

Scientific Studies



The effectiveness of an external Employee Assistance Program EAP has been studied and published throughout the world.

1. The WHO (World Health Organization) recommends an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) as an effective measure against work-related stress. *(Prof. Gaston Harnois, WHO Study: Mental health and work, 2009)*
2. According to numerous studies by Stanford University, at least 20% of employees and managers are unable to reach their full performance potential. The Stanford experts estimate that this leads to performance reductions of 25% on average. The HWWI (Hamburgisches WeltWirtschaftsinstitut) calculated that the cost of unrealized production resulting from reduced productivity amounted to approx. € 364 billion (= 16% of the GNP Index) for the German economy in 2010.
3. 70% or more of EAP users were able to increase their productivity at work. *(ICAS' survey of 800 EAP users in 2003)*

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4. In their report on the mental health of employees, the OECD recommends to better deal with psychosocial risks at work. Support by external experts is a recommended way to do this, particularly in small and mid-size businesses.
(OECD research study; 12/13, Mental Health and Employment)
5. The company EuPD Research in Bonn has examined the effectiveness of external EAPs based on the opinions of leading and experienced health managers in Germany since 2009. They gave the EAP system a grade of 1.6 (1 being the highest, 6 the lowest).
(EuPD Research, 2011)
6. Untreated workplace stress leads to psychological and physiological problems, which in turn result in illness, lost productivity, absences, work accidents, poor customer relations and ultimately in loss of sales volume.
(Babcock, P., "Workplace stress? Deal with it!" 2009 (SHRM))
7. 524 businesses on Long Island participated in a study which showed that the use of EAPs leads to lower insurance premiums, higher productivity, fewer absences, improved work atmosphere, reduced absenteeism and increased motivation and engagement among employees.
(Mulligan, P. "The prevalence of employee assistance programs and the employee participation rates of Long Island companies." 2007).
8. In a large-scale study, EAP effectiveness was assessed with the help of internal case studies. The US-Government and the following companies participated in it: America On Line, Campbell Soup, Abbott Laboratories, Detroit Edison, Crestar Bank, Chevron, Los Angeles City Department of Water & Power, DuPont, McDonnell Douglas, Marsh & McLennan, New York Telephone, NCR Corp, the U.S. Postal Service and Southern California Edison. All participants agree with the general conclusion that an EAP produces a good return on investment (ROI). Depending on the company, the ROI was between \$3 - \$10 per dollar invested in EAPs.
(Attridge "EAP Effectiveness and ROI", 2009)

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Detailed Information on Studies about the Effectiveness of EAPs

The following three studies from the US, Canada and Germany support the effectiveness of EAPs:

Study I: Health and Productivity Management of Shepell FGI

Publication Date: 2008

Duration: 4 years

Number of companies: 22

Number of employees: almost 100,000

Results:

- Absences resulting from mental illnesses, musculoskeletal illnesses and cancer were reduced by 13 to 19 days when EAPs were used.
- Employees who used EAPs were twice as likely to return to work than those who didn't.
- 2% of EAP participants will go from short-term to long-term disability. For employees who did not use EAPs, the number is 9%.
- Companies in which more than 10% of employees used an EAP reported 23% to 47% fewer illnesses than those without an EAP.
- Having used EAP services showed increased productivity measured two and four months later.

Study II: FGI Client Survey FGI Toronto. Canadian Study

Publication Date: 2004

Duration: 2 years

Number of Employees: 24,000

Results:

- 67% of employees recorded significant improvement in their productivity.
- 58% would have missed several days at work because of personal problems if they had not used an EAP.
- 70.3% reported improved concentration.
- Relationships with co-workers, supervisors and overall health improved.

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Study III: Wissenschaftliches Institut der AOK (Source: Deutsches Ärzteblatt April 2009)

This study highlights the importance of company health management.

Results:

- In 2008, 8.3% of absences were due to mental illness.
- Since 1995, absences resulting from mental illness have increased by 80%.
- Absences resulting from mental illness last on average 22.5 days. Employees suffering from respiratory illnesses miss an average of 6.4 days of work.
- The study asserts: "Supporting employees under psychological stress is an investment into the future of every individual as well as the company".

Summary

EAP is a goal-oriented program for professional employee assistance. Its positive effect shows the value of such an investment for employers. The benefit of the program is demonstrated in reports produced for the employer. Those reports are anonymous and make it impossible to draw conclusions with regard to an individual. The EAP principle is one of total confidentiality. The employer will not find out which employees used the services and with what kind of questions and problems. If confidentiality were not guaranteed, employees wouldn't feel free to use the services.