



Five ways to sell EAP to the bean counters

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It's not uncommon for HR to be seen as paper pushers at best, and a cost to the company at worst. So when it comes to initiatives such as Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) how can you convince the higher ups that it's a good thing for the company?

1. **Everyone else is doing it**

We're not saying you should follow all the latest trends – if all the other companies are jumping off a bridge there's no need to follow. However, with the workforce aging and the skills gap increasing, it's important to use all the tools available to attract the top workers. If your competition is offering better benefits, they might be attracting better candidates, too.

2. **Employees say it works**

Ceridian surveyed its end users – employees who accessed its EAP services – and asked what they thought. The numbers are telling:

- 73% reported a reduction in stress
- 68% said they were more likely to stay with their employer because they offered the service
- 65% reported missing less work
- 62% reported improved productivity

3. **Encourage long-term thinking**

"Sometimes organizations are short-sighted, they don't see the long-term costs which could include a number of things," Owner and President of EAP Surveys Warren Shepell said. Encouraging EAP use early can reduce absenteeism, drug costs and short or long term disability claims.

4. **Benefit cost reduction**

Many EAPs include wellness aspects such as health risk assessments, smoking cessation aids and support for employees who want to improve their health. It's already common in the US for premiums to be lower for employees who don't smoke – those trends are coming to Canada.

"Having a healthier employee population will start to become more measurable as far as reducing benefit costs, not to mention reducing time off work for short term and long term disability," Cande Dandelé, Ceridian executive vice-president of HR solutions, said.

5. **The soft advantages**

"It's hard to quantify this side, but it is important to be seen as a care giving employer," Shepell said. "But a lot of employers don't put a premium on this. It creates a greater commitment to the organization from employees who are well and see their employer recognizing and supporting those who need help."