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PUTTING THE 5 PRINCIPLES INTO PRACTICE

1. EARLY IDENTIFICATION

Putting it into practice

- Some industries require drug screening. A partial list includes: Transportation, construction, manufacturing, defense, law enforcement, and others related to public safety. If these measures are already company policy, they can be used for SUD identification.
- In workplaces where drug screening and testing are not in place, managers often need to rely on what they see. If there's visual evidence of what may be SUD-related behavior, the event should be documented. Before addressing the issue with the employee, see Section 2.0/How to talk to an employee about SUD.

2. INSTANT SUPPORT

Putting it into practice

- **Training supervisors and managers to spot the first signs of drug misuse** and scheduling routine check-ins with employees will help enhance rapport and staff engagement.
- **Enacting strong company drug policies** through an RFW initiative may also help increase the likelihood that employees will feel supported and that they will not be discriminated against for their problem.

- **Managers, supervisors, and human resources personnel** can be responsive and helpful by consistently putting information from this toolkit front and center before their employees.
- **Encouraging employees with SUD to engage other resources** sends the message that support is available. Community hotlines, Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, Al-Anon, community mental health centers, private therapists or counselors, and treatment centers can be helpful.
- **Specifically, Peer Recovery Support programs have experienced significant success** in helping people with SUD. Peer Recovery Support providers offer valuable guidance by sharing their own experiences recovering from SUD, helping to build skills, and assisting with specific needs that someone with SUD is facing.

3. EMPLOYER FLEXIBILITY

Putting it into practice

- **There may be a temporary need to move an employee to light duty, non-hazardous work, or another job modification** while he or she engages in a recovery program.
- **Many employers cannot allow an employee to take paid or unpaid time off from work**, but it's important to



remember that terminating an employee with SUD is a permanent loss, while allowing modified duty is a temporary measure that can serve the interests of both employer and employee.

- **You can address employee needs related to SUD** just as you would with employees who have other health-related conditions. This also means working in accordance with personnel policies and collective bargaining agreements, if applicable.
- **The Job Accommodation Network (JAN)** is a service provided by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy. It provides free, expert, confidential guidance to employers regarding workplace accommodations and disability employment issues, including SUD.
- **Depending on the employee's needs and the employer's policies,** possible solutions may include the use of paid or unpaid leave, counseling and attendance at support meetings, a modified daily schedule, temporary reassignment to a less stressful job, flexible use of leave time, or the ability to work from home.

4. REGULAR REVIEW

Putting it into practice

- **Create a Recovery Accommodation Plan (RAP).** This is initiated when an employee enters treatment or shows an interest in recovery support services. RAPs generally include these steps:
 - Education of those involved with information regarding substance misuse and the recovery process. This includes management and co-workers.
 - Establishing the plan. This involves meeting with the employee to agree upon what's involved – before the employee returns to work. This meeting takes into consideration clinical recommendations for recovery. The RAP should then be documented.
 - The employee reviews and signs the RAP agreement, making it clear that the employee is expected to follow what has been agreed upon.
 - The RAP team meets at regular intervals, which at first are daily, then weekly, and eventually monthly. The plan can be reviewed and adjusted as necessary.
 - Adherence to the RAP protocol will enable all involved parties to measure the effectiveness of the plan.
- **Drug screening can be a deterrent to relapse.** An option is to include screening upon request as a provision of the RAP.
- **As part of the RAP process,** remember to provide the employee with a list of peer and community supports and encourage him or her to participate in related support groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), Narcotics Anonymous



(NA), and similar resources.

- **As the timeframe for the RAP reaches its end point**, consider allowing the employee time for an extension. Also for consideration: Encourage or require that your employee continue with a peer-based support plan alongside or after the RAP.

5. ENLISTING SUCCESS

Putting it into practice

- **Consider partnering with organizations that are affiliated with yours:** suppliers/vendors, contractors, clients, and other organizations in the same business sector should be aware of your initiative and why it constitutes good business practice.
- **Working through your Chamber of Commerce** is a good place to start.

Explore partnerships with other companies to share best practices related to facing SUD in the workplace.

- **Some organizations commit to creating a resource center for SUD.** The CT International Union of Operating Engineers (IOUE) Local 478 created a Members Assistance Program (MAP), which has become an innovative tool in facing the opioid crisis.

