Drugs and How They Affect Our Workforce

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Drug addiction which is also called substance use disorder is basically a condition in which the user unconsciously rely on the drugs, and it affects the person's brain and other related behavior which results in complete failure to control the urge and use of any legal and illegal drugs. Substance use includes the frequent use of alcohol, marijuana, and nicotine which produces pleasure sensations in the body and brain due to which slowly the user needs a higher amount to produce the same sensation in the body. The use of a substance is not only limited to home now; but it is also now in practice in the workplaces. Therefore this is a growing concern for the responsible individuals on how to control the use of alcohols and other drugs during office hours. The use of substance during work hours affects the overall performance of the workers; thus it can not be ignored, and serious measures must be taken to control it.

There are billions of people in the entire world who struggle daily with drugs and other substance use whether it is their home, school or workplace. According to recent reports, it is now proved that substance use is rarely a home problem and majority of the users are those who are on the job and professional individuals. Due to which it is now a growing concern because the use of drugs, alcohols, and other such substances is not only harmful to the person but at the same time it can affect the performance of the company or organization where the person is working. An employee who has a substance use disorder can unwittingly cause problems at work which are related to their substance use. Some of the common issues which are related to substance use are low productivity, injuries, fatalities, theft and also low morale of the employees and due to all these reasons it is a growing concern among all the responsible individual to control this growing problem in the workforce to improve the productivity and self-confidence of the employees. Some other consequences of drug use at workforce include health care costs, issues related to human resource, legal liabilities and also workers compensation costs (“Drug Testing in the Workplace - Google Books,” n.d.).

Because of all these problems, it is now safe to say that addressing all these problems in the workplace is important in order to have a successful business. While dealing with this problem it is important to keep in mind that substance use disorder is a health issue, not a personal choice because most of the users initially take drugs to relax their mind but with the passage of time their brain instigate them to use it again and again and unknowingly they become addicted to this problem, and it becomes an addiction. Most of the employers who deal with addiction in their workplace mostly get benefit from taking a firm stance on drug users and also they have a proper plan for all those workers who genuinely deal with this problem.

The pressure in the workplace forces the professionals to use drugs in order to feel relax, and there is a going trend among the majority of professionals to use drugs in office. Therefore many research has been done in this field, and these researches show different statistics about substance use in the workplace. It shows that 35% of patients with an occupational injury were at-risk drinkers, 16% of the emergency room patients injured at work were tested positively for alcohol consumption and around 11% of workplace fatality victims had been drinking at the same time of the accident. Along with that the workers and managers across a variety of industries and company sizes report that when a coworker drinks or uses drugs at the workplace then it not only jeopardizes their safety and production but at the same time effects the performance of other employees. So in response to these concerns, the employers from all over the world have responded by effectively implementing different policies, and other programs to reduce the drug use at the workplace and also its effect on the workforce (Frone, 2012). There are certain education programs and also certain written standards like Zero tolerance policies, the employers from the last 20 years have also turned to various tests in order to detect the alcohol or drug uses at the workplace. The main idea behind workplace drug testing is quite clear that by increasing the expense of drug use and abuse during working hour, this program also aims to reduce the use of harmful drugs by current and other prospective employees (Carpenter, 2007).

As it is evident that these substances are associated with adverse health consequences like accident, injuries, violence and also absenteeism there are a high number of companies and other organizations who are dealing with this problem by using various methods like Occupational Safety and health like the screening of psychoactive among the employee(Marques, Jesus, Olea, Vairinhos, & Jacinto, 2014).

The effect of the drugs on the workforce is quite obvious and also it common now, there are many news reports in the last few years that reported the impact of the use of these drugs on the workforce. Most common drugs that are currently trending among the employees is marijuana. A news report from a few years ago suggested that in Ohio it is not forbidden for an employee to use medical marijuana. But recently the employers noticed the negative impact of marijuana on the employees and also on the overall work environment. So it was suggested that a good game plan to control the use of drugs during working hours is random drug testing and also zero tolerance. The employers are also using various other strategies like the replacement of references of impairment with the term under the influence. Another news that reported the use of drugs in the workplace included a pilot who had smoked one joint with Cannabis and afterward he had difficulty in aligning and also running on the runway. The pilot was also noticed to have higher vertical and other lateral deviation from the required flight path. Pilots also had lateral deviation on approach to the land, and one of them landed off the runway completely. The prominent finding in these participating pilots was that none of them were aware that they had any possible impairment which is also a risk factor of the use of drugs in the workplace and on the workforce as well ("Mutti: How does medical marijuana impact the workforce?" n.d.).

According to the labor statistics 5,190 people that is more than 14 a day died while they were in office or any other place in 2016, and it is also quite apparent that when a worker is lost then there are several co-workers, friends, and family who are affected by that lose directly or indirectly. For almost 100 years the National Safety Council has played an important part in the workplace safety, and they are still thriving very hard in order to eliminate any preventable deaths. According to many reports that were published in the recent past by this council, more than half of these deaths were caused by substance use in the workplace that caused injuries and accidents and ultimately caused the death of the workers (“At Work,” n.d.).

There are many growing concerns among the authorities and administration of different industries about the effect of using drugs and other substances during work hours. Because the effect of all these substances on the employees are huge and under the effect of these drugs they cannot deliver their best performance. Many types of research have been done in this field to address the effects and other risk factors of using drugs in office and all the studies suggested that there must be some tests in order to determine if a worker has used the drugs or not and if that is determined then employers must change their policy towards zero tolerance of drug use during office hours. By doing so, they will also be able to reduce the death rates that occur during office hours under the influence of drugs. To do that effectively, all the responsible agents must change their policies; this will help not only in the reduction death rates but also increase the production and progress of that particular company or organization.

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