

**FORBES PSYCHOLOGICAL  
SERVICES**

**EMPLOYER'S HANDBOOK**

**(PREPARED FOR THE ALBERTA  
LAWYERS' ASSIST PROGRAM)**

# **INTRODUCTION**

**THIS HANDBOOK STARTS FROM THE ASSUMPTION THAT AN EMPLOYEE'S JOB PERFORMANCE OR BEHAVIOUR HAS DETEORATED AND SOMETHING NEEDS TO BE DONE FOR BOTH THE EMPLOYEE'S SAKE AND THE SAKE OF THE FIRM, DEPARTMENT OR OTHER SETTING THE INDIVIDUAL IS WORKING IN.**

**FOR EASE OF REFERENCE WE USE THE TERMS "EMPLOYEE", "SUPERVISOR" OR "MANAGER" INTERCHANGEABLY WITH THE APPROPRIATE REFERENCES IN YOUR WORKPLACE (STAFF, ARTICLING STUDENT, ASSOCIATE, PARTNER, ETC.)**

**IF YOU ARE WORKING IN GOVERNMENT OR AT A LARGE CORPORATION, IT IS LIKELY THAT YOUR HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT HAS A SYSTEM IN PLACE TO DEAL WITH PERFORMANCE ISSUES AND FOR MAKING AN "ASSISTED" OR "FORMAL" REFERRAL TO YOUR EMPLOYEE AND FAMILY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EFAP) AND YOU WILL BE WORKING WITH THEM TO HANDLE THE SITUATION.**

**FOR THOSE WORKING IN A SETTING THAT DOES NOT HAVE A "SYSTEM" IN PLACE TO DEAL WITH THE ISSUE OF UNSATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE AND POSSIBLE PERSONAL DISTRESS, THIS HANDBOOK IS INTENDED TO PROVIDE YOU WITH SOME BASIC KNOWLEDGE TO HELP WITH THIS ISSUE.**

**IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CONTENTS OF THIS MANUAL OR REQUIRE ADDITIONAL HELP, PLEASE CALL US THROUGH THE ASSIST TOLL-FREE LINE AT 1-877-498-6898.**

**THERE MAY ALSO BE OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES WHERE YOU PERCEIVE THAT AN INDIVIDUAL MAY BE EXPERIENCING PERSONAL DIFFICULTIES BUT THERE ARE NO WORK PERFORMANCE ISSUES. WHILE THERE ARE SIMILAR BASIC PRINCIPLES TO APPLY, THAT IS A DIFFERENT CONVERSATION. THE ASSIST PROGRAM IS ALSO AVAILABLE TO PROVIDE YOU WITH ADVICE AND COACHING ON HOW THAT CONVERSATION MAY BE MOST EFFECTIVELY HANDLED.**

## MAKING A REFERRAL

A CHANGE FROM SATISFACTORY JOB PERFORMANCE TO POOR JOB PERFORMANCE IS SOMETIMES A SYMPTOM THAT AN EMPLOYEE IS EXPERIENCING A SIGNIFICANT PERSONAL PROBLEM. ABSENTEEISM, A NOTICEABLE INCREASE IN ERRORS, DECREASED EFFICIENCY, UNPREDICTABLE BEHAVIOR, TARDINESS, DETERIORATION IN APPEARANCE, CONFUSION, MOODINESS, OR ANY COMBINATION OF THESE BEHAVIORS, ARE TYPICAL INDICATIONS THAT THERE MAY BE PERSONAL ISSUES IMPACTING WORK PERFORMANCE.

LEFT UNATTENDED, MANY PROBLEMS BECOME MORE TROUBLESOME AND DIFFICULT TO RESOLVE. OBVIOUS POOR PERFORMANCE MAY ALSO HAVE A NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE REST OF THE ORGANIZATION AND CREATE COSTLY ABSENCES.

### ***ASSISTED REFERRAL***

YOUR COMMUNICATION OF THE PERFORMANCE PROBLEM(S) MAY PROVIDE THE OPPORTUNITY FOR THE EMPLOYEE TO TELL YOU THAT A PERSONAL PROBLEM EXISTS AND IS A CONTRIBUTING FACTOR.

WHERE AN EMPLOYEE CHOOSES TO BE OPEN WITH YOU ABOUT A PERSONAL PROBLEM, AN *ASSISTED REFERRAL* TO THE ASSIST PROGRAM OR YOUR OWN EFAP MAY BE APPROPRIATE. IF THE EMPLOYEE WELCOMES THE SUGGESTION, YOU SHOULD ENCOURAGE THEM TO ARRANGE A DATE AND TIME FOR THE FIRST APPOINTMENT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

HAVING DEALT WITH THE PERSONAL PROBLEM IN THIS MANNER, YOU ARE NOW FREE TO FOCUS ON THE WORK PERFORMANCE ISSUES. IT IS CRITICAL THAT YOU KEEP THE REFERRAL CONFIDENTIAL.

WHERE YOU SENSE THAT THERE IS A PERSONAL PROBLEM WHICH IS IMPACTING THE EMPLOYEE'S PERFORMANCE, BUT THE EMPLOYEE DOES NOT REVEAL THIS IN YOUR MEETING, SIMPLY REMIND THE EMPLOYEE OF THE AVAILABILITY OF THE ASSIST PROGRAM OR YOUR OWN EFAP. EMPHASIZE THAT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS ARE STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.

IF YOU MANAGE PERFORMANCE BY CLEARLY COMMUNICATING CONCERNS AND EXPECTATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT, AND YOU SUPPORT THE USE OF THE ASSIST PROGRAM OR YOUR OWN EFAP, YOU SHOULD BE BETTER EQUIPPED TO DEAL WITH ONGOING WORK ISSUES.

THERE ARE THOSE INSTANCES, HOWEVER, WHERE IN SPITE OF YOUR PROPER SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGEMENT, AN EMPLOYEE CONTINUES TO PERFORM POORLY AT WORK AND FOR WHICH YOU THINK THERE COULD BE AN UNDERLYING PROBLEM THAT MIGHT APPROPRIATELY BE ADDRESSED THROUGH SOME FORM OF PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANCE. IN THIS INSTANCE YOU MAY CHOOSE TO INITIATE A *FORMAL REFERRAL*.

### ***FORMAL REFERRAL***

IN ESSENCE, A FORMAL REFERRAL INVOLVES THE EMPLOYER INSISTING THAT THE EMPLOYEE UNDERGO A PROFESSIONAL EVALUATION TO DETERMINE THEIR FITNESS TO CONTINUE WORKING.

IF THE EMPLOYEE REFUSES THIS PROFESSIONAL EVALUATION, YOU WILL BE DEALING WITH A PERFORMANCE ISSUE RELATING TO BOTH THEIR JOB PERFORMANCE AND THEIR REFUSAL TO BE EVALUATED.

IF THE EMPLOYEE DOES UNDERGO THE EVALUATION AND IT IS DETERMINED BY A PROFESSIONAL THAT THERE IS NO MEDICAL OR PSYCHOLOGICAL ISSUE PRESENT, YOU WILL BE DEALING SOLELY WITH A PERFORMANCE ISSUE.

IF IT IS DETERMINED THAT A MEDICAL OR PSYCHOLOGICAL ISSUE DOES EXIST THEN YOU WILL BE WORKING WITH THE EMPLOYEE'S PROFESSIONAL CARE PROVIDER AND THE EMPLOYEE IN DETERMINING HOW TO BEST HELP THE INDIVIDUAL AND HOW TO ACCOMMODATE WORK IN A WAY THAT THE PERFORMANCE ISSUES ARE DEALT WITH IN ORDER TO ENSURE THE DUTIES TO THE CLIENT ARE HANDLED APPROPRIATELY.

YOU WILL ALWAYS WANT TO CONSIDER YOUR LEGAL DUTY TO ACCOMMODATE.

IF YOU ARE CONSIDERING A FORMAL REFERRAL YOU ARE ENCOURAGED TO CALL THE ASSIST TOLL FREE LINE AT 1-877-498-6898 FOR GUIDANCE. THERE ARE MANY FACTORS TO DEAL WITH IN THESE SITUATIONS, INCLUDING:

- APPROPRIATE CHOICE OF PROFESSIONAL EVALUATION;
- APPROPRIATE CONFIDENTIALITY AND RELEASE OF INFORMATION AGREEMENTS;
- APPROPRIATE MANAGEMENT OF THE ONGOING EMPLOYEE/EMPLOYER RELATIONSHIP;

- APPROPRIATE ACCOMMODATIONS BY BOTH EMPLOYEE AND EMPLOYER TO ENSURE THE WORK ENVIRONMENT IS CONDUCIVE TO A RETURN TO HEALTH AND SATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE

## **HOW TO ASSIST THE TROUBLED EMPLOYEE**

LEADER ASSISTED REFERRALS TO ASSIST OR YOUR EFAP ARE USUALLY APPROPRIATE WHEN AN EMPLOYEE'S BEHAVIOR HAS CHANGED AND IS AFFECTING WORK PERFORMANCE. ALL OF US HAVE SOME DAYS WHEN OUR PERFORMANCE IS BETTER THAN OTHERS, SO IT IS IMPORTANT TO BEAR IN MIND HOW LONG THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF DISTRESS HAVE BEEN EVIDENT, AS WELL AS THE MAGNITUDE/SEVERITY OF THE CHANGE. MORE SEVERE CHANGES IN BEHAVIOR AND PERFORMANCE USUALLY WARRANT EARLIER ACTION.

HERE ARE SOME GUIDELINES TO USE AS A REFERENCE WHEN DEALING WITH A DIFFICULT EMPLOYEE SITUATION.

### **TEN TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE LEADER ASSISTED REFERRALS**

- 1) REQUEST A MEETING WITH THE TROUBLED EMPLOYEE IN A DISCREET MANNER AND CONDUCT THE MEETING IN A PRIVATE LOCATION.
- 2) BE PREPARED TO DEMONSTRATE THE WORK PERFORMANCE PROBLEM WITH FACTS.
- 3) DISCUSS DETERIORATING WORK PERFORMANCE, USING THESE FACTS.
- 4) ALLOW THE EMPLOYEE TO EXPLAIN AND EXPRESS FEELINGS.
- 5) CONVEY AN ATTITUDE OF CONCERN AND RESPECT USING A CALM MANNER.
- 6) INDICATE CLEARLY WHAT IMPROVEMENTS ARE REQUIRED.
- 7) OFFER ASSISTANCE/SUPPORT BY STATING THAT HELP FOR PERSONAL PROBLEMS AFFECTING WORK PERFORMANCE IS AVAILABLE THROUGH ASSIST OR YOUR EFAP.
- 8) IF HELP IS ACCEPTED, ASSIST THE EMPLOYEE IN MAKING AN APPOINTMENT BY OFFERING THE TOLL-FREE NUMBER AND A PRIVATE PLACE TO MAKE THE CALL, OR CALL ON THE EMPLOYEE'S BEHALF.

- 9) CONCLUDE THE MEETING WITH POSITIVE ENCOURAGING REMARKS IF AT ALL POSSIBLE.
- 10) DOCUMENT YOUR INTERVIEW AND FOLLOW-UP USING AN APPROPRIATE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PROCESS. IF NECESSARY, REMIND THE EMPLOYEE DURING FOLLOW-UP MEETINGS THAT ASSISTANCE IS AVAILABLE. REMEMBER, ASSIST OR EFAP PARTICIPATION IS ENTIRELY VOLUNTARY.

## **CHALLENGES OF LEADER ASSISTED REFERRALS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

THE FOLLOWING SECTION BEGINS WITH A HYPOTHETICAL CASE EXAMPLE OF AN EMPLOYEE WHOSE PERFORMANCE HAS DROPPED AND WHOSE BEHAVIOR HAS CHANGED IN THE WORK SETTING.

IT IS ASSUMED THAT YOU, AS A LEADER, HAVE FOLLOWED STEPS 1 THROUGH 3 OF THE 10 TIPS LISTED EARLIER AND REQUESTED A MEETING, DEMONSTRATED THE WORK PERFORMANCE PROBLEMS WITH FACTS, AND DISCUSSED DETERIORATING PERFORMANCE USING THE FACTS. YOU ARE NOW AT THE STAGE WHERE YOU ALLOW THE EMPLOYEE TO EXPLAIN AND EXPRESS HIS/HER FEELINGS.

THE EMPLOYEE'S RESPONSE AT THIS POINT IS OFTEN UNPREDICTABLE, AND CAN BE DISTRESSING IF HE/SHE EXPRESSES STRONG EMOTIONS OR REVEALS SENSITIVE PERSONAL INFORMATION. AS A RESULT, IT IS COMMON FOR LEADERS TO AVOID THE ISSUE HOPING THAT IT WILL FIX ITSELF. IN THE LONG RUN, THIS CAN MAKE THE PROBLEM MORE DIFFICULT TO RESOLVE, MORE COSTLY FOR THE FIRM AND MORE FRUSTRATING FOR CO-WORKERS.

TO ENHANCE YOUR CONFIDENCE IN DEALING WITH A RANGE OF CHALLENGING RESPONSES, THE EXAMPLE BELOW IS FOLLOWED BY A LIST OF POTENTIAL REACTIONS, AND WAYS OF EFFECTIVELY DEALING WITH THEM.

### **CASE EXAMPLE**

BLAINE HAS BEEN A SOLID PERFORMER OVER THE YEARS; HE'S A FRIENDLY, OUTGOING INDIVIDUAL. OVER THE PAST THREE MONTHS YOU HAVE NOTICED A DISTINCT CHANGE.

- **BILLABLE HOURS ARE DOWN 40% OVER THE PAST QUARTER**
- **COMPLAINTS ABOUT QUALITY OF WORK HAVE SURFACED FROM CLIENTS OR OTHER LAWYERS**
- **LESS PUNCTUAL**
- **LOOKS TIRED**
- **LESS RELAXED, EDGY AT TIMES**
- **LESS SOCIABLE THAN USUAL**
- **IN OFFICE WITH DOOR CLOSED**
- **INCREASED ABSENTEEISM**
- **LONG LUNCHES**
- **COMPLAINTS FROM HIS SUPPORT STAFF ABOUT LACK OF FOLLOW THROUGH WITH CLIENTS**
- **NEGATIVE ATTITUDE**

GIVEN THE ABOVE LIST, ISSUES DISCUSSED IN STEP 3 WOULD LIKELY INCLUDE BILLABLES, COMPLAINTS ABOUT QUALITY OF WORK AND INCREASED ABSENTEEISM. WHILE YOU MAY HAVE NOTICED THAT BLAINE LOOKS TIRED, SEEMS LESS SOCIABLE, IS EDGY AT TIMES, AND HAS HIS DOOR CLOSED MORE OFTEN, IT IS BEST TO STICK WITH OBJECTIVE PERFORMANCE CRITERIA.

WHEN BLAINE IS ASKED TO EXPLAIN, A VARIETY OF CHALLENGING RESPONSES COULD POSSIBLY ARISE. THEY FALL WITHIN THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES:

- 1) **EVASIVE RESPONSE;**
- 2) **CRYING;**
- 3) **ANGER;**
- 4) **DESTRUCTIVE/SELF-DESTRUCTIVE RESPONSES; AND**
- 5) **VARIOUS POSSIBLE DISCLOSURES.**

FOR EACH CATEGORY OF RESPONSE, THERE ARE TIPS AND EXAMPLES OF EFFECTIVE APPROACHES BELOW. FEELING PREPARED TO ADDRESS A WIDE RANGE OF POSSIBLE RESPONSES WILL ENHANCE YOUR CONFIDENCE AND EFFECTIVENESS, INCREASING THE PROBABILITY OF ADDRESSING DETERIORATING PERFORMANCE ISSUES IN A TIMELY MANNER, IN WHICH CASE EVERYONE WINS.

## **SOLUTIONS TO VARIOUS EMPLOYEE RESPONSES**

### ***1) EVASIVE RESPONSE***

INQUIRY IS MET WITH DENIAL, DETACHMENT, VAGUENESS E.G. “MY PERFORMANCE HASN’T BEEN THAT BAD. IT’S JUST BEEN AN OFF TIME. I HAD THE FLU A WHILE AGO”.

### ***TIPS***

- DO NOT CHALLENGE VAGUE REASONS FOR PERFORMANCE CHANGE;  
E.G. “IT’S REASSURING TO HEAR YOU THINK THIS DOWNTURN IS TEMPORARY, BUT THERE ARE PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS WITH YOUR JOB”.
- RESTATE PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS AND METHOD TO MONITOR;  
AND
- IF PROBLEMS REQUIRING REFERRAL ARE STRONGLY SUSPECTED AND THE EMPLOYEE DENIES ANY PROBLEM EXISTS, A LEADER CAN INTRODUCE THE TOPIC IN A GENERAL WAY.  
E.G. “SOMETIMES PERFORMANCE CHANGES ARE RELATED TO VARIOUS STRESSES IN A PERSON’S LIFE, AND ASSIST OR THE EFAP CAN BE HELPFUL IN THESE SITUATIONS. JUST SO YOU ARE AWARE, HERE’S A BROCHURE FOR FUTURE REFERENCE”.

## **2) CRYING**

EMPLOYEE BURSTS INTO TEARS WHEN ASKED TO DISCUSS THE PERFORMANCE CHANGE.

### ***TIPS***

- ALLOW SOME TIME TO PASS AND CONVEY AN ATTITUDE OF CONCERN IN A CALM MANNER. DON’T BE ALARMED;
- ACKNOWLEDGE THE EMPLOYEE’S EMOTIONAL STATE. AT THIS POINT, THE CRYING IS THE ISSUE.  
E.G. 1 “YOU SEEM UPSET. IS THERE SOMETHING YOU WANT TO DISCUSS?”  
E.G. 2 “YOU ARE TEARFUL. HAVE YOU BEEN MORE EMOTIONAL THAN USUAL LATELY?” IF YES, “HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT SEEKING HELP?”

## **3) ANGRY RESPONSE**

EMPLOYEE BECOMES ANGRY AND CHALLENGING E.G. “WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?” WHO’S MEASURING MY PERFORMANCE? YOU? WHAT, AM I NEXT ON YOUR LIST? EVER SINCE YOU CAME TO THIS AREA, YOU’VE WANTED ME OUT. I SEE THE WAY YOU PLAY FAVOURITES!!!”

## **TIPS**

- STAY CALM;
- DO NOT BECOME DEFENSIVE;  
E.G. "I DON'T WANT YOU OUT"
- FIND SOMETHING VALID IN WHAT WAS SAID AND RESPOND EMPATHETICALLY;  
E.G. "I CAN UNDERSTAND YOUR CONCERN ABOUT FEELING SECURE IN TODAY'S WORKPLACE."
- IF EMPLOYEE REMAINS ANGRY, FOCUS ON THE PROCESS RATHER THAN THE CONTENT;  
E.G. "WHEN YOU RAISE YOUR VOICE AND BECOME ANGRY, I FEEL WE CANNOT BE PRODUCTIVE. I'D PREFER IF YOU WOULD LEAVE AND COOL OFF. WE'LL DISCUSS THIS LATER WHEN WE'RE MORE LIKELY TO REACH AN EFFECTIVE SOLUTION."
- WAIT UNTIL EMPLOYEE IS IN A CALMER STATE TO SUGGEST ASSISTANCE.

## **4) DESTRUCTIVE/SELF-DESTRUCTIVE RESPONSES**

**NOTE: THESE ARE QUITE RARE**

- A) **SELF-DESTRUCTIVE:** EMPLOYEE EXPRESSES DESPAIR AND HOPELESSNESS E.G. "I KNOW I'M DOOMED NOW. WITHOUT THIS JOB I HAVE NO REASON TO CARRY ON."

## **TIPS**

- REASSURE, AND EXPRESS CONCERN ABOUT THE DEPRESSED MOOD;
- STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT THE EMPLOYEE SEEK IMMEDIATE PROFESSIONAL HELP;
- OFFER TO CALL FOR ASSISTANCE ON THE EMPLOYEE'S BEHALF;
- ENSURE SAFE TRANSPORTATION; AND
- USE FORBES PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES (THROUGH ASSIST) CRISIS SUPPORT IF NEEDED.

- B) **DESTRUCTIVE:** "I'VE HAD ENOUGH. LONDON LIFE WILL PAY!" EMPLOYEE IS MENACING AND BEGINS BANGING HIS FIST ON THE DESK.

## **TIPS**

- FIRMLY ASK THE EMPLOYEE TO STOP THE DESTRUCTIVE BEHAVIOR;
- STAY CALM, AND INDICATE SECURITY OR POLICE WILL BE CALLED;

- LIMIT THE OPPORTUNITY FOR THE EMPLOYEE’S AGGRESSIVENESS TO ESCALATE BY TALKING CALMLY IN A LOW TONE;
- FOCUS ON PROCESS;  
E.G. “WHEN YOU ACT THIS WAY, I FEEL WORRIED ABOUT YOU. I’D PREFER IT IF YOU WOULD SIT AND RELAX A BIT SO WE CAN EXPLORE HOW I CAN BE OF ASSISTANCE.”
- POINT OUT THE DOWNSIDE OF THE EMPLOYEE’S BEHAVIOR AND STRESS THE IMPORTANCE OF HIS OR HER POTENTIAL VALUE TO THE COMPANY;  
E.G. “YOU HAVE BEEN A HIGHLY VALUED EMPLOYEE, AND STILL ARE. WHATEVER IS MAKING YOU FEEL SO INTENSELY UPSET CAN BE ADDRESSED. YOU NEED TO ENSURE YOU DON’T SABOTAGE YOUR OWN SUCCESS.”
- STRONGLY SUGGEST THAT THE EMPLOYEE TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ASSIST OR YOUR EFAP. POINT OUT IT IS CONFIDENTIAL AND VOLUNTARY, AND THAT UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES AN APPOINTMENT COULD PROBABLY BE ARRANGED FOR THAT DAY. OFFER TO MAKE THE CALL FOR THE EMPLOYEE.

## **5) DISCLOSURE**

THE EMPLOYEE MAY DISCLOSE SOMETHING ABOUT THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM. THERE IS A WIDE RANGE OF POSSIBILITIES. SOME THAT CAN BENEFIT FROM ASSISTANCE ARE LISTED BELOW.

- “I DON’T FEEL LIKE MYSELF LATELY E.G. PROBLEMS SLEEPING, TEARY. I’M NOT SURE WHAT IS WRONG.”
- “DAD LIVES IN MONTREAL AND CAN’T TAKE CARE OF HIMSELF ANYMORE. I FEEL GUILTY AND MY BROTHER HAS LEFT THIS ALL IN MY HANDS. I’M NOT SURE WHAT TO DO, BUT IT IS REALLY STRESSING ME AND AFFECTING MY PERFORMANCE.”
- “I’M STRESSED OUT DUE TO LEGAL PROBLEMS. MY SPOUSE AND I ARE HAVING DIFFICULTY WITH OUR LANDLORD, AND WE DON’T KNOW WHERE WE STAND LEGALLY.”
- “MY PARENT PASSED AWAY NINE MONTHS AGO. I WAS OK UNTIL THREE MONTHS AGO WHEN THE IMPACT SEEMS TO HAVE HIT ME. I CAN’T GET BACK TO FEELING LIKE MYSELF AGAIN.”
- “I HAVE BEEN EXPERIENCING PROBLEMS IN MY MARRIAGE.”
- YOU MAY ALSO HEAR, “I’LL BE OK. I’M GETTING ASSISTANCE. THANKS FOR YOUR CONCERN.”

# **STEPS IN CONSTRUCTIVE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND TALKING TO EMPLOYEES ABOUT PERFORMANCE ISSUES**

## **WHAT NOT TO DO:**

### **1. DO NOT LABEL**

CALLING AN EMPLOYEE AN “ALCOHOLIC” OR “POTHEAD” OR SIMILAR DEROGATORY LABEL, MAY WELL RESULT IN DENIAL, WHICH THEN FORCES ACCUSATION AND FURTHER CONFLICT. THIS IS A NO-WIN CONFRONTATION.

### **2. AVOID ANGER**

ANGER IN A CONFRONTATION SITUATION BETWEEN SUPERVISOR AND EMPLOYEE WILL DRAMATICALLY REDUCE THE SUPERVISOR’S ABILITY TO INFLUENCE A CHANGE IN THE EMPLOYEE’S WILLINGNESS TO COOPERATE.

### **3. DO NOT CONFRONT ON RUMOUR**

RUMOUR MAY BE INACCURATE. IN THIS SITUATION, CONFRONTATION CAN LEAD TO NEGATIVE RELATIONS AND POOR MORALE.

## **WHAT TO DO:**

### **1. DETAIL WORK PERFORMANCE**

EXPLAIN HOW WORK PERFORMANCE HAS DETERIORATED OR IS NOT UP TO STANDARD. POINT OUT THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PRESENT PERFORMANCE AND AGREED UPON EXPECTATIONS. DESCRIBE SPECIFICALLY THE NEGATIVE IMPACT OF THE EMPLOYEE’S PERFORMANCE.

### **2. ALLOW TIME FOR EMPLOYEE RESPONSE**

ALLOWING AN EMPLOYEE TO REACT TO A NEGATIVE PERFORMANCE REVIEW WILL COUNTERACT FEELING OF BEING “RAILROADED”. GET THE EMPLOYEE’S VIEW OF THE SITUATION.

### **3. CLARIFY STANDARD**

BE SURE THE EMPLOYEE UNDERSTANDS THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE JOB. ALSO ASK THE EMPLOYEE FOR IDEAS ON HOW THEY FEEL THEY CAN CORRECT THE SITUATION.

### **4. ACTIVELY LISTEN**

IF THE EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGES THE PROBLEM AND WANTS TO “TALK”, TAKE THE TIME TO LISTEN WITHOUT INTERRUPTIONS. EXPRESS UNDERSTANDING AND CONCERN BUT DO NOT CHANGE THE PURPOSE OF THE MEETING.

### **5. STATE ACTION PLAN OR DISCIPLINE STEPS**

CLEARLY STATE AND DESCRIBE WHAT WILL HAPPEN. EXPLAIN ANY STEPS YOU PLAN TO TAKE AND WHY.

### **6. INDICATE HOW YOU WILL MONITOR PERFORMANCE**

IN ORDER TO AVOID PARANOIA, AN EMPLOYEE SHOULD KNOW HOW YOU PLAN TO REVIEW HIS/HER WORK. AGREE ON AN ACTION PLAN.

### **7. ESTABLISH FOLLOW-UP MEETING DATE**

AGREE ON A SPECIFIC TIME TO MEET TO REVIEW JOB PERFORMANCE.

### **8. ENCOURAGE EMPLOYEE**

CONCLUDE MEETING WITH SOME POSITIVE ENCOURAGING REMARKS, IF AT ALL POSSIBLE. EXPRESS CONFIDENCE THAT THE EMPLOYEE CAN CORRECT THE SITUATION.

### **9. ENCOURAGE AND/OR REFER TO ASSIST OR EFAP**

REMIND THE EMPLOYEE THAT ANY PROBLEMS HE/SHE MAY BE HAVING ARE CONFIDENTIALLY HANDLED THROUGH ASSIST OR YOUR EFAP PROGRAM. FACILITATE AN APPOINTMENT IF HELP IS ACCEPTED.

### **10. RECORD INTERVIEW**

AFTER THE EMPLOYEE HAS LEFT THE OFFICE, MAKE A WRITTEN RECORD OF YOUR CONTACT.