

Tip Sheet: Addressing Performance Issues

Follow Company Procedure

Your company has standard policies and procedures for dealing with poor work performance. A referral to SupportLinc EAP does not replace or change these policies. If an employee's work performance does not improve, regardless of whether the employee is following SupportLinc recommendations, progressive discipline must occur. The SupportLinc program is not a substitute for management corrective action. With very few exceptions, SupportLinc is a voluntary program. The final decision to use or not use the SupportLinc program rests with the employee.

Observation

Ensure the employee knows what is expected regarding job performance, rules and policies. If an employee has performed well in the past, you can be confident that the employee has the experience, knowledge, skill level and appropriate training for the job. When declining work performance or increased absenteeism occurs, your careful observations are important. You are looking for patterns of performance problems, not an isolated event. Your observations and subsequent actions can help an employee face up to a personal problem and get help.

Documentation

Write down your observations by recording specific incidents. Without documentation, it is just your word against your employee's. Document the facts using specific dates, times, details of behaviors and the names of others involved. Documentation is one of the hardest things for a supervisor to do, yet it is one of a supervisor's most vital responsibilities. SupportLinc counselors are always available to consult with you on this and any other area of the supervisory/management referral process.

Discussion

Bring unsatisfactory work performance to the attention of the employee as it occurs. Document this discussion, including the corrective action you requested of the employee. Obtain a commitment from the employee to improve. Remind the employee of the availability of assistance from SupportLinc.

Continue Observations and Documentation

If the employee's work performance improves following your discussion, then a formal referral to the SupportLinc program is not necessary. However, continue to observe and document both declines and improvement in work performance or attendance for a short period of time. Should

Tip Sheet: Addressing Performance Issues

an employee's performance not improve, or improve and then decline again, it is time for formal documentation and a supervisory/management referral to SupportLinc.

Consult with a SupportLinc Case Manager

Discuss your concerns about the employee's work performance and your documentation with a SupportLinc Case Manager. The Case Manager, who is also a counselor, can help you determine a course of action. If a formal supervisory/management referral is appropriate, the SupportLinc Case Manager will gather the name of the employee, information on the work performance problems, what improvements are expected and the next step for discipline. The SupportLinc Case Manager will also discuss follow-up with you in order to offer support and further discuss work performance issues.

Make a Referral to SupportLinc

A formal meeting with the employee should be conducted to discuss the unsatisfactory work performance and to make the formal referral to SupportLinc.

Follow-up

With the permission of the employee, the SupportLinc Case Manager will keep you informed of the employee's compliance within the SupportLinc program and to discuss continued work performance issues. However, remember that failure to follow-through on a formal supervisory/management referral is not grounds for discipline. Discipline should only occur when work performance does not improve. At no time in your discussions with the SupportLinc Case Manager will information be disclosed to you about the nature of the employee's problem, content of the counseling sessions with the employee, or specific recommendations made to the employee. This information is confidential unless the employee authorizes SupportLinc, in writing, to disclose this information to you. Keep your supervisor and/or Human Resources Department informed of your actions as they occur.

Continue Monitoring

Continue to monitor the employee's job behavior and document findings.

Be Accessible

Be accessible to the employee to provide appropriate support.