

Younger employees often see a supervisor as a mentor, sometimes even a parental figure. When someone shares something raw — anxiety, a breakup, family conflict, grief — it's natural to want to help them work through it. That instinct is exactly what gets supervisors in trouble. Here's where the line sits.

YOUR LANE



- Listen without judgment
- Ask how it's affecting their work
- Point them to the EAP
- Follow up on performance, not feelings

NOT YOUR LANE



- Diagnosing what's "wrong"
- Advising on relationships, therapy, or meds
- Becoming their ongoing confidant
- Trying to fix it yourself

TWO LINES THAT HOLD THE LINE



Thank you for trusting me with that.
I'm not the right person to help you work through it — but I know who is.



It sounds like a lot is going on. Have you thought about the EAP?
It's free, confidential, and separate from HR.

YOU'VE CROSSED THE LINE IF...

- You think about it outside work hours
- They reach out to you after hours for support
- You feel responsible for how they feel
- You're giving specific personal advice



FREE, CONFIDENTIAL HELP AVAILABLE ANY TIME