

MANAGING DISCIPLINE

WORKSHOP GUIDE



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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This session will help your delegates deal with discipline and manage problem behaviour.

This guide is designed for a manager or a facilitator to deliver a short workshop featuring videos from the Video Arts Management Essentials Series. Each video comes with a series of activities around the following structure:

LOOK - watch the video and reflect on the content and message.

THINK - activities and questions linking the video to their own experience and workplace.

REMEMBER - a summary of the key learning points.

Each section relating to the video will last around 15 minutes.

ACTION PLAN - At the end of the series of videos and activities delegates should be encouraged to share the most important actions they will take and record actions on their Personal Action Plan sheet.

FEATURED VIDEOS

- Discipline - check the facts
- The reasons behind discipline issues
- Solutions to discipline issues
- Managing problem behaviour

VIDEO 1 – DISCIPLINE – CHECK THE FACTS

LOOK (play video, 3 minutes)

Most managers dread the idea of conducting a discipline interview; often because they don't realise what the purpose of a discipline interview really is. It's about improving poor performance by getting to the bottom of the gap between standards and performance. It's not about telling someone off.

THINK (10 minutes discussion)

How have you handled discipline issues in the past? What's the best way to prepare for them?

From the responses try to emphasise:

- Employees can feel threatened by discipline interviews and may behave aggressively, self-assuredly and impatiently as a result.

Prepare for the interview:

- Keep the interview on track. Write down the points you want to discuss and work your way through the list.
- Think ahead to foresee their arguments.
- Structure what you're going to say.
- Memorise your opening lines.
- Know your facts and be prepared to show facts and figures to highlight the gap between the employee's performance and company's standards.

REMEMBER (2 minutes recap)

Discipline: the problems:

- Check the facts on standards.
- Check the facts on performance.
- Agree on the gap between performance and standards.

VIDEO 2 – THE REASONS BEHIND DISCIPLINE ISSUES

LOOK (play video, 3 minutes)

It's easy to jump to conclusions about gaps in performance, especially if we think we know the employee well enough. But it's not your job to play mind reader or put words in their mouth. In most cases there are valid reasons why employees fail to meet performance standards, especially if it's a one off. Allow the employee to explain the circumstances and put their point of view forward before coming up with an action plan.

THINK (10 minutes discussion)

Have you ever assumed an employee is lazy or just doesn't care only to find that there are valid reasons behind the discipline issues? What's the best way to move beyond our assumptions and get to the root of the problem? Sometimes it's difficult to admit we're wrong, and we often jump to conclusions. It's a universal human problem. But, it is possible to move beyond our assumptions.

Sum up the discussion with these points;

- Be prepared to listen.
- Allow employees to talk through their problems.
- Ask open questions for clarification.
- Be sympathetic - we're all human and have human problems.
- Try to find solutions to the problem together. You might find the problem lies with the procedures you've put in place rather than with the employee.

REMEMBER (2 minutes recap)

Discipline; the reasons:

- Listen.
- Ask open questions.
- Don't jump to conclusions.

VIDEO 3 – SOLUTIONS TO DISCIPLINE ISSUES

LOOK (play video, 3 minutes)

Don't dwell on the past during discipline interviews. Focus on changes that are needed for the future and how to achieve them.

THINK (10 minutes discussion)

Think back to your experiences of feedback, positive and negative. What's the best way to give employees feedback?

Responses could include;

- Giving feedback is a two-way process. You've got to be willing to be honest about your perceptions while listening to the employee's concerns and difficulties.
- Giving constructive criticism involves agreeing what needs to change with the employee. And then agreeing on an action plan.
- It's also a good idea to consider your style and approach. Feedback can say as much about the giver as the receiver. We can learn about ourselves if we listen to the feedback we give others.
- Feedback is about helping others gain greater awareness of the impact their behaviour has on performance. It is not about unloading.
- Also, it's a good idea to get feedback from others about the way you deliver messages.

REMEMBER (2 minutes recap)

Discipline; the solutions:

- Focus on facts.
- Be positive and look to the future.
- Agree a target and fix a review date.

VIDEO 4 – MANAGING PROBLEM BEHAVIOUR

LOOK (play video, 3 minutes)

The presence of problems and conflict which arise out of the behaviour of others is a common feature of many working environments. The measure of any manager is how they approach these difficult behaviours and resolve issues quickly and effectively.

THINK (10 minutes discussion)

Ask the group to discuss how they have dealt with problem behaviour at work? What's the best way to deal with it?

Emphasise the following points;

- If you think the problem behaviour stems from some basic personality characteristic then you are likely to be pessimistic about the chances of changing things.
- However, if you view the problem behaviour as just that - behaviour: something they are saying or doing - then you are likely to be optimistic about your chances of changing things.
- People's behaviour is constantly changing in reaction to different circumstances. This suggests that it is flexible and amenable to a process of change. Also, behaviour is visible so it's easy to identify and monitor it.
- Meet the team to discuss and agree the "traffic lights" approach. Get everyone's buy in to demonstrate green behaviours and make sure you acknowledge good behaviour as well as undesirable and unacceptable behaviours straight away.

REMEMBER (2 minutes recap)

Managing problem behaviour

- GREEN: Positive, helpful behaviour.
- AMBER: Behaviour that develops negativity.
- RED: Behaviour that damages clients, company and colleagues.

MANAGING DISCIPLINE – ACTION PLAN

Divide the group into pairs or threes.

- Ask them to spend 10 minutes sharing the most important action they will take to improve their approach to discipline interviews and managing problem behaviour.
- Make sure that each individual has identified at least one specific action to take as a result of the programme.
- Ask for and answer any final questions.
- Bring the session to an end.