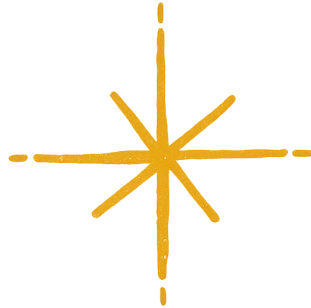




True North Interventions

When Addiction Impacts the Workplace: A Guide for Leaders and HR

Sonja Riddle | MA, BSW, CCC

Addiction Doesn't Stay at Home

It shows up at work.

Missed deadlines.

Absenteeism.

Changes in behavior.

But many leaders feel unsure how to respond.

This guide offers clear, practical direction.

Signs to Pay Attention To

- Increased absenteeism
- Decline in performance
- Mood or behavior changes
- Safety concerns

These signs don't confirm addiction—but they do signal concern.

What Not To Do

- Ignore the issue
- Make assumptions or accusations
- Try to “diagnose” the employee
- Take on a counseling role

What To Do Instead

- Focus on observable behavior
- Document patterns
- Have a private, direct conversation
- Stay within your role as a leader

The Conversation

Example:

"I've noticed some changes in your performance and attendance, and I want to check in. Is there something impacting your ability to work right now?"

Keep it:

- Neutral
- Respectful
- Focused on work impact

Support + Boundaries

Strong workplaces offer both:

Support:

- Employee assistance programs
- Time off for treatment
- Clear pathways to help

Boundaries:

- Clear expectations
- Accountability
- Consistency

Why This Matters

Many employees are also **family members of someone struggling with addiction.**

What you're seeing may not just be about them—it may be about what they're carrying.

Clarity Creates Safer Workplaces

True North Interventions provides:

- Workplace training
- Leadership support
- Education on addiction and family impact

Learn more:

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