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Book Review

ROBERT THOMPSON, JR., SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND EMPLOYEE REHABILITATION (BNA Books 1990) [485 pp.] Appendices, bibliography, index, table of cases. LC-90-2629; ISBN 0-87179-649-X [\$40.00 P.O.B. 7816, Edison NJ 08818-7816.]

This book is designed to deal with both the theoretical and practical aspects of substance abuse programs. Accordingly, the main text of the book (three parts, twelve chapters, 305 pages) deals with substance abuse policies, procedures, and rehabilitation programs, whereas the appendices provide a variety of source materials useful to those involved in the development of substance abuse programs.

The first part of the book consists of two chapters that provide introductory information on workplace substance abuse and a review of legislation and legal implications related thereto. The three chapters in part two provide guidelines for establishing substance abuse policies, procedures, and training. Part three deals with establishing substance abuse programs, and includes chapters dealing with employee assistance programs, rehabilitation referral programs, inpatient programs, outpatient programs, and aftercare and long-term rehabilitation programs.

The appendices distinguish this book from others that cover similar material, and their titles indicate the types of useful information provided: Drugs of Abuse; Glossary of Substance Abuse Terminology; Model Policy, Procedure, and Program; Substance Abuse Policies; Substance Abuse Procedures; Substance Abuse Programs; Federal Controlled Substances Act, Schedules of Controlled Substances; Alcoholics Anonymous Materials; and Codes of Professional Conduct for EAPs.

The main text will be of interest to many readers, but I expect that the appendices will be the most-used part of the book for those actively involved in the development and day-to-day administration of workplace substance abuse programs. The Drugs of Abuse appendix, for example, provides a description of each type of drug, the short-term and long-term effects and a list of code (or, street) names of the drug. The appendix on substance abuse policies provides sample policies for a large manufacturing company, a large service company, a small city government, and a large utility. The appendices, therefore, provide a useful single source for a variety of information that, heretofore, may have been available only in a number of scattered sources.

However, readers attempting to deal with substance abuse problems in smaller organizations, should not adopt, verbatim, the model policies, procedures, and programs. This is similar to using forms from a legal "how-to" book, rather than consulting an attorney to draft a will.

Also statements in the book may lead readers to undertake procedures that could cause problems. For example, at 80, Thompson states "And, in spite of occasional protestations otherwise, an employer can rely on a confirmed positive drug test (confirmed by gas chromatography and mass spectrometry (GC/MS)) in making decisions on substance abuse." Elsewhere, I have cited a variety of articles indicating that false positives do occur, even in well-designed and well-controlled processes in which GC/MS confirmation was used.¹ In one recent case reported in the news media, five of seven confirmed positive methamphetamine tests reported by a laboratory over a six-month period were false positives. These tests were conducted in a NIDA-certified laboratory under the Department of Transportation drug testing program which requires GC/MS confirmation.

¹ See, e.g., 1266 TRANSPORTATION RECORD 10 (1990); 2 RISK 3 (1991).

Thompson also indicates, at 99, that "... federal rules for selecting individuals for random testing provide a variety of means of selection including selecting social security numbers at random by a computer..." There are underlying technical issues which could lead to problems for an employer who follows such a process. For example, a variety of problems with faulty computer random number generators have been identified in the literature. My own research has shown that computer random number generators cannot be relied upon to generate sequences of number that pass even the most fundamental statistical tests for randomness.² Thus, care must be taken if such generators are to be used in random drug testing processes.

In summary, Thompson's book, especially its interesting collection of appendices, provides a useful resource in the development and administration of workplace drug testing programs. However, too much reliance on some of the author's statements could be problematic. In fact, the types of technical issues discussed above provide clear evidence that, in this complicated area of substance abuse, one must be aware not only of *legal* technicalities but also those identified by other disciplines.

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² See, e.g., 30 COMP. METH. & PROG. BIOMED. 43 (1989); 2(4) GEOBYTE 38 (1987).

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