

## A Message from Matt

It is a leader's role to deal quickly and fairly with allegations of sexual harassment in the workplace whether there has been a written or formal complaint. SHRM states that leaders must:



MATT VISSER, CEO  
matt@connectionseap.com

- Take all complaints or concerns of alleged or possible harassment or discrimination seriously no matter how minor or who is involved.
- Ensure that harassment or inappropriate sexually oriented conduct is immediately reported to HR so that a prompt investigation can occur.
- Take any appropriate action to prevent retaliation or prohibited conduct from recurring during and after any investigations or complaints.

*"Are you stuck?  
Only complain  
& you will remain"*

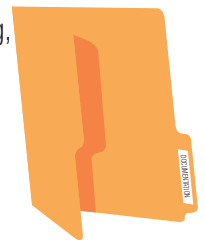


ANDY VISSER  
andy@connectionseap.com

## Sexual Harassment: Not in My Workplace!

With no shortage of high profile sexual harassment cases in the news (often led by the executive suite) organizations must attend to the dignity and respect of employees! Good leaders make bad choices when they fail to address disrespectful behavior. Here's a short checklist for your leadership team:

- PERCEPTIONS: When evaluating claims of harassment, the perception of the person at the receiving end is key. Studying perceptions is opportunity number one. This is key to maximize respect, trust, and honesty! A not to be overlooked bonus is risk management - the **perception** of the alleged victim, not the alleged perpetrator will be considered with certainty in any outside agency investigation or litigation.
- DOCUMENTATION: Lead staff must ask proactive, sensitive, trust-building, open-ended questions in confidential settings and practice respectful, careful listening. However, if there is **no written record, there is no proof it occurred!** Record *facts first, then emotions*. 'This is what she said happened...' 'This is how she stated it made her feel...'
- OBSERVATION: Climb to the best possible scenic overlook. All of us have 'blind spots.' Use a trusted peer leader or HR person as consultant or co-investigator to broaden your observation platform. Readily reposition yourself to observe the truth and build trust. Harassment can be both not seen or inadvertently ignored, and in the worst-case scenario, deliberately ignored.
- PERSONAL BIAS: Biases, often non-conscious, are shaped by the bombardment of media images and information. Recent events have prompted survey efforts demonstrating that coercive sexual behavior for commercial gain is very much entangled in our communities\*. When depictions of coercive and abusive sex are mainstream, sexual exploitation is rampant. When something becomes common, it can be easily overlooked. Leaders in every employment setting must purposefully expose the blind eye! Consultation, training, and skill development opportunities are essential for leadership teams! Connections Inc. EAP proudly stands on our reputation to 'assist' leadership teams as well as employees to support **healthy communities** at work!



\* Mary Rose Somarriba, 2012 Robert Novak Journalism Fellowship: Pornography and Sex Trafficking  
<http://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2018/01/20797/> <http://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2017/11/20520/>

**Connections Inc. Employee Assistance Program's** mission is to provide holistic assistance products and services that support optimum productivity, team work and healthy community in the workplace.

Connections Inc. Employee Assistance Program mission statement since 1988

## News & Notes:

**MARRIAGE MATTERS:** In 1998, the famed psychology professor John Gottman released a fascinating study. He compared 130 newly married couples about 'listening in relationships' comparing them to a group he had been monitoring for 13 years. He discovered the most successful couples shared control of the relationship. As one of the couples put it, being good at **“receiving influence from each other.”**



**OPIOID EPIDEMIC UPDATE:** Purdue Pharma, makers of OxyContin now say they're trying to balance what they agree is a public health crisis - balance that with patient access to FDA-approved medicine... they lied about the addictive nature of these drugs just like the tobacco industry did. The truth is... [Purdue] opened up the opioid market. There was no huge opioid market before the Sackler family and Purdue went out there and advertised and marketed OxyContin. What happened was they were so successful the other drug companies jumped in. They thought the water was fine, so they all jumped in and did the very same thing. So yeah, Purdue Pharma can say whatever they want in 2017 after the horse is out of the barn and the nation is addicted to opioids. But the problem is they've caused hundreds of billions of dollars' worth of damage and many, many lives. *Michael Moore*



*National Public Radio. Mike Moore was Mississippi's attorney general who spearheaded the 50-state lawsuit against Big Tobacco. Now, he's working to hold opioid manufacturers and distributors accountable.*

<https://www.npr.org/2017/10/17/558390569/after-taking-on-big-tobacco-20-years-ago-former-mississippi-ag-is-trying-again-w>

## Maynard's Corner

Connections EAP Is More Than Just an “Employee” Benefit

The EAP is more than an “Employee” benefit. It is equally an “Employer” benefit. Our services not only assist employees in addressing issues that impact their life, but their work as well.



MAYNARD WELLIK  
maynard@connectionseap.com  
Direct Phone: (515)890-0663

Connections EAP helps manage the risk of payroll dollars, absenteeism, presenteeism, company liability, product quality, employee morale and more – issues that all have a direct impact on the bottom line. The benefit of a proactive EAP is what it does for the Employee AND Employer.

**NEXT ISSUE:** Workplace Violence: Prevention and Preparation

# CONNECTIONS INC

925 Westview Drive, Rock Valley, Iowa 51247 | Call (712) 476-2889 or 800-779-6125 | FAX (712) 476-2464

www.connectionseap.com | E-mail at: andy@connectionseap.com