



# Chaplains in the Workplace

March 24, 2014      Employer Articles

*Mash* fans will remember the Army chaplain, Father Mulcahey, who was always available with kind words, good counsel, as well as a great sense of humor. In the trauma and stress of war, Father Mulcahey helped everyone hang onto their sanity.

**Ever feel at work like you, too, are under attack? Have some days where you wonder how you'll stay sane? Well, you're not alone! A recent survey showed that 83% of Americans were stressed at work about something.**

Where's Father Mulcahey when we need him?



## Workplace chaplains are becoming more common:

Workplace chaplains are common in the armed forces, hospitals, fire and police departments, prisons and universities.

Did you know that chaplains also serve for the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives? Even the NFL has chaplains to help the players manage their stress.

So why not corporate America?

The use of workplace chaplains is actually on the rise. There are companies such as Marketplace Chaplains USA and Corporate Chaplains of America to serve this growing field.

Major corporations, such as Tyson Foods, Coca-Cola and General Motors are among the companies now offering chaplain services to their employees. We're all familiar with Employee Assistance Programs, but workplace chaplains serve a little bit different purpose.

## What can corporate chaplains do?

Obviously, for non-discrimination reasons, corporate chaplains cannot preach or push a particular religion. Rather, they serve as counselors, coaches, and confidants.

With a commitment to confidentiality, employees can talk with them without fear that information shared might be used against them on the job.

When a chaplain is present on a regular basis in the workplace, employees can bring up issues when they first develop, before they begin having a negative impact.

A recent Gallup poll revealed that about 40% of Americans attend church regularly. The 60% that don't may not have quick, easy, and free access for guidance when needed. Corporate chaplains can ease that stress.

# The benefits of using corporate chaplains:

Even if counseling is not needed, corporate chaplains still have benefits for employees.

Employee Assistance Program provide access to occasional counseling for employees, but corporate chaplains are present regularly in the workplace, creating trusting relationships with employees.

After getting to know employees, chaplains can be called on to perform weddings and funerals. They are able to check in with employees on a casual, regular basis, helping to head off problems before they become a distraction.

Employees who are hesitant to discuss their personal issues with their boss or the Human Resources department can talk without fear to the chaplain.

Chaplains are even available outside of work hours so in an emergency situation an employee has someone familiar to call.

## The wrap-up:

It's interesting to see that ministering in the workplace is on the rise, and that companies have been able to do it without getting crosswise with regulations.

Staying away from preaching and proselytizing, workplace chaplains can improve morale, productivity, and well being. And I'll say amen to that!