



# **The Drug-Free Workplace Program: Lose the Drugs, Keep the People**

Leader's Guide and Quiz

## **THE DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE PROGRAM: *"Lose the Drugs & Keep the People"***

This easy-to-use Leader's Guide is provided to assist in conducting a successful presentation. Featured are:

**INTRODUCTION:** A brief description of the program and the subject that it addresses.

**PROGRAM OUTLINE:** Summarizes the program content. If the program outline is discussed before the video is presented, the entire program will be more meaningful and successful.

**PREPARING FOR AND CONDUCTING THE PRESENTATION:** These sections will help you set up the training environment, help you relate the program to site-specific incidents, and provide program objectives for focusing your presentation.

**REVIEW QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:** Questions may be copied and given to participants to document how well they understood the information that was presented. Answers to the review questions are provided separately.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Substance abuse affects approximately 10 percent of the adult population, the majority of which are employed and performing various types of jobs in workplaces throughout North America. Unfortunately, these substance abusers tend to have a negative impact on practically every aspect of their employer's organization. Productivity, quality, safety and morale are just a few critical areas negatively impacted when workers abuse drugs and alcohol. This program discusses the multitude of dangers associated with drug and alcohol abuse and the actions viewers should take if they suspect someone, including themselves, has a substance abuse problem.

Topics include the Drug-Free Workplace Policy, adverse effects of substance abuse, substance use vs. abuse, addiction, signs and symptoms of abuse, enabling the abuser, an appropriate response to suspected abuse and seeking assistance voluntarily.

### **PROGRAM OUTLINE**

#### **BACKGROUND**

- Substance abuse, including the use of illegal drugs, overusing alcohol or the misuse of prescription drugs affects approximately 10 percent of the adult population. In North America, that comes to almost 40 million people, the majority of which are employed and performing various types of jobs in workplaces throughout North America.
- Unfortunately, these substance abusers tend to have a negative impact on practically every aspect of their employer's organization. Productivity, quality, safety and morale are just a few critical areas negatively impacted when workers abuse drugs and alcohol.
- To prevent these detrimental effects, our organization has developed and implemented a Drug-Free Workplace Policy which includes training to educate employees about the dangers of alcohol and drug abuse as well as how to seek assistance if they suspect that they or a co-worker has a substance abuse problem.

#### **THE DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE POLICY**

- There are two major objectives of the Drug-Free Workplace Policy—first, to send a clear message that the use of alcohol and drugs in the workplace is prohibited, and second—to encourage employees with substance abuse problems to seek help voluntarily so they can successfully return to work. In other words, we want to “lose the drugs and keep the people.”
- Other important aims of the Drug-Free Workplace Policy include protecting the safety and health of all employees, customers and the general public; safeguarding company property and assets from theft or damage; and, maintaining the quality of our products and services and the company's integrity and reputation.

#### **ADVERSE EFFECTS OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

- People who abuse alcohol or drugs tend to neglect basic health needs, such as nutrition and sleep. Substance abuse also depresses the immune system, leading to more frequent illnesses, increased incidents of tardiness and absenteeism as well as the higher use of health benefits.

- In addition, substance abusers may be mentally and physically impaired while on the job, leading to a wide variety of negative outcomes.
- When a worker has a substance abuse problem, the quality of work being performed begins to decline.
- When a worker has a substance abuse problem, productivity suffers because the worker is unable to perform work at the same pace as before.
- When a worker has a substance abuse problem, he or she may have trouble concentrating on the task at hand.
- When a worker has a substance abuse problem, they may have a distorted perception of their capabilities and make poor decisions related to their safety and the safety of those around them.
- When a worker has a substance abuse problem, they often also have financial difficulties which may lead them to engage in theft or other types of illegal activities while at work.
- When a worker has a substance abuse problem, they often develop strained relationships with their co-workers, leading to an overall decline in morale and job satisfaction for all involved.

### **NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

- The longer a substance abuse problem is left unresolved, the negative consequences spread farther and deeper into the organization, creating the impression that the company condones the behavior or just doesn't care.
- This spread of negativity can quickly lead to a downward spiral in the overall commitment to safety, quality and productivity.
- Preventing these negative consequences of substance abuse is the overarching purpose of our organization's Drug-Free Workplace Policy.

### **SUBSTANCE USE VS. ABUSE**

- Practically everyone has taken a medication prescribed by a doctor or consumed alcohol with a meal or in a social setting.
- In addition, many people live in a jurisdiction that has legalized the use of marijuana; either for medicinal purposes or for limited recreational use.
- Because of this wide-spread cultural familiarity with prescription drugs, alcohol and marijuana, it is often unclear where normal use ends and abuse or addiction begins.
- Having a social drink with friends, legally ingesting a small amount of marijuana or taking medications prescribed by a physician for a specific ailment or illness are examples of adults using drugs or alcohol in a legal, responsible manner.
- When this type of drug or alcohol use is infrequent and doesn't become problematic for the user or to the people around them, it is generally acceptable and is considered "normal use"; however, for some people, normal use can turn into abuse when the frequency of use and the amount being consumed begin to increase more and more.
- Using alcohol or drugs to help cope with pain, pressure or stress is a warning sign that a person's use may be becoming abuse.
- Another warning sign of substance abuse is when the alcohol or drug use begins to have a negative impact on a person's personal or work life as well as negatively impacting those around him or her.
- Anytime a person purposefully uses a substance to alter their mood or state of mind in a manner that is illegal or harmful to themselves or others, their use has crossed over into the realm of substance abuse.

### **ADDICTION**

- It's important to understand that substance abuse is not the same thing as addiction. Many people occasionally use or even abuse alcohol or drugs without becoming addicted.

- Unfortunately, for approximately one in 10 people, substance abuse will lead to an addiction and it is not possible to determine who will or who won't become addicted.
- Addiction is the overwhelming compulsion to use or abuse alcohol and drugs despite the adverse consequences.
- Addiction is characterized by repeatedly failing to control or moderate the use of drugs or alcohol; developing an increased tolerance to the substance so that more is required to achieve the desired effect or to even feel normal again; and, an increased disruption in the personal, family and work life of the addict.
- Once a person's abuse of drugs and alcohol has progressed into addiction, it must be professionally treated and managed as a chronic, primary illness.
- Alcohol or drug addiction can lead to disease and even death in some cases.

## **SIGNS, SYMPTOMS & INDICATORS OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

- Because of the negative impact substance abuse has in the workplace, it is important to be able to recognize the various signs, symptoms and other indicators of substance abuse so appropriate action may be taken.

### ***Physical Signs***

- Some of these signs and symptoms include the odor of alcohol on the person's body or breath, slurred speech, unsteady standing or walking, inability or difficulty completing routine tasks, unable to focus or concentrate, disorientation or confusion and erratic or unusual behavior.

### ***Denial***

- Another common trait of many substance abusers is how they react when confronted about their possible drug or alcohol problem. One common reaction is denial.
- Denial is a powerful defense mechanism triggered by the need of a substance abuser to avoid the reality of their drug or alcohol problem.
- A person in denial typically insists that they are in full control of their substance use and that their drinking or drug use has no effect on their work or family responsibilities.
- In fact, a person in denial often blames others for any problems that arise and accuses those trying to help as being out to get them or falsely accusing them for personal gain.

### ***Other Indicators***

- Another common reaction of a substance abuser who is confronted by a friend or co-worker is to make up various excuses in an effort to deflect attention from his or her problem and also offering frequent apologies or pledges to change their behavior.
- Finally, a drug abuser or addict will often attempt to solicit sympathy to their situation by sharing heartbreaking stories about their personal lives or their loved ones.

## **ENABLING SUBSTANCE ABUSERS**

- Whether by design or not, it is these types of pleas that all too often lead a friend, family member or co-worker to become an enabler.
- When it comes to substance abuse, an enabler is someone who helps another person continue self-destructive behavior by providing excuses or by actively removing the negative consequences to the abuser or addict of his or her behavior.
- Here are some of the ways friends, family members and co-workers enable people with abuse problems:
  - Covering up for the abuser by making excuses, providing alibis or even performing an impaired co-worker's job tasks rather than allow the abuser to suffer the negative consequences of their behavior;
  - Rationalizing a user's continued substance abuse by developing reasons, and sharing them, as to why the person's behavior is acceptable or understandable;
  - Ignoring or minimizing an abuser's unsafe actions or behavior. This is extremely dangerous because ignoring unsafe acts like drinking and driving or operating equipment while impaired places many others at risk.

—Finally, placing the addicted person’s needs before your own. This commonly occurs with close family members and loved ones and includes constant financial support, continuing help with daily life tasks or even failing to press charges in an abuse situation. This type of enabler sacrifices their own quality of life in a misguided effort to protect the addict.

- Don’t fall into the trap of becoming an enabler and don’t just ignore the problem. Ignoring or enabling allows the destructive behavior to continue and escalate.
- Failing to act when you suspect a co-worker or loved one is abusing drugs or alcohol jeopardizes the health and safety of the individual, his or her co-workers and the general public.

### **APPROPRIATE RESPONSE TO SUSPECTED ABUSE**

- When you suspect a co-worker is abusing drugs and alcohol, you can consult your organization’s Drug-Free Workplace Program or its Employee Assistance Program or “EAP” program to determine how to properly report the situation.
- In most cases, there will be a specific person in your organization to whom you can report the situation confidentially and who will take the necessary action to evaluate the situation and take the appropriate measures to protect the health and safety of all involved, including the person in question. This may include enrollment in appropriate counseling or addiction programs designed to help the abuser to recover and return to work.
- If the person in question is a friend or loved one and you decide to approach the person yourself, there are a few key elements that should be included in the conversation.
- First, show your concern for the person. Tell them that you have noticed changes in behavior and that you are troubled by their actions and the negative consequences they could cause.
- Describe specific behaviors you have observed and recall the days or times that you noticed them.
- When having this conversation, avoid using general phrases such as “you always” or “remember when.” You need to be specific.
- Explain that you feel their behavior is connected to suspected substance abuse and isn’t part of his or her normal conduct.
- Urge the person to get help by encouraging him or her to go to counseling, consult his or her family physician or seek assistance through the company’s employee assistance program or EAP.

### **SEEKING ASSISTANCE VOLUNTARILY**

- One of the important goals of the Drug-Free Work Place Program is to encourage workers to seek assistance on their own through the Employee Assistance Program. Accessing the EAP program can be completely confidential and can be done by calling the EAP number, which is usually found in an employee handbook or as part of the organization’s healthcare coverage information.
- If your company doesn’t have these types of programs, seek out a trusted supervisor or the human resources department for guidance.
- It is much better to seek assistance voluntarily than waiting for the situation to escalate to the point where absenteeism, poor job performance or a work place incident forces your employer to take action.
- It takes a lot of courage to seek help for an alcohol or drug problem, but like other diseases, addiction can be managed successfully through proper treatment and a strong commitment to personal recovery and healing.

### **SUMMARY**

- In this program, we have discussed our organization’s Drug-Free Workplace Program and explained that its primary goals are to send a clear message that the use of alcohol and drugs in the workplace is prohibited and to encourage workers with substance abuse problems to seek help voluntarily.
- To educate workers to the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse, we have shown examples of, and explained how, substance abuse negatively affects the workplace in general as well as the health and safety of the substance abuser, co-workers and the general public.

- To assist workers in evaluating the difference between “normal use” and “abuse,” we have pointed out the warning signs that indicate the onset of substance abuse. We also defined addiction and explained the common characteristics that would identify an addict.
- In this program, we have stressed the negative consequences substance abuse has in our workplace and have pointed out the specific signs and symptoms that indicate a co-worker may be abusing drugs or alcohol.
- Finally, and perhaps most importantly, we have discussed the actions you can take should you suspect that a co-worker, or yourself, has a substance abuse problem.
- Remember, reporting the situation right away, or seeking assistance voluntarily, is not only critical to protect the health and safety of the individual and the workplace, but also provides the substance abuser with the most promising path towards a successful treatment program and a return to work. That is how our Drug-Free Workplace Program helps to provide a safe and healthy workplace for everyone.

### **PREPARE FOR THE SAFETY MEETING**

Review each section of this Leader's Guide as well as the program. Here are a few suggestions for using the program:

Make everyone aware of the importance the company places on health and safety and how each person must be an active member of the safety team.

Introduce the program. Play it without interruption. Review the program content by presenting the information in the program outline.

Copy the review questions included in this Leader's Guide and ask each participant to complete them.

Make an attendance record and have each participant sign the form. Maintain the attendance record and each participant's test paper as written documentation of the training performed.

Here are some suggestions for preparing your video equipment and the room or area you use:

Check the room or area for quietness, adequate ventilation and temperature, lighting and unobstructed access.

Check the seating arrangement and the audiovisual equipment to ensure that all participants will be able to see and hear the program.

### **CONDUCTING THE PRESENTATION**

Begin the meeting by welcoming the participants. Introduce yourself and give each person the opportunity to become acquainted if there are new people joining the training session.

Explain that the primary purpose of the program is to discuss the multitude of dangers associated with drug and alcohol abuse and the actions viewers should take if they suspect someone, including themselves, has a substance abuse problem. Introduce the program. Play it without interruption. Review the program content by presenting the information in the program outline.

Lead discussions about your organization's specific policies and procedures for reporting suspected abuse and the options available for employees if they feel if they have a substance abuse problem of their own.

After watching the program, viewers should be able to explain the following:

- What the adverse effects of substance abuse are;
- What the differences in substance use, abuse and addiction are;
- Which signs and symptoms can indicate someone potentially has an abuse problem;
- Why enabling a suspected abusive behavior is so dangerous;
- How to respond to suspected abuse appropriately;
- How and why to seek assistance voluntarily if you suspect you have an abuse problem of your own.

***ANSWERS TO THE REVIEW QUESTIONS***

1. c
2. d
3. b
4. a
5. a
7. c
7. a
8. b
9. a
10. b

## THE DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE PROGRAM:

### *"Lose the Drugs & Keep the People"*

#### REVIEW QUIZ

*The following questions are provided to determine how well you understand the information presented in this program.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

1. Substance abuse affects approximately \_\_\_\_\_ of the adult population.
  - a. 1 percent
  - b. 5 percent
  - c. 10 percent
2. Which of the following is an objective of the Drug-Free Workplace Policy?
  - a. To protect the safety and health of employees and customers
  - b. To safeguard company assets from theft or damage
  - c. To maintain the quality of products and services
  - d. All of the above
3. When a worker has a substance abuse problem, it has little or no effect on the quality of work being performed.
  - a. True
  - b. False
4. Preventing the negative consequences of substance abuse is the overarching purpose of our organization's Drug-Free Workplace Policy.
  - a. True
  - b. False
5. Using alcohol or drugs to help cope with pain, pressure or stress is a warning sign that a person's use may be becoming abuse.
  - a. True
  - b. False
6. Which of the following is *NOT* a way people enable others with substance abuse problems?
  - a. Covering up for the abuser by making excuses
  - b. Ignoring an abuser's unsafe actions or behavior
  - c. Insisting that the abuser get help
  - d. Placing the addicted person's needs before their own
7. Failing to act when you suspect a co-worker or loved one is abusing drugs or alcohol jeopardizes the health and safety of the individual, his or her co-workers and the general public.
  - a. True
  - b. False
8. When someone feels the urge to abuse alcohol or drugs to alter their mood, it means he or she has become addicted.
  - a. True
  - b. False
9. It is much better to seek substance abuse assistance voluntarily than waiting for the situation to escalate to the point where absenteeism, poor job performance or a work place incident forces your employer to take action.
  - a. True
  - b. False
10. Unlike other diseases, addiction is a permanent disorder that cannot be managed successfully through proper treatment and a strong commitment to personal recovery and healing.
  - a. True
  - b. False