

PREPARED FOR

Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling

# Designing an Effective Employee Assistance Programme

From Zero to Functional EAP in 90 Days

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Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling

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## Programme Overview

Many Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs) in India struggle to gain traction due to a transactional approach rather than a strategic design. This guide empowers you to build an EAP from the ground up, ensuring it aligns with your organisation's unique needs and fosters genuine employee well-being.

### Learning Objectives

- ✓ Understand the fundamental principles that drive EAP effectiveness, learning how to leverage utilisation data to inform a robust programme design.
- ✓ Identify the essential components of a comprehensive EAP, including access to counselling, assessment tools, manager support, and crisis intervention protocols.
- ✓ Develop a strategic framework for selecting the right EAP vendor, focusing on due diligence and avoiding common pitfalls specific to the Indian market.
- ✓ Master the art of creating a compelling communication strategy to significantly boost employee awareness and EAP utilisation beyond the typical low percentages.
- ✓ Learn to effectively measure the return on investment (ROI) of your EAP, focusing on metrics that demonstrate tangible business value and employee impact.
- ✓ Gain insights into the nuances of the Indian EAP landscape, including cost benchmarks and considerations for local provider partnerships.

#### WHO SHOULD ATTEND

This programme is designed for Chief Human Resources Officers (CHROs), HR Directors, and Benefits Managers who are responsible for developing and implementing employee well-being initiatives.

## Programme Content

### 1. What Makes an EAP Actually Work: Data-Driven Design Principles

An effective Employee Assistance Programme is not merely a benefit purchased off-the-shelf; it is a strategically designed system tailored to employee needs and organisational culture. We will explore how to analyse existing utilisation data, if available, or benchmark against industry standards to identify key areas for support. Understanding these core principles ensures your EAP addresses prevalent workplace challenges and promotes proactive mental wellness, rather than being an underutilised resource. This session focuses on building a programme foundation that resonates with your workforce and drives meaningful engagement.

 **Activity: Group Discussion: Sharing current employee wellness challenges.**

### 2. Core EAP Components for Comprehensive Support

A truly impactful EAP integrates several critical elements designed to offer holistic support. This includes readily accessible and confidential counselling services, robust assessment tools for early identification of concerns, and specialised training for managers to recognise and respond to employee distress appropriately. Furthermore, a well-designed EAP must include protocols for immediate crisis support, ensuring employees receive help during critical moments. We will delve into how each of these components contributes to a supportive work environment and employee resilience.

 **Activity: Brainstorming: Identifying essential support services for your organisation.**

### 3. Vendor Selection and Rigorous Due Diligence in the Indian Context

Choosing the right EAP vendor is paramount to programme success, especially within the diverse Indian corporate landscape. This section guides you through the essential questions to ask potential providers, focusing on their experience with Indian organisations, data privacy protocols, and service delivery models. We will also highlight common pitfalls to avoid, such as vague service level agreements or a lack of culturally sensitive support. Ensuring your vendor aligns with your organisational values and can provide effective, localised support is crucial for long-term EAP effectiveness.

 **Activity: Role-playing: Practicing vendor evaluation questions.**

#### 4. Crafting a Communication Strategy to Drive Utilisation Past 5%

Low utilisation rates are a common obstacle for EAPs, often stemming from a lack of awareness or perceived stigma. This session focuses on developing a multi-channel communication strategy that demystifies the EAP and highlights its confidential, accessible benefits. We will explore creative ways to embed EAP messaging into your organisation's culture, ensuring employees understand when and how to seek support. The goal is to move beyond a one-time launch announcement and foster ongoing engagement, making the EAP a go-to resource for employees facing life's challenges.

 **Activity: Workshop: Developing key communication messages.**

#### 5. Measuring EAP ROI: Identifying Metrics That Truly Matter

Demonstrating the value of your EAP is essential for continued investment and strategic alignment. This section moves beyond simple utilisation numbers to focus on key performance indicators (KPIs) that reflect tangible business outcomes. We will explore how to track metrics such as reduced absenteeism, improved productivity, decreased employee turnover, and fewer workplace incidents. Understanding these metrics allows you to quantify the impact of your EAP and advocate for its importance within the organisation.

 **Activity: Case Study Analysis: Evaluating EAP impact through data.**

#### 6. Navigating the Indian EAP Landscape: Market Insights and Benchmarks

The Indian market for EAPs presents unique opportunities and challenges. This session provides an overview of the current EAP provider ecosystem in India, helping you understand the different types of services available and their typical cost structures. We will discuss relevant cost benchmarks to inform your budgeting process and explore considerations for partnering with local providers who understand the cultural nuances and specific needs of the Indian workforce. Gaining this market insight is critical for making informed decisions about your EAP investment.

## Action Plan

Concrete steps for implementation.

Action	Owner	Timeline	Notes
Form an EAP Design Task Force comprising key HR leaders and representatives from different departments.	CHRO	Week 1	Ensure diverse representation to capture varied employee needs and perspectives.
Conduct a thorough needs assessment to understand current employee well-being challenges and support gaps.	HR Director	Month 1	Utilise surveys, focus groups, and existing HR data to inform the assessment.
Develop a detailed Request for Proposal (RFP) document based on the needs assessment and core EAP components.	Benefits Manager	Week 2	Clearly outline service requirements, confidentiality protocols, and data reporting expectations.
Initiate vendor selection process, including rigorous due diligence and reference checks for shortlisted providers.	HR Director	Month 1	Prioritise vendors with proven experience in the Indian market and strong data security measures.
Design a comprehensive, multi-channel communication and launch plan to introduce the EAP to all employees.	HR	Month 2	Include regular updates, testimonials, and clear instructions on how to access services.
Establish a framework for ongoing EAP performance monitoring and ROI measurement.	Leadership	Quarter 1	Define key metrics and reporting frequency for continuous programme evaluation and improvement.

## About Manas



### Dr. Priya Dubey Sharma

Founder & Consulting Psychologist | Applied, Organizational & Behavioural Psychologist | PhD | 18+ Years

Dr. Priya Dubey Sharma brings 18+ years of applied psychology to corporate wellness. She has worked with SBI, educational institutions, and corporate teams across India. Her evidence-based approach combines CBT, mindfulness, and culturally contextualised psychology for measurable outcomes. She is the creator of the Performance FOMO Index™ and the High-Functioning Distress Framework™.

### Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling

A MSME-registered organisation dedicated to evidence-based mental wellness.

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## Ready to Partner With Us?



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