the workplace, the involvement of supervisors is needed (Scheiner *et al.*, 1990:85). It is therefore important that the EAP should be viewed as an organisational asset which can play an important role in helping those in position of authority to resolve complex work performance problems (Klarreich *et al.*, 1985:116).

EAP professionals, whether working as part of an organisation or as outside consultants, are frequently approached by managers and supervisors requesting assistance in dealing with a problem employee. Typically the manager wants to know what to do with this individual and wants a quick resolution to the problem (Oher,1999:457). Blair (2001:37) also indicates that employers view EAPs as strategic partners in handling human factors in workplace productivity. Since the role of the supervisor is vital in the EAP, the researcher agrees that the EAP should also be dynamic because the world of work is also changing. Making business sense is important.

The focus of this chapter is to theoretically contextualise what has been identified as the role of the supervisor and the value of the EAP to supervisors and management.

Through the discussion of the benefits of the EAP the importance of utilising the programme is highlighted. Discussing the responsibilities of the supervisor will contextualise the expectations, and highlighting types of referral will theoretically explain what is expected. An examination of reluctance to use the EAP by supervisors will identify barriers for supervisors to perform their referral role. Addressing supervisors' referral problems will reveal how referral problems can be addressed.

2.2 THE BENEFITS OF AN EAP

The two key beneficiaries to gain from an EAP in a company are the employer and the employee. Joseph and Injodey (2006:31) indicate that an EAP gives the organisation an option to save a good employee and maintain his productivity.

2.2.1 Support for the employer

Dickman and Emener (1988:102) identify the following benefits of the EAP to management.

✓ Increased Cooperation

Supervisory training to key personnel on intervention techniques, referral procedures, signs to look for in identifying troubled employees, company policies and procedures will all increase cooperation. Mostly managers, labour representatives and supervisors are trained together, which facilitates closer cooperation and increased unity among leaders within the same company.

✓ Enhanced morale

It has been experienced that, with the existence of the EAP programme which is designed to assist troubled employees and their immediate family members,

worker morale tends to increase and be more positive. Sutherland and Cooper (2000:224) agree that the EAP enhances employee morale.

✓ **More troubled employees are helped**

When management and labour representatives work together in an EAP, the likelihood of a higher penetration rate exists and hence there is a greater likelihood of reaching more troubled workers who need help.

✓ **Enhanced Productivity**

Helping workers toward being more fully functioning individuals will have a positive impact on productivity.

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

Supervisors, managers and labour representatives will have options of dealing with problematic employees before they can resort to disciplinary procedures. The programme can be a useful management tool in managing employees.

Klarreich *et al.* (1988:90) take it further and emphasise that the benefit of an EAP to supervisors is an opportunity to consult with EAP when confronted with a troubled employee. The EAP also helps the supervisor to keep professional boundaries intact in the workplace. It is important that supervisors maintain their role of supervising employees because, if they become too involved in personal issues, then they will lose their essential focus of supervising work performance.

Sutherland and Cooper (2000:224) elaborate further that the ultimate benefit of the EAP is to improve job performance and to:

- ✓ improve changes of employee retention, with savings in recruitment, training costs and expertise protection;

- ✓ reduce managerial workload resulting from problem employees shared with EAP;
- ✓ treat disciplinary and dismissal issues more precisely, constructively and humanely; and
- ✓ improve financial control of labour costs.

The researcher believes that investing in employees through the EAP will save a lot of time for the employers because there not only be an easily accessible assistance but employees in turn will see that the organisation values them and thus there will be an increase in retention. It is therefore important that all managers are fully aware of the programme so that it can assist them in directing troubled employees and play a major role as a business partner.

2.2.2 Support for the employee

Joseph and Injodey (2006:31) believe that when stress, distress, substance abuse or depression takes hold, it begins to interfere with an employee's work. Employees want help in recovering quickly from such challenges. Tiner (2006:25) states that with proper treatment arranged through an EAP, many troubled employees can be restored to a satisfactory level of job performance.

As these authors have indicated that a satisfactory level of job performance can be restored through the EAP, the researcher believes that this could even be done by employees themselves if they could be empowered early to know that asking for help is not a weakness.

2.3 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SUPERVISOR

Klarreich *et al.* (1985:100) state that, if an EAP is to flourish and function at an optimum level, it needs the active support of supervisors and managers. These authors also suggest that referring employees for help with problems before job

performance is affected, is the hallmark of nearly every good EAP. If an employee's problems are apparent, supervisors are obliged to inform the employee of the counseling services available through the EAP (Klarreich *et al.*, 1985:102). Bruce (1990:125) contends that early identification is an important function of the EAP and supervisors are the ideal people to play that role and refer to the EAP. Supervisors are responsible for monitoring and directing employee activity, and they are in a unique position to identify those employees whose work may be affected by personal problems, (Klarrecih *et al.*, 1985:102).

In the opinion of Roman and Blum (1988:171) there are three separate core technologies to describe the crucial role of supervisors in the operation of the EAP and these are:

- ✓ use by supervisors of job performance issues as the criteria for identifying troubled employees;
- ✓ provision by EAP specialists of expert consultation to supervisors on how to take appropriate steps in utilising the programme's services; and
- ✓ supervisors' use of constructive confrontation to motivate troubled employees to contact the EAP.

Bruce (1990:117) highlights the responsibilities of the supervisor for the successful operation of the EAP as follows:

- ✓ to know and understand how the EAP works;
- ✓ to play the role of the primary and best source of information about the EAP; and
- ✓ to be comfortable in referring employees to the EAP both voluntary and involuntary.

Management sometimes prefers to regard employee's personal problems as not their business. However this view is unrealistic and shortsighted.

An important part of the management process is ensuring that there is collaboration with employees in order to remove any barriers that exist to impact adversely upon performance and productivity (Sutherland & Cooper, 2000:224).

The researcher believes that there is no doubt that knowledge that a spouse or partner is unhappy may affect one's performance, safety or well-being. Focusing on the bottom line only, is no longer the sole focus for supervisors today. Because of the changing world, there are so many social problems that can not be avoided. Moreover the impact they have on people can also not be avoided.

2.3.1 Identifying a troubled employee

If any employee or family member of that employee is suffering from a serious personal problem, sooner or later it will have an impact on their ability to function at work. Some employees can hide problems for a long time, but those problems will still impact in their behaviour, their attitude and their morale (Emener *et al.*, 2003:57). It is therefore important for supervisors when making a referral to emphasise the seriousness of the problem and the implications thereof, because if the problem is minimised the will to change is also minimal.

Managers and supervisors should be concerned with job performance and specifically with any consistent job performance deterioration. It is important to note that most of the employees exhibit some job performance problems occasionally. It is any pattern of deteriorating job performance over a period of time that should be noted, documented and discussed with the employee (Romano, 1995:90).

Supervisors are the linchpin of the programme and they must be able to identify and observe the signs of a troubled employee. Since the primary responsibility for identifying and referring the troubled employee falls on the supervisor, it is worthwhile to examine areas in which the supervisor should be alert for change of behaviour or appearance of any typical behaviour.

Blair (2001:56) points out that, while self referrals to the EAP are the indicator of its acceptance by the workforce, and thus its success, referrals by managers and supervisors are vital if a sizeable percentage of troubled employees are to receive the help that they need.

According to Romano (1995:92) the signs of deteriorating job performance can be classified as:

- ✓ absenteeism and tardiness;
- ✓ accidents and carelessness;
- ✓ conflicts with co-workers;
- ✓ decline in quality and quantity of work;
- ✓ inability to concentrate, memory problems and confusion;
- ✓ mood swings and unusual behaviour;
- ✓ poor appearance and poor hygiene;
- ✓ unprofessional conduct; and
- ✓ on-job-absenteeism (presenteeism).

When responding to these kinds of work problems, supervisors need to look for behaviour patterns, not single events. Single or isolated incidents may not warrant extreme concern; however it is best to respond to an employee's performance as early as possible (Romano, 1995:93). Emener *et al.* (2003:57) suggest that some employees can hide problems for a long time, therefore, supervisors should be particularly concerned with a pattern of job performance deterioration. Googins and Godfrey (1987:45) are concerned about supervisors who keep quiet about job performance, as this behaviour may allow inappropriate incidents to become habits, and problems left unaddressed are likely to become more serious. The sooner an employee is referred, the sooner the problem will be resolved.

2.3.2 Constructive Confrontation

Barth (2006:30) indicates that, if the EAP wants to enhance performance and help people cope with the ongoing changes and challenges of modern life, supervisors need to have a thorough knowledge of the concept of constructive confrontation. This approach of constructive confrontation is to confront employees with evidence of unsatisfactory job performance and coach them on ways of improving their work, while simultaneously emphasising the consequences of continued poor performance (Cagney, 2006:19).

Constructive confrontation is one technique that enables the supervisor to address performance issues objectively and helps supervisors against being trapped in emotional issues. Constructive confrontation gives the supervisor the opportunity to combine discussions regarding performance problems with a genuine offer of assistance (Workplace Behavioural Health, 2005:18).

One problem with the constructive confrontation strategy is that supervisory referrals are based on declining job performance. Cagney (2006:19) asserts that the problems with detecting and documenting declining and / or unsatisfactory job performance include :

- ✓ a failure to develop adequate standards of performance;
- ✓ an inability to define objective performance criteria easily;
- ✓ a lack of opportunities to observe relevant job behaviours; and
- ✓ unwillingness of supervisors to document job behaviours.

Cagney (2006:19) continues by stating that some supervisors fear confronting employees and see the EAP as a crisis management tool rather than a resource and a performance management tool. Although the constructive confrontation model has been shown to be effective when used properly by supervisors faced with the challenge of managing a troubled employee, only a small minority of supervisors actually look to the EAP as a resource (Cagney, 2006:19).

It seems to the researcher that some supervisors become reluctant to confront employees, but if they are trained well on how to confront constructively, this tool will help them deal with the fear of confronting someone. Constructive confrontation helps the supervisor to deal with performance issues and at the same time be supportive to the troubled employee. Even though Cagney (2006:19) identified problems with this tool the researcher believes that it will encourage organisations to align supervisors' training with performance management. Constructive confrontation can be viewed rather as a supportive tool for supervisors than as a difficult tool to utilise.

2.3.3 Referral

Understanding the EAP referral process becomes part of the supervisor's toolbox for dealing with challenging job performance situations (Beidel & Brennan, 2006:29). Myers (1984:231) mentioned that referral activity determines an EAP's success because, without sufficient referrals, the programme becomes a dormant expense. Blair (2004:35) agrees by saying that, supervisors are essential to the EAP, since they are the first to notice any drop or change in work performance and the early identification of problems is the key to the success of the EAP.

Klarreich *et al.* (1985:225) insist that referral of employees with personal problems to the EAP is the single most important management support item in the clinical realm, and there are three set of circumstances under which a manager would refer an employee. Those appear below.

- ✓ Job performance is in evidence.
- ✓ There is no job performance problem, but the employee shares a personal problem with the supervisor.
- ✓ There is neither a job performance problem nor does the employee share a personal problem, but on the basis of supervisory observation, something seems amiss.

For managers to refer someone successfully to the EAP it is important that the focus remains job performance. It has been observed that managers and supervisors who are sensitive to employees, their needs and their problems would always avoid referring when performance is evidence, compared to a supervisor who consistently takes a hard line approach in dealing with subordinates (Blair 2004:36). The supervisors' role is to assess work performance and take appropriate management action when improvement is required. Supervisors should be sensitive to the possibility that a personal difficulty may be the reason for a deterioration in an employee's performance (Emener *et al.*, 2003:56).

The EAP should not be used as a substitute for appropriate use of discipline. In other words the supervisor must utilise appropriate resources, including the EAP as an integral part of any managerial position. Cohen (1985:250) maintains that it is extremely important to the EAP to have supervisors who have referred employees to the programme, communicate periodically on the employee's progress on the job. When an EAP functions well everyone wins. But no EAP, no matter how well designed, staffed or managed, can function well over an extended period of time without active management support on all levels (Blair, 2004:39).

It is clear to the researcher that supervisors' referral is the core of the EAP programme and it is best that referral be linked only to declining job performance. In addition to job performance it should also be emphasised that supervisors need not only record negative performance, but that positive performance need to be acknowledged as well. If supervisors can refer early that will help save their time with disciplinary enquiries when the problem has become severe and too late to refer to the EAP.

2.4 TYPES OF REFERRALS

According to Emener *et al.* (2003:56) EAP referrals can be classified into self referral, informal supervisor referral and formal supervisor referrals.

2.4.1 Self Referral

Emener *et al.* (2003:56) mention that self referrals occur when an employee voluntarily seeks assistance from the EAP on their own. When employees contact the EAP directly, supervisors are not aware and not involved in the counselling process. Myers (1984:234) describes self referral as when the individual recognises a problem and seeks help in confidence. Self referrals are initiated by employees who are aware of a problem or are experiencing enough discomfort to seek help. They possess some level of insight or at least are motivated to obtain relief. No feedback is given to the employer or supervisor with this type of referral (Management referrals, 2006:20).

2.4.2 Informal Supervisor Referrals

According to Cagney (2006:19) informal referrals often occur in response to pressure from supervisors who are reluctant to take supervisory action. Both employees and supervisor prefer this informal referral, but without an official record of job performance. Tiner (2006:26) states that, in an informal referral, the supervisor may inform the employee of the benefits provided by the EAP. The supervisor can suggest or recommend the EAP to the troubled employee, but with this type of referral the supervisory will not receive any feedback.

On the other hand when, an employee brings a personal problem to the attention of the supervisor, but work performance and attendance is still within acceptable standards, the supervisor can still encourage the employee to use the EAP (Emener *et al.*, 2003:56).

2.4.3 Formal Supervisor Referrals

According to Myers (1984:234) formal referral will take place when an employee will be formally referred to the EAP due to a decline in performance. The supervisor will formally recommend the use of the EAP to remedy job performance concerns. With informed consent by the employee, the supervisor receives reports of the employee's compliance. The supervisor can only make a formal referral to the EAP when an employee's work performance has shown a pattern of decline. Supervisors who have referred formally receive feedback from the EAP (Blum & Roman, 1990:89).

A formal or mandatory referral is considered to be mitigation, since it is an alternative consequence to the loss of employment or serious disciplinary action (Management referrals, 2006:21). When an employee is having a job performance problem that is observed and documented, Tiner (2006:25) indicates that the supervisor is provided with a valuable and practical tool for handling the troubled employee and to helping retain a formerly productive worker.

In a formal referral process, it is according to Sonnestuhl and Trice (1995:89) and Tiner (2006:26) essential that the supervisory use the following components to help the troubled employee:

- ✓ identification of changes in work performance. If the employee's behaviour has negatively affected work performance;
- ✓ documentation of factual objective information concerning job performance. Sonnestuhl and Trice (1995:89) reiterate that behaviour must be documented in detail, including time and place;
- ✓ expectations of work performance that need to improve;
- ✓ timeline for improvement;

- ✓ consequences and action to follow through if job performance does not improve; and
- ✓ the employee has been given the chance to access the EAP voluntarily.

According to Blum and Roman (1995:67), managers have a right to the following information when they have formally referred an employee.

- ✓ whether an employee poses risks in the workplace;
- ✓ whether an employee is not fit for duty; and
- ✓ managers will also be guided on their approach to the employee, especially when dealing with unfamiliar circumstances.

It is also important to highlight that the EAP is a voluntary and confidential programme and, even in the case of a formal referral, the decision to use the EAP is up to the employee.

It is clear to the researcher that in essence these authors share the same thinking regarding the formal referral process; that it should be linked to decline in job performance. It is a useful tool to retain a formerly productive employee. They proceed to highlight the important issues when referring an employee which is the timelines for improving their performance and the consequences linked to the failure to improve performance. The researcher agrees with the opinions of these authors, as it links to constructive confrontation, because the manager is interested in the bottom line. Due to increase in social problems today it is therefore impossible for the supervisor not to support employees. This brings the researcher to a point that in this referral process supervisor must be supportive.

2.5 RESISTANCE TO USE EAP BY SUPERVISORS

A delay in acting by supervisors is one of the biggest problems facing the EAP. It is unfortunate but true that many supervisors will cover up for a problem employee for years, and will take action only when it appears that the problem

employee's performance is going to impact the supervisor's performance (Blair 2004:38).

According to Myers (1984:232) supervisors are frequently ill-trained and poorly prepared to handle the confrontation interview. The result is that they often ignore employee deficiencies until these become so aggravated that severe disciplinary action is needed. Cagney (2006:19) agrees with Myers, and says that most referrals seemed to be reactive referrals based on highly visible triggering events. She continues that a dramatic workplace incident that reflects on the supervisor's or manager's ability is more likely to prompt a referral action.

Most supervisors show little initiative confronting employees because past confrontations have been episodic and unpleasant. The result is that supervisors ignore deficiencies and hope the deficient employee either will resign or ask to be reassigned. Myers (1984:233) continues, saying that supervisors interpret a referral as a judgment that an employee needs help. Other supervisors believe that when there is a team that performs well, confronting a deficient team member will provoke team hostility towards the supervisor. Cagney (2006:19) asserts that some supervisors believe that referring employees to the EAP creates more aggravation than relief.

Many supervisors feel threatened by the EAP, as they feel that referring a troubled employee for help is an admission of failure on their part, and indicate poor supervisory skills. Other supervisors feel responsible for resolving everything that affects the employee since he/she reports to him/her (Klarreich *et al.*, 1985:172). Training for EAP (1989:83) also states that some supervisors resist using the programme as they believe that it will take away their disciplinary power and thus their position of authority. Other supervisors over-identify with the employee and feel that the programme requires them to be harsh and unfeeling.

Klarreich *et al.* (1985:175) state that when a supervisor recommends the EAP without focusing on job performance, employees become much more receptive and the supervisor is perceived in a much more positive light. However there are times when performance has been impaired and, regardless of the initial perception of the supervisor, the supervisor may be the only one in a position to help the employee access the programme.

Often employees confide in supervisors. This can complicate the supervisors' lives by trying to be nice and, thus end up doing counselling which will be dangerous since they are not trained. It must also be noted that most supervisors are from the ranks and, they are friends of employees. Hence, they may overlook behaviour and cover up for employee deficiencies (Klarreich *et al.*, 1985:175).

According to Emener *et al.* (2003:39) supervisors often have concerns about referring an employee to the EAP. Some are often afraid of hurting an employee and others feel that they may be perceived as not doing their job. Myers (1984:78) identified the following reasons that make supervisors avoid referring to the EAP.

- ✓ There is work-related fear, which is when supervisors feels inadequate or unable to control their subordinates. They may want to keep employees' troubles secret from management.
- ✓ Personal fear occurs when the supervisor may be feeling a sense of denial, seeing that their own personal problems are reflected in the worker. Sometimes they may pity or feel sorry for the employee, while some do not believe EAP is a solution.
- ✓ Ego occurs when supervisors believe in their own ability to fix anything, seeing themselves as superior supervisors.
- ✓ They need to be a caretaker. Some supervisors enjoy solving employees problems themselves.

- ✓ They may be overwhelmed; referring is seen as just one more thing to do, meaning they regard themselves as too busy to cooperate and think it is easier to fire the employee.
- ✓ Some supervisors are not informed, or do not believe in the concept of the EAP.

2.6 Addressing Supervisor referral problems

Klarreich *et al.* (1985:180) highlight that too often the importance of initial implementation of the programme has been overlooked. This includes who supports the programme, how many supervisors and managers will benefit from the expertise and assistance of EAP and what contribution the programme will make to the company's goals. The function of the EAP is to assist in the identification of problems that lead to impaired job performance and constructive confrontation of the issue. Once the individual has been referred, the EAP becomes the link between the problem employee and the management structure of the organisation (Sutherland & Cooper, 2000: 223).

The most effective way to gain supervisor support and address the challenges they face when referring to the EAP is through supervisory training programmes presented to create awareness of the EAP; and its principles; to clarify the role of supervisors within the context of the EAP; and to provide adequate procedures for referral (Sutherland & Cooper, 2000:224).

According to EAPA SA (2005:9) the EAP will provide training for supervisors, management and union representatives to equip them in fulfilling their functional roles regarding the EAP in terms of access and utilisation.

Intervening with an employee can be one of the most difficult parts of the supervisor's job. According to Sonnenstuhl and Trice (1995:25) every supervisor has unique qualities, but there are also many common behaviours and beliefs

about supervision. Common beliefs, which may get in the way of dealing with a difficult employee include:

- ✓ thinking that as the supervisor you are interfering;
- ✓ hoping that ignoring will make the problem go away; and
- ✓ thinking that recommending the EAP is insulting another person.

Klarreich *et al.* (1985:182) mention that the EAP should be viewed as an organisational asset which can play an important role in helping those in positions of authority to resolve complex work performance problems. Clark as quoted in *The EAP Management Yearbook* (2001:50), suggests that a means of helping supervisors and senior management is to provide forms to supervisors and senior management on which they can calculate the hire-fire-hire cycle costs, thus seeing the benefit of referring and retaining the employee. These calculations can take into account issues such as hours spent on exit interviews, termination paperwork, placing advertisements, application review, interviewing, retraining and loss of skill. Clark as quoted in *The EAP Management Yearbook* (2001:51) state that education is a crucial part of improving supervisory referrals, it is therefore critical to host as many training sessions, mini seminars and focus groups which will ensure that the EAP is visible to supervisors.

2.6.1 Supervisors' orientation sessions as a means of addressing referral problems

Klarreich *et al.* (1985:180) emphasise that supervisory personnel often require encouragement, guidance, and reinforcement to integrate an ongoing process of performance evaluation into their work routine. They can be preoccupied with the bottom line and lose sight of what is expected of the employee. Supervisory orientation seminars have been identified as a very effective means of enhancing supervisors' understanding and utilisation of the EAP. Klarreich *et al.* (1985:182) identify the following to form part of orientation seminars:

- ✓ common patterns of decline in performance;

- ✓ understand company procedures;
- ✓ discussing work performance problems; and
- ✓ referring employees for professional help.

Tiner (2006:25) refers to those orientation sessions as “brown bag” presentations. Dayoff (1996:29) agrees with this by stating that a highly effective EAP must take time to train and consult the supervisor to develop trust and confidence in the EAP.

The researcher will agree that orientation sessions are not enough, because in some companies supervisory orientation is a once-off. But if these sessions are ongoing then this will help to cover different topics of the referral process and have supervisors share case examples without disclosing employees’ names. This process will also help for supervisors to learn from each other, because there is labour turnover in companies, and supervisors change.

2.6.2 Supervisory Training as a means of addressing referral problems

Romano (1995:50) presented a different view by claiming that supervisory training is essential to maintaining health and vitality of EAP’s. Myers (1984:235) stated that implementing an EAP should begin with a well-planned and executed supervisory training programme. Myers continues, saying supervisors are not going to commit themselves to an EAP, particularly since confrontation is involved, unless they are sensitised to the programme. Schneider *et al.* (1990:42) state that EAP’s have implemented supervisory training programmes in order to enhance supervisory skills in performing their role in the EAP.

Bevington (2006:22) asserts that EAP training to supervisors in work organisations is an important part of the EA programming. According to Beidel and Brennan (2006:29), there is no doubt that training is becoming more valued within work organisations.

The clear value that EAP supervisory training brings to individual managers and the organisation as a whole, goes well beyond an understanding of and a feeling of comfort with, the mechanics of making a supervisory referral to the EAP.

According to Training for EAP(1989:84) one of the essential elements of the EAP is that managers and supervisors are enthusiastic about the programme, and are willing and able to fulfil their role in implementing it. It is therefore important that the manner in which the EAP is introduced to managers and supervisors and the training which they receive, is crucial to the success of the programme.

Myers (1984:235) states the following objectives for training of supervisors:

- ✓ explaining the pervasiveness of treatable problems among the workplace;
- ✓ detailing the problem-work deficiency relationship;
- ✓ describing the costs to the organization attributable to the deficiencies of troubled employees; and
- ✓ explaining how the EAP can help the supervisor do a better job by reducing performance deficiencies for employees.

Roman and Blum (1988:26) and the Training for EAP (1989:84), agree on the following objectives for training of supervisors.

- ✓ The first is to observe their subordinates' behaviour in terms of attendance, punctuality and general productivity.
- ✓ It is important to document all instances of unsatisfactory job performance and or poor work habits. Naturally sound management practice would also include records of the positives, as well as the negatives, to provide a balanced picture of each employee.
- ✓ Inform the employee of his poor record, should the incidents begin to form a generally unsatisfactory pattern through the use of constructive confrontation as a technique to approach troubled

employees. This involves using evidence of job problems communicated by the supervisor to the employee and at the same time introducing the EAP as an option for the employee.

- ✓ Refer the employee to the EAP for diagnosis of the cause of persistent poor job performance and resolution of it.

Roman and Blum (1988:27) further elaborate on their saying that consultation is a process that bears heavily on the EAP's ability to reach workers in greatest need of help. Private consultation between the EAP and supervisor is a crucial mechanism for implementing EAP individual cases. This process involves vital information and support to motivate supervisors to document a job performance problem and confront employees.

Tiner (2006:26) states one of the key principles and components of EAP supervisory training as being :

- ✓ EAP is voluntary and confidential. Employees and family members can use the EAP at their own discretion. No information can be released without signed consent from the EAP client member.

In the opinion of the above-mentioned authors, supervisors training is required when implementing an EAP, and the success of the programme lies in clearly defined objectives that should be outlined for training. The researcher can summarise that training can not be overlooked and it is necessary that time should be set aside for this training. This training must not be rushed. It is imperative that the traditional way of doing role plays can still work. It must also be noted that supervisors' training even though it is for EAP should not be in isolation. It must be inline with the company's policies and procedures.

2.6.3 Consultation as means of addressing referral problems

It is important to note that for supervisors to utilise the programme successfully they have to accept as a management tool, and it is important for the EAP professionals to consult with supervisors. According to The Tug of War...., (2004:87) EA professionals must stay informed on the subject of holistic behavioural risk management. Just as an individual addresses personal behavioural issues, so an EAP can help an organisation address and intervene in areas of human behavioural risk. EA professionals must seek to be invited to the table with management as value adding partners and leaders, rather than as primarily crisis repair personnel.

According to Klarreich *et al.* (1985:250) the EAP provides consultation to supervisors to resolve workgroup problems: Consultation may include:

- ✓ workplace safety concerns;
- ✓ job performance problems;
- ✓ workgroup education; and
- ✓ critical stress debriefing.

Klarreich *et al.* (1985:251) continue by highlighting that an essential pre-requisite to any active support is time. Management must be willing to spend time on the programme in the following:

- ✓ time meeting the EAP staff to familiarise themselves with the operation;
- ✓ time on individual basis with employees when they have problems;
- ✓ time in key employee orientation sessions to learn about the programme;
- ✓ time with employee groups describing the programme and encouraging its use; and
- ✓ time reading regulations and procedures to increase understanding and awareness.

According to The Training for EAP (1989:86) it is vital that follow-up sessions be held with managers and supervisors to discuss the following.

- ✓ Build the relationship between the EAP and supervisors.
- ✓ Reinforce the importance of the programme.
- ✓ Deal with any questions or reservations about the EAP.
- ✓ Work through the barriers in a non-threatening way.
- ✓ Encourage discussions about possible EAP candidates.

Klarreich *et al.* (1985:253) state that policies and procedures of a well thought EAP must be consistent with the policies and procedures of the organisations. Since most companies need a system for assessing an employee's performance and are in need of interventions where performance is less than acceptable, the EAP can utilise this set of procedures to identify and help troubled employees. And for that reason it is important for EAP professionals to be partners in business.

2.6.4 Feedback as means of addressing referral problems

Training for EAP (1989:85) indicates that, once the EAP has become established, feedback should be included on the agenda at management and supervisory meetings regarding the number of employees referred to the programme, and what proportion are now performing satisfactorily. This will act as an incentive to those supervisors who are toying with an idea of referring a subordinate and also as a pat on the back for those managers who have referred employees to the programme.

The discussions at management and supervisory meetings should also include the best EAP success story and the best manager or supervisor of one of those success stories. Emener *et al.* (2003:55) also emphasise that programme evaluation reports should form part of feedback to supervisors, besides reporting on utilisation and satisfaction.

If the EAP is aiming at being recognized as business partners it is important that it add value to the company, by indicating the cost-benefit of the programme.

2.6.5 Integrating EAP into ongoing training to address referral problems

In the opinion of Klarreich *et al.* (1985:256) most managers and supervisors will probably not need to use the EAP immediately. Timely reminders of the programme should be included in normal supervisory and management development programmes. This serves a dual purpose where newly appointed supervisors will receive training, while previously trained ones will be reinforced in the desired behaviour. Training for EAP (1989:85) agrees that intergrating information about, and reference to, the programme in different training modules will help, also in disciplinary and performance appraisal interviews, supervisors' forums and occupational health and safety. Cagney (2006:19) makes the statement that it would be more effective to train supervisors and/or managers to make both reactive and pro-active referrals.

The researcher believes that, for the EAP to maintain the standard of being an organisational partner, it is also vital that the EAP practitioner conducts wellness presentations to supervisors on issues like handling conflict or stress management. This will help position the programme pro-actively, and will be adding value. And it is during these types of presentations that referral issues will emerge and be addressed.

2.7 SUMMARY

From the literature study compiled it is evident that supervisors have a vital role to play within the Employee Assistance Programme. In the comprehensive literature different authors have mentioned why supervisors resist referring, and described the expected roles of the supervisor.

There have been studies conducted on needs assessment and evaluation of the EAP, but no study has been conducted on the perceptions of supervisors on their referral role within the EAP.

With this study the intention is to focus on recording supervisors perceptions especially within the changing world of work. The literature reviewed does highlight different views regarding the benefits of an EAP, types of referrals, responsibilities of the supervisor, constructive confrontation, resistance to using EAP by supervisors and addressing supervisors' referral problems.

This study should help develop insight regarding how supervisors perceive their role, especially in South Africa because EAPs are starting to be well known, and also because of the changes that are constantly happening in the workplace.

In the next chapter the empirical findings relating to the perceptions of supervisors regarding their referral role within the EAP will be discussed, analysed and interpreted.

CHAPTER 3

THE EMPIRICAL FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The researcher did an exploratory in this qualitative applied research, since her intention was to gain understanding of the perceptions of supervisors regarding their referral role within the EAP. It is the aim of the qualitative approach to understand the meaning that individuals attach to their everyday lives.

The population consisted of 30 EAP client companies of The Careways Group in Gauteng. The researcher interviewed 12 respondents from three client companies, who had 20% or fewer supervisory referrals. The 12 respondents were selected as the sample through non-probability sampling, utilising a purposive sampling method. Five of the respondents were working for Nashua Molbile, four were working for Computer Share and three were working for New Vaal.

The empirical data was gathered by means of a semi-structured interview schedule. A tape recorder was used to record the interviews and put data into transcripts. All respondents signed an informed consent form (Appendix D).

The research findings will be discussed in this chapter using themes extracted from the respondents' experiences.

3.2 GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The goal of the study was to explore the perceptions of supervisors regarding their referral role within the Employee Assistance Programme.

The objectives of the study were:

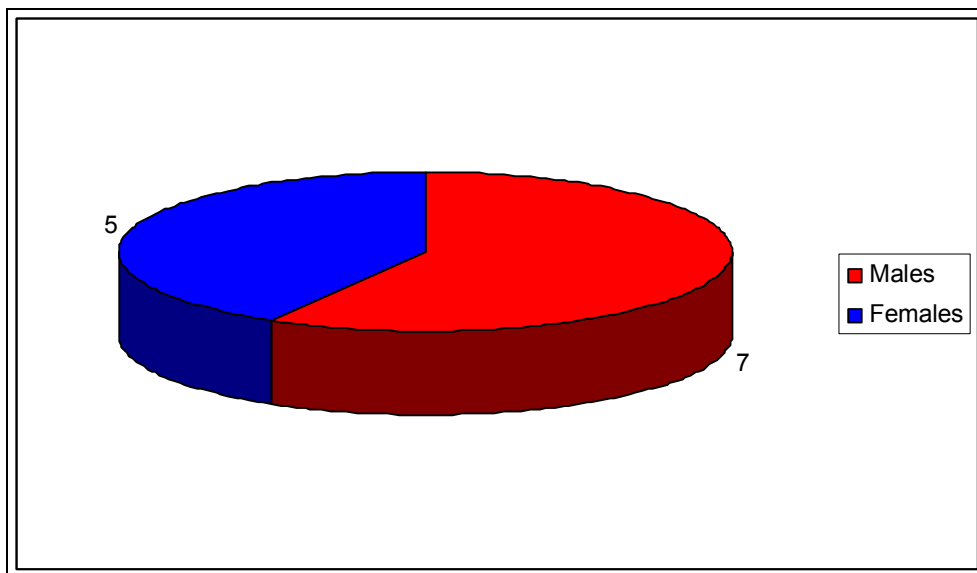
- to conceptualise theoretically the referral role of the supervisor in the EAP;
- to investigate perceptions of supervisors regarding their referral role through an empirical study; and
- to formulate conclusions and recommendations to The Careways Group regarding the referral role of supervisors in the EAP to enhance service delivery.

3.3 PRESENTATION OF DATA

The demographic details of respondents are presented in the form of figures and tables followed by a discussion and analysis of the information presented.

3.3.1 Demographic details

Figure 1: Gender of respondents



Fifty eight percent of the respondents were males and 42% were females.

Table 1: Years of experience as a Supervisor

Years as a supervisor	Frequency
1- 5 years	7
5 – 10 years	1
10 – 15 years	2
15 – 20 years	2

Seven respondents were between 1-5 years in terms of their experience as supervisors. This concerns the researcher because it may indicate that most of the supervisors are new in organisations and still getting used to the culture of the organisation. Further, if most of the supervisors have been in their position for between 1-5 years, it might indicate high turnover among supervisors, thus affecting utilisation of the EAP.

Table 2: Employees under supervision

Employees under supervision	Frequency
6 – 8	3
10 – 14	6
23 – 30	3

According to the table above the majority of the supervisors have between 10-14 employees reporting to them. There is still concern with those who have 23 – 30 employees reporting to them which means a great deal of responsibilities for those supervisors, thus inability to manage effectively. The minimum number of employees that the 12 supervisors are responsible for is 147, which is a larger number of employees especially if these supervisors have to look after the bottom line and at the same time identify those that are troubled.

3.3.2 Central Themes

“Identifying salient themes, recurring ideas or language and patterns of belief that link people and settings together is the most intellectually challenging phase of data analysis” (De Vos, 2005:338). Data obtained from respondents was broken down into themes and sub-themes. This will be discussed according to responses from respondents with the necessary integration of literature as part of the explanation of the empirical study. The table below sets out the different themes and sub-themes identified.

Table 3: Themes and Sub-themes

Themes	Sub-themes
Awareness of the EAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of the role of the EAP • Visibility of the EAP • Understanding supervisor’s role within the EAP
Knowledge of the referral process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying a troubled employee to encourage utilisation of the EAP • Views on referral role within the EAP • Feedback from the EAP • Confidentiality concerns
Benefits of the EAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buy-in from supervisors • Training concerns • Supportive role played by the EAP • Reactive role played by EAP • Organisational interventions

Theme 1: Awareness of the EAP

The first theme identified in the data collected was the respondents' awareness of the EAP. The researcher divided the role of the EAP, the visibility of the EAP and understanding of the supervisor's role within the EAP as sub-themes.

Sub-Theme 1: Understanding of the role of the EAP

The sub-theme role of an EAP was identified when respondents were revealing their understanding of the programme.

The extracts below gave an indication of the responses.

- “The EAP is designed to assist employees when they have personal problems “.
- “The EAP addresses problems that affect work performance”.
- “An EAP is a professional service that managers can refer to so they don't have to deal with employees problems” .
- “The EAP is a programme put in place by the company for employees' who need counselling”.
- “EAP is a support system for the company to deal with employees personal issues”.

The *New Dictionary of Social Work* (1995:20) characterises an EAP as a programme offered to the employees by employers to prevent, relieve or eliminate work-related and social problems with a view to promoting job satisfaction, productivity and general social functioning. The EAPA SA (2005:6) explains that EAP is a work-site based programme designed to assist in the identification and resolution of productivity problems associated with employees burdened by personal concerns including, but not limited to, health, marital, family, alcohol, drug, legal, emotional, stress or other personal concerns which may adversely affect employees' job performance.

Ross and Altmaier (1994:225) expands on this, saying that the EAP is a valuable programme that gives supervisors a mechanism to identify problem employees early. Blair (2001:37) indicates that employers view EAPs as strategic partners in handling human factors in workplace productivity.

The researcher believes that there is generic understanding of the role of the EAP as explained by the respondents. But there also seems to be a view that the EAP is for employees. For the researcher that may reveal a lack of ownership of the programme on the part of the supervisors and this raises concern about the perception of the EAP.

Sub-theme 2: Visibility of the EAP

There seem to be a noticeable trend regarding the visibility of the EAP within client companies. The following are the extracts of the responses.

- “If the programme is more visible and marketed more employees can deal with their issues early”.
- “With continuous marketing the programme can be communicated to supervisors as a management tool”.
- “For me an EAP person should at least come onsite during specific days to consult with employees and managers, and put a face to the EAP.”

Oher (1999:99) believes that the primary goal of an ongoing marketing approach within an EAP is to include a specific orientation for managers that focuses on their specific roles and responsibilities. This is also supported by Klarreich *et al.* (1985:256) who state that most managers and supervisors will probably not need to use the EAP immediately, but timely reminders of the programme should be included in normal supervisory and management development programmes.

Clark as quoted in the EAP Management Yearbook (2001:51) states that education is a crucial part of improving supervisory referrals, it is therefore critical to host as many training sessions, mini seminars, focus groups which will ensure that the EAP is visible to supervisors.

From the responses, the visibility of the programme is a concern and the literature has supported this. The researcher therefore believes that there seem to be a generic trend regarding the approach of continuously marketing the programme.

Sub-theme 3: Understanding Supervisors' role within the EAP

Another trend that the researcher identified is that there seem to be statements that warrant concerns regarding the understanding supervisors displayed regarding their referral role within the EAP. This is illustrated by the following quotes from the responses.

- “As a supervisor I am expected to offer advice and guidance only to employees needing help and avoid being involved”.
- “I believe I should be telling employees about the programme so that they can use it on their own”.
- “My role as a supervisor is to channel troubled employees to Human Resources (HR) to refer them to the EAP”.
- “If supervisors can take ownership of the programme by creating awareness and identifying problems early, there won't be problems with using the programme at disciplinary enquiries when the problem is worse which is what is currently happening”.

Myers (1984), as cited by Oher (1999:145), has stated that supervisors sometimes prefer to regard EAP issues as none of their business, whereas an important part of supervising employees is to ensure that there is cooperation

with employees in order to remove any barriers that may have an effect on performance and productivity.

Training for EAP (1989:83) also states that other supervisors resist using the programme as they believe that it will take away their disciplinary power and thus their position of authority. Other supervisors over-identify with the employee and feel that the programme requires them to be harsh and unfeeling.

The researcher can conclude from the responses above that there are supervisors who are still not clear about their role within the EAP, and see the programme as an employee programme and not as a management tool.

Within the same sub-theme of understanding the supervisors' role within the EAP, there were statements that demonstrated a different view from other respondents and the following are the extracts of the responses.

- “My role as a supervisor is to identify problems linked to job performance, refer formally to the EAP and monitor progress once referral has been done”.
- “I am expected to build relationships with employees reporting to me so that I can identify problems easy and refer to the EAP”.
- “My role is to ensure that employees are aware of the programme so that when referral is required my job is understood”.

Klarreich *et al.* (1985:100) state that, if an EAP is to flourish and function at an optimum level, it needs the active support of supervisors and managers. These authors emphasise that referring employees for help with problems before job performance is affected, is the hallmark of nearly every good EAP.

According to Emener *et al.* (2003:39) supervisors often have concerns about referring an employee to the EAP. Some are often afraid of hurting an employee and others feel that they may be perceived as not doing their job.

These responses indicate that there are different views regarding the role of the supervisors within the EAP. There are others who demonstrated insight of what is expected of them regarding their referral role within the EAP

Theme 2: Knowledge of the referral process

The second theme identified from the data collected was the respondents' knowledge of the referral process within the EAP. Within this theme the following sub-themes were identified: identifying a troubled employee to encourage utilisation of the EAP; supervisors views on their referral role within the EAP; feedback from the EAP; and confidentiality concerns.

Sub-theme 1: Identifying a troubled employee to encourage utilisation of the EAP

Another trend identified was that many respondents seem to believe that they should be able to identify troubled employees and refer them to the EAP, which will in turn encourage utilisation. The extracts below illustrate the responses from the respondents.

- “Supervisors know employees well so they should even be able to identify work related problems”.
- As a supervisor I work closely with my employees daily and can identify problems early and refer”.
- “As a supervisor I work closely with managers and employees and can therefore encourage utilisation of the programme“.

- “As a supervisor management relies on me to share knowledge with employees. Even EAP information should be shared so that employees will understand referral”.

It is any particular pattern of job performance over a period of time that should be noted, documented and discussed with the employee (Romano, 1995:90). Blair (2004:34) states that the supervisor is the key role player because of the daily contact with employees; therefore, supervisors should identify problem employees early. Supervisors have a working relationship with employees and can detect changes in employees and, as performance managers, they can observe deteriorating job performance. Blair (2004:35) continues by saying supervisors are essential to the EAP, since they are the first to notice any drop or change in work performance. The early identification of problems is the key to the success of the EAP.

What seems to be evident in this sub-theme is that respondents were clear that early identification of troubles employees can encourage utilisation of the EAP.

Sub-theme 2: Views on supervisors’ referral role within the EAP

Respondents were asked to explain how they saw their referral role within the EAP. It must be noted that there were different views on how they perceived their referral role. The extracts below present their responses.

- “I know that I am expected to refer employees to the EAP, but I am not sure how and therefore end up asking HR”.
- “The role of a supervisor is to refer employees but that could be made easy through a referral process booklet”.
- “The involvement of the supervisor is very minimal because employees don’t trust their involvement in the referral process”.

- “Supervisors should understand the referral process because with self referrals attendance is poor and thus they have no impact”.

Understanding the EAP referral process becomes part of the supervisor’s toolbox for dealing with challenging job performance situations (Beidel & Brenman, 2006:29). Klarreich *et al.* (1985:116) add that it is important that EAP should be viewed as an organisational asset which can play an important role in helping those in a position of authority to resolve complex work performance problems. Myers (1984:11) is of the opinion that the referral activity determines an EAP success because, without sufficient referrals, the programme becomes a dormant expense.

There seems to be minimal understanding about what the exact role of supervisors is within the EAP. The researcher would therefore conclude that not all supervisors understand their role within the EAP and that raises a concern.

Sub-theme 3: Feedback from the EAP

This sub-theme was identified when respondents were asked to explain what encouraged them to refer to the EAP and feedback from the EAP was identified as a noticeable trend. The following were extracts from the respondents.

- “I have referred employees to the EAP and was encouraged by the positive feedback received from the EAP”.
- “Feedback from the EAP has indicated that as supervisors we don’t have to deal with sensitive issues”.
- “As a supervisor I was encouraged by the feedback from the employees regarding their experience of the programme”.

Cohen, as cited by Klarreich *et al.* (1985:250) maintains that it is extremely important to EAP to ensure that supervisors who have referred employees to the programme communicate periodically on the employee's progress on the job. The discussions at management and supervisory meetings should also include the best EAP success story and the best manager or supervisor of one of those success stories (Emener *et al.*, 2003:55). Training for EAP (1989:85) asserts that, once the EAP has become established, feedback should be included on the agenda at management and supervisory meetings regarding the number of employees referred to the programme, and what proportion are now performing satisfactory.

It is evident that feedback from the EAP plays a vital role in encouraging utilisation. In the opinion of Klarreich *et al.* (1985:250), Emener *et al.* (2003:55) and Training for EAP (1989:85) the researcher has identified that feedback should be shared so that supervisors who are not utilising the programme can be encouraged to do so.

Sub theme 4: Confidentiality concerns

Concern about confidentiality was identified as a sub-theme when respondents were explaining their referral role within the EAP and what encourages them to refer employees to the EAP. The following extracts are the responses.

- “The role of the supervisor is very minimal because employees don't trust the involvement of supervisors”.
- “The main concern when referring employees is confidentiality due to my involvement so I prefer the informal route”.
- “As a supervisor, I think a formal referral is intimidating, since I will be involved, so I prefer an informal referral”.

According to the Myers (1984:234), it is also important to highlight that the EAP is a voluntary and confidential programme and, even in the case of a formal

referral, the decision to use the EAP is up to the employee. Klarreich *et al.* (1985:18) emphasise that the counsellor exchanges no confidential information with any source without the consent of the employee concerned.

According to the researcher there seems to be a concern regarding the involvement of supervisors in the referral process, which may be linked to a lack of awareness about how the programme works.

Theme 3: Benefits of the EAP

The third theme identified from the data collected was the respondents' understanding of the benefits of the EAP. Within this theme the following sub-themes were identified: buy-in from supervisors; training concerns; the supportive role of the EAP; the reactive role played by the EAP and the need for organisational interventions.

Sub-theme 1: Buy-in from Supervisors

When supervisors were asked about the reluctance of supervisors to utilise the EAP, a trend was identified that lack of buy-in towards the programme by supervisors could be the reason for not using the programme. The following are the extracts of their responses.

- “I am not reluctant to use the EAP but the programme was never introduced and therefore I don't understand what is it there for”.
- “For me to support the EAP, it is important that I understand it and it is well introduced to me”.
- “If we are expected to play a key role in the programme, we must receive a thorough introduction to the programme so that we can support the programme”.

- “The programme should receive buy-in from unions and managers and for that to happen, proper implementation is necessary”.

Dickman and Emener (1988:102) argued that, when management and labour representatives work together in an EAP, the likelihood of a higher penetration rate exists and hence the greater likelihood of reaching more troubled workers who need help. Schneider *et al.* (1990:43) agree by saying that training must start with senior personnel to ensure total corporate support. Mostly managers, labour representatives and supervisors are trained together, which facilitates closer cooperation and increased unity among leaders within the same company.

It is the researcher’s opinion the inherent lack of support from senior managers will negatively impact on the support of the programme, and utilisation of the programme will be affected. It is evident that, when introducing the programme, supervisors should be included before the actual training so that they understand the rationale from the beginning. The researcher believes that the fact that training is introduced after implementation and without any needs analysis is the main concern. The initial step of needs analysis when implementing the EAP is very useful from the beginning and at all levels not just to employees. At this stage the programme is enforced and supervisors get to know about it during a training session.

Sub-theme 2: Training concerns

A trend was identified when respondents were asked to share why supervisors are reluctant to use the EAP. The following extracts present their responses.

- “Supervisors are reluctant to use the EAP because they are not well informed about the programme”.
- “I would like to use the programme but I am not sure how the programme works”.

- “I don’t think I am well equipped to deal with troubled employees”.
- “Through training employees will be taught how to refer employees early and not use the programme as a punitive tool”.
- “If I can get information on how to use the EAP effectively, that will help me keep employees happy”.
- “No supervisor would be reluctant to use the programme if they knew how it works”.

According to Myers (1984:232), supervisors are frequently ill-trained and poorly prepared to handle the confrontation interview. The result is that they often ignore employee deficiencies until these become so aggravated that severe disciplinary action is needed.

Training for EAP (1989:84) further illustrates that one of the essential elements of the EAP is that managers and supervisors are enthusiastic about the programme, and are willing and able to fulfill their role in implementing it. Accordingly the manner in which the EAP is introduced to managers and supervisors and the training which they receive, are crucial to the success of the programme. Romano (1995:50) presented another view by claiming that supervisory training is essential to maintaining health and vitality of EAP’s.

There seem to be a generic trend that supervisory training is essential for supervisors to understand how the programme works so that they can be confident to utilise the programme. It is evident from the findings that supervisors know that they can assist in ensuring that the programme is utilised by employees, but there is a need for supervisors to be thoroughly trained.

Sub-theme 3: Supportive role played by the EAP

When respondents were asked about how the EAP benefited them as supervisors, a generic theme was identified that it is a supportive structure for them. The following extracts presents their responses.

- “EAP for me helps by taking away the pressure, knowing that there is someone else who will deal with employees personal issues”.
- “Managing people is stressful therefore having this supportive structure at work helps me”.
- “EAP will help deal with people issues so that productivity will be improved”.
- “It helps me to let professionals handle these issues because I can’t deal with these issues”.

Dickman and Emener (1988:102) state that supervisors, managers and labour representatives will have options of dealing with problematic employees before they can resort to disciplinary procedures. The programme can be a useful management tool in managing employees. Sutherland and Cooper (2000:224) agree that the EAP enhances employee morale. Klarreich *et al.* (1988:90) further says that the EAP also helps the supervisor to keep professional boundaries intact in the workplace. It is important that supervisors maintain their role of supervising employees because, if the supervisors become too involved in personal issues, then they will lose their focus on supervising work performance.

As a trend it became clear for the researcher that supervisors recognise the supportive role of and need for the EAP. The researcher believes that supervisors are acknowledging the role the programme plays.

Sub-theme 4: Reactive role played by the EAP

This sub-theme was identified when respondents were asked to explain their views on whether EAP is a useful management tool. The following extracts reveal their responses.

- “There is a need for more proactive interventions in the programme rather than only a reactive part in the programme”.
- “EAP is playing a minimal role as a management tool if any as it currently plays a reactive role”.
- “Supervisors are not empowered enough to handle soft issues, there is a need for a shift in training and implementing the EAP”.
- “As a supervisor I believe I should also receive other information on soft skills like conflict management”.
- “The EAP should be linked to performance management training so as to empower me in my role”.

In the opinion of Schneider, Colan and Googins (1990:99), without the supervisor, the EAP becomes a counselling programme similar to any community-based programme dealing with emotional, family and substance abuse problems. What differentiates EAP is not only its organisational identity, but also its incorporation of the unique properties of the work environment. Maynard (2003:19) emphasise that the lists of core EA functions that makes sense today may not be applicable or useful in tomorrow’s world; they must evolve over time to respond to changing environments, needs and situations. Schneider *et al.* (1990:102) argue that, within the quickly changing environments of the corporation and the EAP, the role of the supervisor in EAPs has shifted and it continues to shift.

There seems to be a trend regarding a need to change the focus of the EAP from a reactive role to a more proactive role. This could mean that the expectations regarding the role of the programme is changing and continue to change.

Supervisors mentioned the need for proactive interventions. It is therefore important that the EAP play a consultative role and be able to identify issues that supervisors note in their respective departments. In that way the programme will get buy-in and add value to the organisation. Mostly when EAPs are implemented, they are positioned within HR which ends up being a problem because other HR duties involve disciplinary processes. Supervisors should be empowered enough to perform their referral role within the EAP after training has been conducted. HR should only guide supervisors.

Sub-theme 5: Need for organisational interventions

Another sub-theme identified when respondents were asked if the programme is a useful management tool was a need for organisational interventions. The extracts below show the responses:

- “When I referred to the EAP it was clear that an organisational intervention like training managers in soft skills like conflict management was required, as most the problems were between employees and managers”.
- “I was discouraged to refer to the EAP because they could not intervene to organisational issues”.
- “The EAP should be able to implement interventions that will assist managers in addressing the issues they face daily so that it can be a management tool”.

According to Klarreich *et al.* (1985:38) integrating EAP into regular company processes is essential in order to communicate to supervisors that appropriate referral of problem employees to the EAP is a key aspect of their supervisory

duties. Blair (2001:37) also indicates that employers view EAPs as strategic partners in handling human factors in workplace productivity. To ensure that an Employee Assistance Programme functions as an integral part of an organisation, the EAP must assist management in addressing organisational issues which may impact on employee well-being, as well as reporting and commenting on trends identified in service rendering and utilisation (EAPA SA, 2005:20). Stoltz (2003:21) maintains that EAP professionals are trusted change agents and can help convert challenges into opportunities for further organisational development.

There seems to be a need to re-position the programme differently through organisational interventions, changing the type of training received by supervisors. It is evident that EAP can add value to organisations if the EAP could recommend new types of trainings and interventions to empower managers and supervisors in their roles. Therefore, in companies where the programme is implemented it is important that the programme be positioned as effectively as other functions and also be part of other forums within the organisation, so that it can be linked with other functions in the organisation like occupational health and safety and absenteeism management.

3.4 SUMMARY

For the purpose of this study, the researcher focused on the views of supervisors regarding the EAP and their referral role. From the study it is clear that the supervisors understand the concept of the EAP, but they need training to enhance their knowledge of the referral process.

The next chapter will conclude this study and certain recommendations will be made to The Careways Group about how to enhance service delivery.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This study focused on the perceptions of supervisors regarding their referral role within the EAP. Attention was focused on the benefits of an EAP in the company and the important role of a supervisor concerning a troubled employee. Different types of referrals were highlighted and the supervisors' referral problems were addressed.

An empirical study was done during which interviews were used to collect data from supervisors within three client companies of The Careways Group in Gauteng. The theoretical information and the empirical data were intergrated and certain interpretations were made.

This chapter will serve as the final evaluation of the research process and results. In order to enable the researcher to provide an effective research report, certain conclusions and recommendations will be made.

4.2 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.2.1 Conclusions

- ✓ The researcher can conclude that supervisors have only basic information about what the EAP is and, there is not sufficient understanding of the role of the supervisors and the processes of the EAP.
- ✓ There is a general view that the EAP is there to take away the pressure from supervisors so that they do not have to deal with employees.

- ✓ Supervisors have some understanding that the EAP plays a supportive role to deal with the personal issues that they are supposed to deal with.
- ✓ There is some understanding from the supervisors that they are the key figures in implementing the programme because they work closely with employees on a daily basis and can identify troubled employees easy.
- ✓ There is a general view that the programme is reactive, which means it only responds to the troubled employees and operates in isolation and not with other departments within the organisation.
- ✓ There is a risk of creating dependency because there are supervisors who end up referring employees to HR because they are not sure of the referral process of the EAP, which means that HR will play the role of a supervisor by referring the employee.
- ✓ There is a general view that supervisors need thorough training on the EAP referral process so that they can utilise the programme with confidence.
- ✓ Supervisors become reluctant to use the programme because they lack understanding of how the programme works. This means there is little support for the programme.
- ✓ There is a general view that the EAP plays a minimal role as a management tool because there are no organisational interventions that the EAP is currently putting in place.
- ✓ EAP needs to be more visible to supervisors, and consistently be reminded about the EAP services.

4.2.2 Recommendations

- ✓ Supervisors should receive training and refresher courses in-between regarding their understanding of what the EAP is, and the role of the EAP.
- ✓ Supervisors, managers and executives should participate in the needs analysis, which will help create baseline for implementation of the programme.
- ✓ Supervisory training must be linked to all other management training that is happening in the organisation.
- ✓ For the EAP to obtain management support it is very important that it addresses the needs of supervisors in order to demonstrate value and be perceived as a management tool.
- ✓ The needs of the organisations are changing, so the EAP should consider at increasing the focus of the programme to address the needs of the organisations.
- ✓ Positioning of the EAP in organisations should be considered and organizations should consider positioning the programme where there will not be conflict of interests.

4.3 SUMMARY

The aim of exploring supervisors' perceptions regarding their referral role within the EAP has been established. Through the data collected, the researcher was able to determine the different views of supervisors. The following objectives of the study outlined were achieved.

- ✓ The first was to conceptualise theoretically the referral role of the supervisor in the EAP. Through a thorough literature review it emerged that supervisors do have a referral role to play within the EAP.
- ✓ The second objective was to investigate perceptions of supervisors regarding their referral role through an empirical study. It was discovered that supervisors are aware of their referral role within the EAP but they are generally not confident about using the programme because of lack of knowledge, lack of support and they believe the programme should be positioned differently.
- ✓ The final objective was to formulate conclusions and recommendations to The Careways Group regarding the referral role of supervisors in the EAP to enhance service delivery. From the investigation the researcher will be able to recommend the need to implement the programme properly by including a needs analysis at all levels. There is also a need to position the programme proactively by looking at organisational issues that are presented.

It can therefore be concluded that the goals and objectives described in chapter one have been achieved through this investigation.

References

- Babbie, E. 1998. *The practice of social research*. 8th.ed. Belmont: Wadsworth.
- Babbie, E. 2001. *The practice of social research*. 9th.ed. Belmont: Wadsworth.
- Babbie, E. 2004. *The practice of social research*. 10th.ed. Belmont: Wadsworth.
- Babbie, E. & Mouton, J. 2002. *The practice of social research*. Payza: Oxford University Press.
- Barth, J. Needing the “Old Tools”. 2006. *Journal of Employee Assistance*, 36 (94):30.
- Beidel, B.E. & Brennan, K.N. 2006. Supervisory Referrals : Always a best practice. *Journal of Employee Assistance*, 36 (3) : 29.
- Bevington, L.N. 2006. Challenges facing external EAPs. *Journal of Employee Assistance*, 36 (3) : 22.
- Blair, B. 2001. Does your EAP add value to the organisation? *HR Future*, 1(2):36-37.
- Blair, B. 2004. Tug of war for EAP identity. *Journal of EAP*, 34(2):34.
- Bless, C. & Higson-Smith, C. 1995. *Fundamentals of social research methods: An African perspective*. Cape Town: Juta & Co. Ltd.
- Bless, C. & Higson-Smith, C. 2001. *Fundamentals of social research methods: An African perspective*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Blum, T.C. & Roman, P.M.1995. *Cost Effectiveness and Preventative Implications of the EAP*. Department of Health and Human Services. London: Greenwood Publishers.
- Bruce, W.M. 1990. *Problem employee management: Proactive strategies for human resource management*. London: Quorum Books.
- Cagney, T. 2006. The policy-practice gap. *Journal of Employee Assistance*, 36(3):19.
- Cohen, M, 1985. EAP Training to integrate Performance Appraisals, Evaluation Systems and Problem Solving Skills. In Klarreich, S.H.

- Francek, L. & Moore, C.E. *The Human Resources Handbook: Principles and Practice of EAP*. New York: Praeger Publishers.
- Creswell, J.W. 1998. *Qualification inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions*. London: Sage Publications.
 - Dayoff, M. 1996. The seven Practices of Highly Effective EAPs: Advice for Programme and Personal Survival. *EAP Digest*, March/April, (28-29).
 - De Beer, A., Rossouw, D., Moolman, B., Le Roux, E. & Labuschagne, M. 1998. *Supervision in general management*. Cape Town: Juta and Co Ltd.
 - De Vos, A.S. 2002. Qualitative data analysis and interpretation. In De Vos, A.S. (Ed.) Strydom, H., Fouché, C.B & Delpport, C.S.L. *Research at grass roots for the social sciences and human service professions*. 2nded. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
 - De Vos, A.S. 2005. Qualitative data analysis and interpretation. In De Vos, A.S. (Ed.), Strydom, H., Fouché, C.B & Delpport, C.S.L. *Research at grass roots for the social sciences and human service professions*. 3rd ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
 - Dickman, F. & Emener, W.G. 1988. In Dickman, F., Challenger, R. Emener, W & Hutchison, W. *Employee Assistance Programs: Basic Concepts, Attributes and Evaluation*. EAP: USA: Charles C. Thomas Publishers.
 - EAPA SA. 2005. *Standards of Employee Assistance Programmes in South Africa*. South Africa.
 - Emener, W.G., Hutchison, W.S. & Richard, M.A. 2003. *Employee Assistance Programmes*. Springfield: Charles Thomas Publishers.
 - Fouché, C.B. 2005a. Writing the research proposal. In De Vos, A.S. (Ed.), Strydom, H., Fouché, C.B. & Delpport, C.S.L. *Research at grass roots for the social sciences and human service professions*. 3rded. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
 - Fouché, C.B. 2005b. Qualitative research designs. In Fouché, C.B & De Vos, A.S.. Selection of a researchable topic. In De Vos, A.S. (Ed.), Strydom, H., Fouché, C.B & Delpport, C.S.L. *Research at grass roots for the social sciences and human service professions*. 3rded. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

- Fouché, C.B., & De Vos, A.S., 2005b. Problem Formulation. In De Vos, A.S. (Ed.), Strydom, H, Fouché, C.B & Delport, C.S.L. *Research at Grass Roots for the social sciences and human service professions*. 3rded. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Fouché, C.D. & Delport, C.S.L. 2005. Introduction to the research process. In De Vos, A.S. (Ed.), Strydom, H., Fouché, C.B & Delport, C.S.L. *Research at grass roots for the social sciences and human service professions*. 3rded. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Googins, B. & Godfrey, J. 1987. *Occupational Social Workers*. New Jersey. Prentice Hall.
- Greeff, M. 2002. Information collection: Interviewing. In De Vos, A.S. (Ed.), Strydom, H., Fouché, C.B. & Delport, C.S.L. *Research at grass roots for the social sciences and human service professions*. 2nded. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Hepworth, D.H., Rooney, R.H., & Larsen, J.A. 2002. *Direct Social Work Practice: Theory and Skills*. 6th ed. USA: Wodsworth Books Group.
- Jones, W. 2006. *Personal Interview*. Care Centre Manager. The Careways Group. Johannesburg, 14 February.
- Joseph, B. & Injodey, J. 2006. India differing requirements. *Journal of Employee Assistance*, 36 (4):31.
- Klarreich, S.H., Francek, J.L. & Moore, C.E. 1985. *The Human Resources Management Handbook*. New York: Preager Press.
- Kumar, R. 2005. *Research methodology: A step-by-step guide for beginners*. London: Sage Publications.
- Management referrals vs. mandatory referrals: Are they one and the same? 2006. *Journal of Employee Assistance*, 36 (3):20–21.
- Maxwell, J.A. 1998. Designing a qualitative study. In Brickman, L. & Rog, D.J. (Ed.) *Handbook of applied social research methods*. London: Sage Publications.
- Maynard. J. 2003. Understanding the Essence of Employee Assistance. *Journal of Employee Assistance*, 1(1):18.
- McLaughlin, H. 2007. *Understanding social work research*. London: Sage Publications.

- Myers, D.W. 1984. *Establishing and Building Employee Assistance Programs*. London. Quorum Books.
- Neuman, W.L. 1997. *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. 3rd ed. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Neuman, W.L. 2003. *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. 5thed. Boston: Pearson Education, Inc.
- *New Dictionary of Social Work*. 1995. USA. National Association on Social Work Press.
- Oher, J.M. 1999. *The Employee Assistance Handbook*. Toronto: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Roman, D.M & Blum, T.C. 1988. *The Core Technology of EAP*. London. Greenwood Publishers.
- Romano, M.E. 1995. Redefining Supervisory, Shop Steward Training. *EAP Digest*, Jan/Feb, (50):93.
- Ross, R.R. & Altmaier, M.E. 1994. *Intervention in occupational stress: Handbook of counselling for stress at work*. London: Sage Publications.
- Saunders, M., Lewis, P. & Thornhill, A. 2003. *Research methods for business students*. 3rd ed. London: Prentice Hall.
- Schneider, R., Colan, N.B. & Googins, B. 1990. Supervisor training in employee assistance programmes: Current practices and future directions. *Employee Assistance Quarterly*, 6(2):99.
- Schoeman, D. 2005. *Personal Interview*. National EAP Coordinator. South African Police Services. Pretoria, 6 October.
- Sieber, J.E. 1998. Planning ethically responsible research. In Brickman, L. & Rog, D.J. (Ed.) *Handbook of applied social research methods*. London: Sage Publications.
- Sonnenstuhl, W.J. & Trice, H.M. 1995. *Strategies for Employee Assistance Programs : The Crucial Balance*. 2nd ed revised. New York: ILR Press. Cornell University.
- Stoltz. S. 2003. Building Partnerships at the workplace. *Journal of Employee Assistance*, 1(1):21.

- Struwig, F.W. & Stead, G.B.2001. *Planning, designing and reporting research*. Cape Town: Pearson Education.
- Strydom, H. 1998. The pilot study. In De Vos, A.S. *Research at grass roots for the social sciences and human service professions*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Strydom, H. 2002a. The pilot study. In De Vos, A.S. (Ed.), Strydom, H., Fouché, C.D. & Delport, C.S.L. *Research at grass roots for the social sciences and human service professions*. 2nd ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Strydom, H. 2002b. Ethical aspects of research in the social sciences and human professions. In De Vos, A.S. (Ed.), Strydom, H., Fouché, C.D. & Delport, C.S.L. *Research at grass roots for the social sciences and human service professions*. 2nd ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Strydom, H. 2005. Sampling and sampling methods. In De Vos, A.S. (Ed.), Strydom, H., Fouché, C.D. & Delport, C.S.L. *Research at grass roots for the social sciences and human service professions*. 3rd ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Strydom, H. & Venter, L. 2002. Sampling and sampling methods. In De Vos, A.S. (Ed.) Strydom, H., Fouché, C.D. & Delport, C.S.L. *Research at grass roots for the social sciences and human service professions*. 2nd ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Strydom, H. & Delport, C.S.L. 2005. Sampling and pilot study in qualitative research. In De Vos, A.S. (Ed.), Strydom, H., Fouché, C.D. & Delport, C.S.L. *Research at grass roots for the social sciences and human service professions*. 3rd ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Sutherland, V.J. & Cooper, C.L. 2000. *Strategic Management: An organizational Approach*. London: Macmillan Business.
- *The American Dictionary of English Language*, 4th ed. 2000.
[http:// answers.com/topic/perception](http://answers.com/topic/perception)
Accessed: 2006-03-09
- *The EAP as a Management Resource*. 2003
<http://www.bpahealth.com>
Accessed : 2006.08.07
- *The EAP Management Yearbook*. 2nded. 2001. New York American Business Publishing.

- The Tug of War for the EAP Identity. 2004. *Journal of Employee Assistance*, 34 (2):37.
- Tiner, P. 2006. Normalizing supervisory EAP training. *Journal of Employee Assistance*, 36(3):25-26.
- Training for Employee Assistance Programs. 1989. *IPM Journal*, 25 (3):84.
- Trochim, W.M.K. 2001. *The research methods knowledge base*. 2nded. Cornell: Cornell University Press.
- Welman, J.C. & Kruger, S.J. 1999. *Research methodology for the business and administrative science*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Workplace Behavioural Health: *Employee Assistance Practice and Research*. 2005, 38(3):18-20.

APPENDIX A



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Department of Social Work and Criminology
Tel. +27 12 420-2325
Fax. +27 12 420-2093

The CEO
The Careways Group

Dear Sir

**RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT EMPIRICAL
RESEARCH: SMANGELE SIMELANE REGISTRATION NUMBER: 25283813**

Smangele Simelane is a permanent employee of The Careways Group and she is currently completing her Masters Degree in Employee Assistance Programmes (EAP) at the University of Pretoria. As part of the course, she is required to conduct research. The research topic which she has selected is “Perceptions of supervisors with regard to their role as referral agents within the Employee Assistance Programme”.

The study aims to evaluate the perceptions of supervisors with regard to their role as referral agents within the EAP, and to make recommendations for service delivery enhancements. The anonymity of your organisation will be protected. You will also receive feedback regarding the outcome of the research.

It will greatly be appreciated if you could grant Smangele Simelane permission to conduct her research within your client organisations.

Yours sincerely

SN Simelane

THE CAREWAYS GROUP

APPENDIX B



8 March 2006

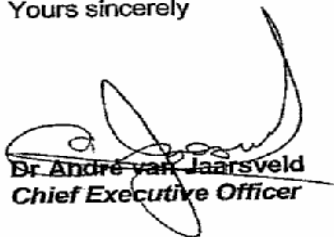
Dr Florinda Taute
Supervisor
University of Pretoria
Department of Social Work and Criminology
Faculty of Humanities

Dear Dr Taute

**Re: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO PERFORM EMPIRICAL RESEARCH:
SMANGELE SIMELANE REGISTRATION NUMBER: 25283813**

I would like to confirm that The Careways Group grant permission to Smangele Simelane to proceed with her research, namely "Perceptions of Supervisors regarding their role in the EAP".

Yours sincerely


Dr. Andre van Jaarsveld
Chief Executive Officer

Dr Florinda Taute
The Supervisor
University of Pretoria
Department of Social Work and Criminology
Faculty of Humanities

**RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT EMPIRICAL
RESEARCH: SMANGELE SIMELANE REGISTRATION NUMBER:
25283813**

I would like to confirm that **Nashua Mobile** grant permission to Smangele Simelane to proceed with her research, namely " Perceptions of Supervisors regarding their referral role in the EAP".

Yours sincerely

BRENDA GRIEBENOW
HUMAN RESOURCES
NASHUA MOBILE
42 James Crescent, Halfway House, Midrand

7 / FEB 2007

P.O. BOX 3843, HALFWAY HOUSE 1685

SIGNATURE _____


7 Feb. 2007

Date

Name : Brenda Griebenow
Title : EWP Co-ordinator for Nashua Mobile

APPENDIX C

Dr Florinda Taute
The Supervisor
University of Pretoria
Department of Social Work and Criminology
Faculty of Humanities

**RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT EMPIRICAL
RESEARCH: SMANGELE SIMELANE REGISTRATION NUMBER:
25283813**

I would like to confirm that **New Vaal** grant permission to Smangele Simelane to proceed with her research, namely "Perceptions of Supervisors regarding their referral role in the EAP".

Yours sincerely



Name : ALAN HART
Title : HR MANAGER

24 | 01 | 07

Date

APPENDIX C

Dr Florinda Taute
The Supervisor
University of Pretoria
Department of Social Work and Criminology
Faculty of Humanities

**RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT EMPIRICAL
RESEARCH: SMANGELE SIMELANE REGISTRATION NUMBER:
25283813**

I would like to confirm that Computershare Ltd. grant permission to Smangele Simelane to proceed with her research, namely "Perceptions of Supervisors regarding their referral role in the EAP".

Yours sincerely



Name : Mbali Magudulela
Title : Executive: HR & Development



Date

APPENDIX D



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Department of Social Work and Criminology
Tel. +27 12 420-2325
Fax. +27 12 420-2093

Researcher: Ms Smangele Simelane
011 847 4038
083 272 2949

INFORMED CONSENT

Title of the Study: *Perceptions of supervisors regarding their referral role within the Employee Assistance Programme*

Purpose of the Study: To explore the perceptions of supervisors regarding their referral role within the EAP.

Procedures: As a respondent I will be required to partake in a 30 minutes interview to express my perceptions on the supervisor's referral role of which the contents will be recorded. The appointment will be arranged at my convenience.

Risks: There are no medical or emotional risks attached to the study. I will be discussing my perceptions and I understand the contents of the interview will be confidential.

Benefits: I understand that there will be no direct benefits to myself for participating in the study but the results will assist in providing recommendations regarding the perceptions on the role of the Supervisor in the EAP.

Participant's rights: I understand that there will be no financial reimbursement for my participation in the study.

Confidentiality: The interviews will be recorded via audiotape to ensure accurate documentation and solely for the purpose of the study. Only the researcher will hear the tape. I understand that the contents will be kept confidential but the results will be published and be made available to The Careways Group and University of Pretoria.

I am aware that if there are any questions or concerns concerning the study I may call Ms Smangele Simelane. I understand my rights as a research subject and I voluntarily consent to participation in this study. I understand what this study is about, how and why it is done. I am fully aware of the fact that all research data will be stored for 15 years. I will receive a copy of this consent form.

Name of the participant : -----

Signature of the respondent

Date

Signature of the researcher

Date

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

PERCEPTIONS OF SUPERVISORS REGARDING THEIR REFERRAL ROLE WITHIN THE EAP

Section A: Background Information

1. How long have you been working for your company?
2. When were you appointed in your supervisor's position?
3. How many employees do you have reporting to you?

Section B: Knowledge of the EAP

1. Explain your understanding of the EAP?
2. What is expected of you as the supervisor within the EAP?

Section C: Referral

1. Supervisors are considered the key figures in implementing and utilizing EAP. What is your view on this?
2. How do you see your referral role in the EAP?
3. Have you referred employees to the EAP?
4. What encourages you to refer to the EAP?
5. Why are supervisors reluctant to use the EAP?
6. Do you think EAP benefit you as a supervisor - Why do you say that?
7. Do you think EAP is a useful management tool? Explain your answer.
8. Do you have reservations about referring employees to the EAP? Explain.

APPENDIX F

BERNICE BRADE EDITING

FREELANCE WRITER, PROOF READER AND EDITOR
WEB RESEARCHER AND RESEARCH STRATEGIST
ENGLISH SPECIALIST

Tel. and Fax +27 11 465 4038
Cell 072 287 9859
Email edit@iafrica.com
Date: 10th September 2007

P O Box 940
LONEHILL 2062
South Africa

To whom it may concern

This letter serves to confirm that in September 2007
I proofread and did the language editing for the Research Report
of

SMANGELE NOMKHOSI SIMELANE

This document is being submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

MASTER IN EAP

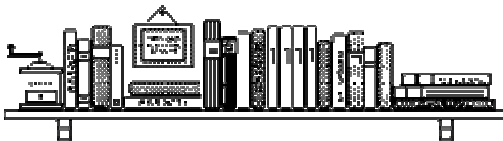
**in the Faculty of Humanities
Department of Social Work and Criminology**

at the University of Pretoria.

I have proofread and edited the whole work, including the references. This editing principally involves proofreading, language, style and grammar editing; and also checking the text for clarity of meaning, sequence of thought and expression and tenses. I have also noted any inconsistencies in thought, style or logic, and any ambiguities or repetitions of words and phrases, and have corrected those errors which creep into all writing, no matter how careful we are.

Bernice McNeil

Bernice McNeil



Proprietor: Bernice McNeil BA Hons,NSTD <http://www.angelfire.com/journal/edit/aboutbba.html>