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Tips for Supporting Haitian Employees Following the Earthquake in Haiti

1. Be sensitive to the extreme worry and stress that is being experienced by those employees who have family and friends in Haiti.
2. Be aware that lower income employees may not have easy access to internet and other communication. If possible create a communication link within your workplace. For workers who are not able to receive messages during work, develop a way of monitoring and notifying them of any information that is posted on their loved ones. This may help them to be able to work knowing that if information comes in they will receive it right away. Allow workers to keep their cell phones turned on so they can receive calls regarding their family.
3. Organize a company wide support effort which could include:
 - a. Employee and company donations to Haitian disaster relief.
 - b. Providing assistance to employees in reaching out and supporting their families.
 - c. Providing EAP support to employees on coping with the stress and trauma of the disaster back home.
 - d. Provide EAP support to grieving employees.
 - e. Allow liberal compassionate leave (paid if possible).
4. Be available to your employees for support
5. Encourage employees to continue to work as much as possible as a way of coping and continuing with life, however, consider suspending normal productivity requirements as workers may be upset and distracted. Given the uncertainty of the future of the welfare of their family, they will need to feel they can “balance” their distress with the obligations of work without risking their employment.
6. Encourage the work force to be supportive and sensitive to their Haitian colleagues.
 - a. Ask employees to “brainstorm” on how they can help their Haitian colleagues. You may be surprised at the good ideas they generate.
 - b. Encourage employees to “reach out” to their colleagues from Haiti. Simple words of support and concern are helpful during these difficult times.
7. Offer to invite a Chaplain in to support your Haitian employees. Only do so if the employees are agreeable to this support.

Haitian people are grateful people who will appreciate any help they are offered. Any expense incurred by your company will likely be returned many times over by their appreciation and loyalty.