



### ***Communication Tips for Managers During COVID-19***

This is a challenging time for leaders as they are forced to think, feel and behave in ways that are unfamiliar. During a crisis like this current pandemic, leaders must demonstrate extreme leadership. In every crisis, there is opportunity for leaders to be positive and promote hope when it seems impossible.

- **Align expectations.** In a crisis, leaders will not have all the answers but will need to address the unknown. People will expect decisive actions from you. Aligning expectations and realities takes skill, insight and patience, as well as the ability to admit you don't have all the answers. Leaders conquer communication barriers and communicate early and often.
- **Seek credible information.** Leaders should ensure that they are disseminating only the most reliable information. The MLH COVID-19 Command Center, the World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are considered reliable sources.
- **Utilize Appropriate Communication Channels.** Transparency throughout your organization is crucial during a crisis such as COVID-19. Knowledge is powerful because it reduces fear of the unknown, provides guidance, informs employees that their leaders care and are managing the situation. Remember to handle key information utilizing the 3 Rs – Review, Repeat, Reinforce. You can't assume that everyone received and understood the information that was communicated.
- **Explain what the organization is doing about the crisis.** If you are in charge, take charge. Be proactive; take initiative. As you make decisions and take action, communicate those actions truthfully and honestly.
- **Be present, visible, and available.** Leaders should be accessible. Because it is not always possible to walk around your facility and talk to colleagues in person, let employees know how they can best reach you with status updates and questions. When leaders appear calm, concerned, knowledgeable, supportive and in charge, workers feel encouraged, and are more likely to have hope and the confidence that things are under control.

**FirstCall EAP is there to provide emotional support for you during this stressful time  
24 hours a day, 7 days a week at 800-382-2377.**