Expert Advice on Personal Holidays

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Adedayo: Welcome to Leading Edge Online. My name is Adedayo Adeniyi. I am the director for leadership and organization development in the Office of the Vice President for Human Resources. Joining me today is Sharon Williams. Sharon is a senior employee relations specialist. Welcome, Sharon.

Sharon: Thanks, Adedayo.

Adedayo: Today's focus is the Personal Holiday Policy. Sharon, can you share with us the principle purpose of this policy and why this policy exists.

Sharon: Actually, the personal holiday was created by the CSSAC, Clerical Service Staff Advisory Committee, making a suggestion to the administration that the clerical service staff could use one additional holiday during the year. They can use -- it's an eight-hour holiday. They can use it anytime during the year. They can use it in half-day increments. And they need to use it anytime within the fiscal year or they lose it.

Adedayo: Is this a holiday that the employee is entitled to take, or is this something that the supervisor can deny the employee?

Sharon: When an employee comes to a supervisor and requests either a half a day or a full day of personal holiday, the supervisor should make every effort to grant that employee's request. If there's a business reason why the supervisor can't grant the request on the day the employee has requested, then the
supervisor and the employee need to work together to choose an alternate day that works best for the both of them.

Adedayo: Sharon, what tip would you provide the supervisor in implementing personal holiday?

Sharon: I think supervisors, to the best of their ability, should grant the request of the employee if it's at all possible. If not, they should work with the employee to make sure that they can find an alternate day that fits with the employee's needs. They need to be sure that the employee takes their personal holiday, either in half day or full day increments, and that they don't try to use it, like if they're late one day or if they need to leave early or something like that, that they would use it in less than half-day increments.

Adedayo: Sharon, what are some of the common errors that supervisor and employees make when implementing personal holiday?

Sharon: Well, the personal holiday was created to give the employee an additional day away from work, whether they use it for their birthday or some other type of activity that they want to do. It's important to remember that it can only be taken in either in one full-day increment or a half-day increment. So employees can't use it in hourly increments or anything less than a half a day.

Adedayo: As we wrap things up, are there any parting thoughts that you'd like to leave the supervisors with?
Sharon: Personal holiday is a benefit that's provided by the university for clerical and service staff employees. Managed properly, it's a win-win situation for both the employee and the supervisor.

Adedayo: Sharon, as always, we thank you for your expert advice. We appreciate you very much.

Sharon: Glad to be here.