

Recognize and Address Performance Troubles

One of the difficulties of supervising staff in public media is recognizing and managing a troubling employee. Their lack of job performance can negatively impact the performance of others. Once work-related issues are identified, the media manager should take action to address the behavior and try to correct it.

Confronting the Problem Employee

A media manager's objective is to confront undesirable workplace behaviors, not try to psychoanalyze the employee. Many supervisors delay confronting a troubling employee but this hesitation leads to increased frustrations of other staff members. Delaying corrective action may negatively impact the workplace productivity of the entire staff. It is important for media managers not to let the discomfort prevent them from proceeding with corrective actions.

Checklist of Unsatisfactory Job Performance

Absenteeism - Leaving without permission, Excessive sick leave

Difficulty in Concentration - Takes more time, forgetfulness

Poor Employee Relationships on the Job

On the Job Absenteeism - Goofing Off, Long work breaks

Confusion - Difficulty following instructions & complex tasks

Appearance - Personal appearance & hygiene, alcohol on breath

Uneven Work Pattern - Alternate high/low productivity

Reporting to Work in an Altered Condition

Other behaviors - Sleeping on the job, Mood Swings

High Accident Rate - Horseplay, accidents on & off the job (but affecting job performance)

General Lowered Job Efficiency - Missed deadlines

Problems with Memory - Difficulty recalling instructions

Appropriate Supervisor Actions

An effective media manager must intervene immediately if a worker is performing at an unacceptable level and/or is showing signs s/he is not fit for work. Suggested steps:

- Check licensee's personnel policies and procedures.
- Establish levels of expected work performance. Set tolerable limits.
- Document all absenteeism, tardiness, job incidents, etc. Be specific with dates, times, and people involved.
- Treat all employees equally.
- Decide on immediate course of action.
- Base employee feedback on **WORK PERFORMANCE** and not on personal issues.
- Be firm, direct, and speak with authority.
- Be prepared to handle the employee's resistance.
- Speak to the staff member privately. Do not confront him/her in front of co-workers
- You should have a witness and/or personnel representative of the licensee at the meeting.
- If dealing with a drug or alcohol problem review your licensee's alcohol and drug policy. It may outline additional procedures to follow.