SUPERVISOR’S ROLE

Our common goal is to establish a work environment that is healthy and productive for all employees. It is important for supervisors to focus on objective performance standards when evaluating an employee’s job performance.

OBSERVE
Troubled employees very often will exhibit changes in behavior that indicate personal problems are causing poor job performance. Here are some examples:

1. Frequent absence with vague excuses.
2. Excessive use of sick days
3. Pattern of unscheduled vacations.
4. Repeatedly coming to work late.
5. Repeated unannounced, early departures from work.
6. Taking unscheduled days off following a weekend, holiday or vacation.
7. Using up vacation days as soon as they are accrued.
8. Frequent and/or prolonged unannounced absences during assigned work hours.
9. Repeatedly missing scheduled staff functions or clients related activities.
10. Errors in judgment, which are inconsistent with past standards of good judgment.
11. Difficulty or failure to carry out routine instructions.
12. Erratic or deteriorating quality of performance when compared with past performance.
13. Overreacting to appropriate criticism.
14. Manipulating co-workers to take over assigned responsibilities.
15. Avoiding interaction with co-workers.
16. Appearing withdrawn or overly preoccupied.
17. Wide mood swings during the day for no apparent reason.
18. An increase in personal telephone calls causing repeated work interruptions.
19. Deteriorating hygiene or appearance.
20. Complaints by co-workers about employee’s erratic behavior or lack of work cooperation.

DOCUMENT
The supervisor should write down specific information regarding performance problems. Complete and accurate documentation will enable a supervisor to:

1. Be objective, fair and consistent.
2. Present factual and objective information that gives the employee a clear picture of their job performance.
3. Prepare a written plan for corrective action. Documentation is necessary if disciplinary action is taken.

PREPARE
Supervisors should address only job-performance problems. Meeting with employees to discuss performance problems should be private. The supervisor should describe job performance problems in behavioral terms. Before meeting with your employee, discuss your observations and get support from your supervisor.

1. Meet and discuss with your immediate supervisor, the data collected and formulate a plan to approach the employee.
2. Contact and discuss the situation with the Employee Assistance counselor for additional suggestions, and support.
**WHAT TO DO**

1. Inform the employee of the purpose of the meeting.
2. Give the employee a copy of your documentation.
3. Be fair, firm and clear about what the employee is expected to do to improve their job performance.
4. Be a patient listener. Allow the employee an opportunity to explain their actions and what problems they are experiencing.
5. Get a commitment from the employee that they understand and accept the plan for improvement. Give them a copy of the plan.
6. Keep confidential any information the employee tells you about their personal problems.
7. Be consistent with workplace rules and regulations.
8. Set a reasonable date for a follow up meeting to review the employee’s progress.
9. Provide information about WorkLife Programs Employee Assistance. Inform the employee how they can contact Employee Assistance.
10. Inform the employee that they have the ultimate responsibility for the improvement of job performance.

**WHAT NOT TO DO**

1. Don’t try to diagnose a personal/drug or alcohol problem.
2. Do not preach, lecture or “brow beat”.
3. Do not be a manipulator.
4. Don’t judge or moralize.
5. Don’t threaten disciplinary action, unless there will be follow through.
6. Don’t engage in rumors, deal only in facts.
7. Don’t be diverted from the purpose of the meeting by arguing.
8. Don’t accept excuses or alibis.
9. Don’t engage in talk about the activities of other employees.
10. Don’t set unreasonable goals for improvement. It took time for the problem to develop and it will take time to correct.

**FOLLOW UP**

Schedule a follow up meeting within 2-4 weeks after the initial performance evaluation. During the interim, continue to observe and documents job performance. Follow up meetings with employees are important, because they enable both parties to assess improvement or lack of improvement. The outcome of a second meeting may be that no further meetings are needed or that subsequent ones would be useful.

**CONCLUSION**

The purpose of confronting an employee’s poor job performance is to develop a positive plan of action for improvement. Good observation can result in early identification of problems. This provides the employee and supervisor with the maximum number of alternatives.