

Substance abuse in the workplace



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“ At-risk, though circumscribed, segments of the U. S. workforce were identified with prevalence rates up to 55. 8% for any use of illicit drugs and up to 28. 0% for illicit drug use in the workplace” (Frone, 2006, p. 856).

Substance abuse affects many in the workplace, and the individual’s drug or alcohol mistreatment has a harmful impact in various division of the workplace. Workers who dependent on drugs or alcohol can demonstrate low enthusiasm and be deficient in awareness of detail. When several staff engages in drug abuse, the complete work team can endure the effects.

Along with the numerous harmful consequences of drug abuse in the workforce is the considerable financial lost that drug use incurs on employers. Drug abuse in the workforce elevates the danger of injuries and risk. A drug-free place of work policy presents vast importance to the work group, and helps maintain various core company goals. This paper will highlight the prevalence of illicit and prescription drug users in the United States workforce, the effects of drug abuse in the workplace, and the key characteristics and benefits associated with a drug-free workplace.

Prevalence of Illicit and Prescription Drug Users “ According to statistics from the 2009 National Survey on Drug Use and Health more than 66 percent of current illicit drug users were employed either full-time or part-time, as were 74 percent of adult binge drinkers and persons reporting heavy alcohol use” (Levinthal, 2012). Illegal drugs are not the only type of substance abuse, the misuse of prescription drugs are on the rise and also contribute to work place accidents and lost productivity (“ Prescription Drugs in the Workplace”, 2010).

There have been instances where employees have taken responsibilities, either by working harder, re-do workers job or cover up their illicit drug habits. This kind of behavior will affect lower production and turnover rates. Also their careless work causes employment liabilities. " Substance abuse affect the workplace in many ways, there is estimated 7% of employee's are injured in the workplace each year" (Prescription Drugs in the Workplace", 2010).

This type of incident can be costly to the company. It is important for management to acknowledge the signs of drug abuse and educate employees to prevent injury and death in the workplace. The Affects of Drug Abuse in the Workplace Drug abuse has very serious effects on people in the workplace. The use of drugs and alcohol has about an 80% increase of absenteeism, decreased productivity, morale and more work-related accidents. (The Effects of Substance Abuse on Job Retention, 1999 - 2013).

According to " The Effects of Substance Abuse on Job Retention" (1999 - 2013), " Increased absences may be the result of time needed to recover from the effects of the substance, forgetfulness or poor judgment. " When the need for the substance increases, the employee will gradually become tardier this will lead to more absentees. The decrease in work productivity usually happens when the employee feels drained and irritable from the effects of the drugs or alcohol. Most people also have problems and arguments with other co-workers which will halt production from both parties due to the complications.

As the effects of the drugs or alcohol take place, the users decision making process and judgment becomes impaired and accidents are bound to happen. While a person is on drugs or alcohol there are approximately 85% more accidents that happen in a workplace (The Effects of Substance Abuse on Job Retention, 1999 - 2013). The morale of a workplace depends on many different ingredients. One of these ingredients is how well the employees work together and get along. If one of the employees is on drugs or alcohol, the whole entire crew suffers the effects that come with the abuse of the drugs or alcohol.

This brings down the morale of the employees because most of the time the user is in a depressed, upset state of mind and bring the other employees down with them. People that are using drugs or alcohol are more likely to steal from a company than someone who is not on drugs or alcohol. This is because the ability to make good decisions is impaired by the effects of the drugs or alcohol has on the brain. When employees have downtime at work there is more likely a chance that an employee will use that time to abuse drugs or alcohol where they will not get caught.

Users will usually try to hide that they are using or drinking at work because it is proper grounds to be fired and or arrested. When a person is using drugs or alcohol at work it not only affects them and the people around them but also affects the way they work. For instance, when an employee is doing a turnover of a shift to another employee who is coming on to the shift, if one of the employees is on drugs or alcohol the turnover will most likely not be done correctly and will have errors which will affect the workplace and inventory if applicable.

The use and abuse of drugs and alcohol have many effects in and around the workplace and will always have consequences and repercussions. Conclusion “ Illicit drug use in the workplace involved an estimated 3. 1% of employed adult’s 3. 9 million workers” (Frone, 2006, p. 856). Drug abuse may produce poor communication, elevated amounts of stress and increasing anger between work groups whose occupation load can multiply because of the drug abusers poor production.

Financial burdens related with absenteeism and poor production in addition to higher worker’s compensation costs, higher rates for disability insurance and employee stealing. Drug abusers furthermore switch occupations frequently and the price of replacing staff contributes to the financial cost. Committing to the establishment and safeguarding of a drug-free workforce signifies that the company is dedicated to the wellbeing and interests for the staff, the security and service of the consumers, and the effectiveness and success of the company’s dream.