





## BOOK REVIEW

**Terblanche, L. (2018). *Creating Legacy in EAP Business: The South African approach towards Employee Assistance*. Pretoria: St. Paul and John Publishers, 651pp, ISBN 978-0-620-79722-1.**

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Over the last few decades the field of employee assistance has grown significantly in South Africa. You will find in this book an account of the growth and decline of employee assistance programmes across the length and breadth of South Africa. These programmes took root and flourished in the earlier years in the private sector and have expanded significantly in the past two decades in both the public and private sectors. At the same time models of employee assistance have evolved and been adapted to meet the changing demands of the South African workplace.

From their beginnings as occupational alcohol programmes that were offered predominantly by the South African National Council on Alcohol and Drug Addition in the mining industry, to the development of employee assistance service provider companies, employee assistance programmes (EAPs) today form an essential part of many work organisations, giving a human face to the world of work. Although the development and expansion of EAPs in South Africa was recorded in various forms throughout the years, this book is the first of its kind in South Africa, as it provides a comprehensive account of the South African approach to employee assistance.

The book is comprised of seven chapters, each chapter having being meticulously researched and compiled. Chapter One frames the context of the book by providing a historical narrative of how workplace programmes have developed in South Africa. The chapter begins with the historical development of employee assistance programmes in the mining industry; it then traces the expansion of these programmes into other sectors beyond the mining industry and the role of the Centres for Human Development. These broad processes paved the way for the growth of the employee assistance movement in South Africa.

Chapters Two and Three document the history of EAPA-SA (Employee Assistance Programme Association of South Africa). The development of EAPA-SA is recorded from its original beginnings in the early 1980s as the National Employee Assistance Professional Committee, a professional subcommittee of the Institute for Personnel Management of Southern Africa, to the establishment of the professional organisation EAPA-SA in 1997. Today EAPA-SA functions on both a national and international level, exposing local practitioners to global standards of practice and advances in the field through a variety of workshops, conferences and networking opportunities. Chapter Three is a particularly useful resource for employee assistance practitioners, as it incorporates essential information pertaining to EAPA-SA, namely the profile of EAPA-SA, the Constitution of EAPA-SA, the by-laws to the Constitution of EAPA-SA and most importantly the EAPA-SA's code of ethics. Values of innovation, leadership, mentorship, development and transformation are articulated, values which are particularly relevant to South African society today. Nine ethical principles are outlined and guidelines for applying each principle are explained. Furthermore, a framework is provided to guide members when they are confronted with ethical questions in their work. A highlight in the history of EAPA-SA was the registration of EAPA-SA's professional body by the South African Qualifications Authority in 2013.

In Chapter Four the author reflects on the roles and contributions of key individuals and interested parties in the advancement of the field across the years. This offers an invaluable opportunity for every professional in the field of employee assistance to familiarise themselves with key role players and sponsors in the field. Detailed explanations are provided recording the achievements of the EAPA-SA

board and the establishment of the ten chapters of EAPA-SA throughout South Africa. This chapter appropriately concludes with some reflection on the successes and challenges of EAPA-SA, which are important to acknowledge in order to promote accountable, reflective and developmental practice.

Chapters Five and Six explore employee assistance programmes in practice and well as the training and research conducted on these programmes in South Africa. At a time in our country's history when there is increasing political and economic uncertainty, South African citizens have much to contend with. EAPs have an essential mandate to fulfil in assisting employees to develop and to be as productive as they can be, thereby making a contribution to the economy as well as to the human rights and transformation agenda of this country. This chapter identifies trends in the development of EAPs in practice and ends with a discussion about current contestations and debates in the EAP field.

In the final chapter the book concludes with a discussion of the importance of international collaborations and networking in the employee assistance field. Through international collaborations important relationships have been developed and maintained between South Africa and other countries over the years. As a result of increasing globalisation and technological development, professionals and practitioners need to ensure that they are informed about international developments and progress in the EAP field. However, it is also important that South African practitioners record their own innovations and developments in the field, in order to contribute to practice and research both nationally and internationally. This book helps to spur on this trajectory, as it records the contributions and achievements of the key role players in this field, as well as recounting some relevant anecdotes.

This book is a landmark contribution to the field of employee assistance in South Africa. Through methodical research the author has provided a comprehensive account of the growth and development of employee assistance and of EAPA-SA. It is written in a way that makes it accessible to all academics, managers and employee assistance practitioners. The author carefully includes key findings of studies, research and conference debates which ignite and stimulate ideas, whilst not filling the book with unnecessary academic jargon and complicated theoretical frameworks. Using his knowledge and experience of working within the employee assistance programmes (EAPs) of South Africa, the author has managed to pour his practical experience and academic wisdom into this book. The book is filled with appropriate anecdotes as many of the key role players in the employee assistance field are acknowledged and their contributions recorded. For specialists in the field of EAPs this book comes across a well-researched and comprehensive compilation of the history and development of these programmes in South Africa over almost four decades. It is essential reading for every practitioner and interested party in this field – it is one of those books that you will want to have in your office as a constant reference source that will not simply sit on your shelf.