

Techniques for Dealing with Troubled Employees

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www.usc.edu/worklife

Center for Work and Family Life

USC Employee Assistance Program

📌 **Available Services** (www.usc.edu/worklife)

★ Faculty and Staff Counseling

★ Work/Life Support @ USC

★ Faculty, Management & Departmental
Consultation

★ Family & Dependent Care: Information &
Resources

★ Health Promotion and Wellness Programs

Center for Work and Family Life
USC Employee Assistance Program

📌 Services to ALL Staff, Faculty & Dependents

- ✓ Short-term, solution-focused counseling for a wide range of personal & work related concerns
- ✓ Crisis intervention
- ✓ Departmental consultation
- ✓ Personal & professional coaching

Staff/Faculty Counseling & Consultation Center

USC Employee Assistance Program

📌 Services to ALL Staff, Faculty & Dependents

- ✓ Assessment, referral and case management
- ✓ Education & training
- ✓ Time limited groups
- ✓ Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM)

We See the Types of Problems You See

- ✓ Chemical Dependency
- ✓ Emotional
- ✓ Behavioral
- ✓ Physical
- ✓ Family / Relationship Problems
- ✓ Performance problems
- ✓ Stress / Burnout
- ✓ Conflict (between co-workers)
- ✓ Violence
- ✓ Financial
- ✓ Trauma / Disaster
- ✓ Others???????

Staff/Faculty Counseling & Consultation Center

USC Employee Assistance Program

- 📌 **Services for Managers/Supervisors**
- ✓ **Supervisory & management consultation**
- ✓ **Coaching**
- ✓ **Workshop / retreat planning**
- ✓ **Organization development**
- ✓ **Training**
- ✓ **Mediation**

Staff/Faculty Counseling & Consultation Center

USC Employee Assistance Program

Types of referrals

✓ **Self Initiated**

✓ **Supervisory**

✓ **Mandatory (Threat Assessment Team)**

✓ **Crisis**

Goals for Today

- 📌 Enhance your ability to identify an employee who may be experiencing personal problems.
- 📌 Identify constructive approaches to confronting performance problems.
- 📌 Know your responsibilities and limitations as a manager or supervisor.
- 📌 Learn how to effectively utilize the services available at the Center for Work and Family Life

Introductory Questions



What interested you in this particular session?



How many of you signed up for this workshop with a specific person in mind?

Introductory Questions



How would you describe a healthy relationship between supervisor and employee?

Establishing a Healthy Relationship Between Supervisor and Employee

Establishing Healthy Boundaries

Supervisor Needs:

Professional Distance

- ✓ Leadership & responsibility
- ✓ Sets the standards
- ✓ Must be able to critique/constructive criticism
- ✓ Honest communication

Establishing a Healthy Relationship Between Supervisor and Employee

Establishing Healthy Boundaries

Supervisor Needs:

Professional Distance

- ✓ Problem identification (talk problem, not people)
- ✓ On-going supervision sessions
- ✓ Timely job performance evaluations
- ✓ Confidentiality

Establishing a Healthy Relationship Between Supervisor and Employee

Establishing Healthy Boundaries

Employee Needs:

Supervisor is the leader, not a friend, but a person who is responsible and accountable for the employee's job performance.

- ✓ **Employee must accept the standards**
- ✓ **Must be open to direction and constructive criticism**
- ✓ **Provides quality work**
- ✓ **Accepts the fact that there is a boss/leader**

Establishing a Healthy Relationship Between Supervisor and Employee

Establishing Healthy Boundaries

Employee Needs:

Supervisor is the leader, not a friend, but a person who is responsible and accountable for the employee's job performance.

- ✓ **Maintains a high standard of work ethic (do the job, receive the pay check)**
- ✓ **Responsible for healthy communication/relationships with others, honest communication, open to input**
- ✓ **Responsible to work through the chain of command**

Establishing a Healthy Relationship Between Supervisor and Employee

Major Communication Problems Stem from Weakness

Supervisor's Weakness

- ✓ Lets things slide / then eventually gets angry
- ✓ Does not give on-going input
- ✓ Lacks empathy
- ✓ Often has high expectations, but does not clarify
- ✓ Stockpiles, then has an attitude change towards the employee
- ✓ Holds employees accountable, but does not bring them along

Establishing a Healthy Relationship Between Supervisor and Employee

Major Communication Problems Stem from Weakness

Supervisor's Weakness

- ✓ Does not have on-going supervision
- ✓ Favors the employees that do everything the way the supervisor wants
- ✓ Betrayal of confidentiality
- ✓ Unable/unwilling to address performance issues
- ✓ Does not address hearsay / separate fact from fiction
- ✓ Does not communicate values / set standards clearly

Establishing a Healthy Relationship Between Supervisor and Employee

Major Communication Problems Stem from Weakness

Employee's Weakness

- ✓ Does not like authority figures
- ✓ Does not like to follow policy or procedure
- ✓ Does not work through the Chain of Command
- ✓ Does not communicate feelings about the situation

Establishing a Healthy Relationship Between Supervisor and Employee

Major Communication Problems Stem from Weakness

Employee's Weakness

- ✓ Inappropriately talks about the workplace or supervisor
- ✓ Politically immaturity
- ✓ Acts out (e.g. passive aggressive, verbalizes negativity, undermining)
- ✓ Role confusion

Establishing a Healthy Relationship Between Supervisor and Employee

Weekly / On-Going Supervision

- ✓ Employees need regular input – strength & weaknesses, positive & negative
- ✓ Employee knows where they stand, no surprises
- ✓ This may keep a person from feeling picked on
- ✓ Opens up communication
- ✓ Gives a private, on-going forum to address issues

Establishing a Healthy Relationship Between Supervisor and Employee

Weekly / On-Going Supervision

- ✓ Establishes a professional relationship
- ✓ Creates a standard of fairness & consistency
- ✓ Improves trust & productivity
- ✓ Constructive criticism is more acceptable because the meeting is an established place for open communication

Establishing a Healthy Relationship Between Supervisor and Employee

📌 Give them the vision, set the standards, the quality. This needs to start at the beginning so that it establishes

- ✓ **Honest guidelines**
- ✓ **Clear expectations**
- ✓ **Role definition between supervisor and employee**
- ✓ **A healthy communication relationship**

What might happen if you try to set standards after an employee has been on the job for a while?

What Do You Think?



What characteristics describe a 'troubled' employee?



What characteristics describe a 'good' employee?

Differentiating Behaviors

A. Normal (All of Us!)

- Healthy “*normies*”
- People want to work with us
- Show up
- Do their job
- Fun
- Productive

Differentiating Behaviors

B. Difficult People

- High maintenance
- Must give a lot, but you get a lot
- Pain-in-the-neck, but they get the job done
- You just wonder why they make things so difficult

Differentiating Behaviors

C. Manipulative People

- ❑ Use others (emotionally, behaviorally) for their own advantage
- ❑ Out for themselves – not out to get others
- ❑ You do not trust them
- ❑ Can pick up on '*career limiting behaviors / activities*' if you point them out

Differentiating Behaviors

D. Destructive People

- Mean spirited
- Angry, hostile
- Out to undermine, destroy, hurt
- You feel afraid of them – Do not feel safe

Differentiating Behaviors

E. Impaired People

- Sometimes we can get them help and they get better
- Sometimes we can get them help and they don't get better
- Sometimes we can't get them help and they don't get better

When is an Employee Considered High Risk?

It is advisable to seek consultation when you have knowledge of employees presenting with the following traits or behaviors, especially more than one:

- Known history of violence
- Preoccupation with violence or weapons (or owns weapons)
- Threats with intent to harm self, others, or property
- Defiant/demanding/intimidating behavior
- Frequent disruptive behavior in the workplace
- Mood Swings

Risk Factors Continued

- Negative attitudes or entitlement
- Irrational thinking/blaming others
- Workplace situational factors
 - high conflict
 - grievances
- Substance abuse
- Suspiciousness/paranoia
- Fear or concern
- Recent or pending loss (significant)

Potential High-Risk Behavior Defined

Disruptive Behavior

Disturbs, interferes with, or prevents normal work functions or activities

- Yelling
- Profanity
- Waving arms or fists
- Verbal abuse
- Non-compliance with security procedures, refusing ID

Threatening Behavior

- Threatening body language, posturing
- Oral or written threats
- Implicit threats

Violent Behavior

- Physical assault, with or without weapons
- Attempted physical assault
- Throwing items with intent to injure
- Behavior that a reasonable person would interpret as violent
- Specific threats to inflict physical harm

Who Is The Troubled Employee?

Documentation Guidelines

- 📌 Adequate documentation will assist you in evaluating job performance and confronting an employee when necessary.
- 📌 It is essential that documentation be:
 - ✓ **specific**
 - ✓ **objective**
 - ✓ **factual**
 - ✓ **thorough**
 - ✓ **timely**

Who Is The Troubled Employee?

Documentation Guidelines

- * **Always a good idea to consult with the Office of Personnel Services for guidance on documenting performance deficits prior to initiating a progressive discipline process.**

Who Is The Troubled Employee?

Documentation Guidelines

The following list of behavioral characteristics is to be used only as a reference and observational aid.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN JOB PERFORMANCE

✓ **Absenteeism (most obvious)**

- multiple instances of reporting time off
- excessive use of sick leave
- repeated absences following a pattern
- excessive lateness in the morning or upon return from lunch

Who Is The Troubled Employee?

Documentation Guidelines

The following list of behavioral characteristics is to be used only as a reference and observational aid.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN JOB PERFORMANCE

✓ **Absenteeism (most obvious)**

- peculiar and increasingly improbable excuses for absences
- frequent unscheduled short-term absences (with or without medical explanation)
- frequent use of unscheduled vacation time

Who Is The Troubled Employee?

Documentation Guidelines

✓ **“On The Job” Absenteeism – *Presenteeism (less obvious)***

- At work but productivity and efficiency lacking
- continued absence from job location more than job requires
- frequent trips to water fountain or restroom
- long coffee breaks

Who Is The Troubled Employee?

Documentation Guidelines



Accidents

- physical complaints on the job
- accidents on the job
- accidents off the job

Who Is The Troubled Employee?

Documentation Guidelines

✓ **Observed Changes in Work Patterns**

- current work assignment requires more effort than previously taken
- work takes more time to produce
- difficulty in recalling instructions, understanding office procedures, etc.

Who Is The Troubled Employee?

Documentation Guidelines

✓ **Observed Changes in Work Patterns**

- display of disinterest in work
- increased difficulty handling complex assignments
- difficulty recalling previous mistakes (although these have been brought to employee's attention)

Who Is The Troubled Employee?

Documentation Guidelines

✓ **Observed Changes in Work Patterns**

- general absentmindedness,
forgetfulness
- alternate periods of high and low
productivity
- coming to work intoxicated
- missed deadlines

Who Is The Troubled Employee?

Documentation Guidelines

✓ **Observed Changes in Work Patterns**

- mistakes due to poor judgement
- outside complaints about the employee's work
- improbable excuses for these poor patterns
- carelessness

Who Is The Troubled Employee?

Documentation Guidelines

✓ **Employee Relationships On The Job**

- overreaction to real or imagined criticism
- wide swings in job morale
- borrowing money from co-workers
- repeated and compulsive criticism of the Department or University

Who Is The Troubled Employee?

Documentation Guidelines

✓ **Employee Relationships On The Job**

- persistent request for job transfer
- unrealistic expectations for promotion
- abrasiveness with others (managers and co-workers)

✓ **Work Related Relationships in the Community**

- inappropriate behaviors
- complaints from other departments or consumers

Who Is The Troubled Employee?

Documentation Guidelines

↓ **CHANGES IN EMPLOYEE'S BEHAVIOR CHARACTERISTICS**

✓ **Appearance**

- sloppy
- inappropriate clothing

✓ **Mood**

- withdrawn
- sad
- mood swings (high and low)
- suspiciousness
- extreme sensitivity
- frequent irritability
- preoccupation with illness and death

Who Is The Troubled Employee?


Documentation Guidelines

✓ **Actions**

- physically assaultive or threatening
- unduly talkative
- exaggerated self-importance
- inability to change plans with reasonable ease
(*rigidity*)
- making incoherent or irrelevant statements on the job
- over-compliance with any routine (rituals)
- frequently argumentative
- frequent outbursts or crying
- excessive amount of personal telephone time


Just observing & recording behaviors

Substance Abuse?

 **A person with a drug or alcohol problem may show the following signs:**

- A change in personality, mood swings, irritability, withdrawing from others
- Declining performance, decline in quality & output, increased number of mistakes, putting off work, inconsistent performance, complaints from others, illogical or sloppy work

Substance Abuse?

 **A person with a drug or alcohol problem may show the following signs:**

- Absenteeism & tardiness, late to work, leaving early, long lunches, late coming back from lunch, Monday / Friday absenteeism, day after payday or holidays absenteeism. Often absent due to illness
- Job Shrinkage – does the minimum necessary
- Presenteeism

Substance Abuse?

- Unreliability, pattern of missed deadlines, poor concentration, confusion about instructions, critical errors in judgment and lack of attention to details
- Increased accidents – on or off the job
- Comes to work early and stays late just to get the normal amount of work done
- Physical signs (bloodshot eyes, weight loss, unsteady gait, slurred speech, wears long sleeves in hot weather)

Substance Abuse?

- 📌 Substance abuse is a disease of denial
- 📌 Alcoholics/addicts come up with millions of excuses for poor performance and poor attitudes
- 📌 Other people, like us, often deny a problem exists
- 📌 Choosing not to see a troubled employee is bad for everyone
- 📌 Protecting instead of confronting leads to more severe problems

The problem does not go away by itself

When to Intervene?

- 📌 **Early:** Concern for seemingly troubled employee when job performance is not yet a problem (*i.e. Employee's mood has been low for a period of time. Employee is usually cheery. Marked change in mood.*)
- 📌 **Middle:** Job performance is beginning to be affected. (*i.e. Absence increase / concentration decline*).

When to Intervene?

- 📌 **Middle:** Noticeable decline in job performance (*i.e. Frequent errors in reports done at the last minute*).
- 📌 **Late:** Job jeopardy (*i.e. Deadlines not kept, sloppy work, increased absences*).

Why is Confrontation Hard?

WHAT MAKES IT DIFFICULT FOR US TO ACT ON OUR CONCERNS AND CONFRONT A TROUBLED EMPLOYEE?

It Creates Anxiety in Us

- ✓ We might be mistaken
- ✓ We might offend
- ✓ It's none of my business/not my place
- ✓ People in glass houses should not throw stones
- ✓ It's easier to avoid/ignore the problem
- ✓ We fear disapproval from others

Why is Confrontation Hard?

WHAT MAKES IT DIFFICULT FOR US TO ACT ON OUR CONCERNS AND CONFRONT A TROUBLED EMPLOYEE?


It's Our Own Style

- ✓ May react from our own learned and built-up responses to the specific problems (e.g. we ourselves are adult children of alcoholics)
- ✓ Our own discomfort with confrontation & assertion
- ✓ Our own need to be protector, to “take care of”, to rescue
- ✓ Our own need to be liked (vs. respected)
- ✓ Our own misconceptions about people with emotional or substance abuse problems
- ✓ Negative past experiences

Co-Dependency (Enabling)

- 📌 Any action which (*no matter how well-intentioned*), serves to protect the employee from the consequences of his or her behavior and thereby allows that behavior to continue, and the underlying problem to worsen.

Why is Confrontation Hard?

 Absent feedback from you, anything an employee says or does is OK.

Why is Confrontation Hard?

WHAT MAKES IT DIFFICULT FOR US TO ACT ON OUR CONCERNS AND CONFRONT A TROUBLED EMPLOYEE?

Organizational Issues

- ✓ Climate (i.e. passive, avoidant, abusive, healthy)
- ✓ Support from supervisor / others
- ✓ Past practices / experiences
- ✓ P & Ps

 **Rule of thumb: Never start down a road that you're not sure you can go all the way down**

Deciding Whether to Confront Key Questions

1. If all the staff I oversee, that I am responsible for, did this behavior, would I be able to tolerate it? (Would my boss?)
2. Do I have a staff member who, when s/he calls in to say they won't be coming in to work, and no matter how much hassle it causes me, I am glad?

Deciding Whether to Confront Key Questions

3. Do I have a “significant other” who knows everything there is to know about one of my staff and, yet, has never met them?
4. Do I usually feel like I am walking on egg shells when I am around one particular staff person?

Making Feedback More Acceptable

📌 People tend to be more willing to accept feedback when they have a feeling that:

- The person offering the feedback is reliable and has good intentions towards them.
- The feedback development process is fair – that is, the person giving the feedback:
 - ⌚ Collects all relevant information
 - ⌚ Allows the subordinate to clarify and explain matters
 - ⌚ Considers the subordinates opinions
 - ⌚ Applies consistent standards when delivering criticism

Making Feedback More Acceptable

📌 People tend to be more willing to accept feedback when they have a feeling that:

☐ The feedback *communication process is fair* – that is, the person offering the feedback:

↻ Pays careful attention to the subordinates ideas

↻ Shows respect for the subordinate

↻ Supports the subordinate despite their disagreements

Tips for a Successful Intervention

- 📌 Allow enough time; have a private place
- 📌 Have all documentation available
- 📌 Be specific, use examples of performance deficiencies
- 📌 “I” statements rather than “you” statements
- 📌 Stick to the facts
- 📌 Judge performance, not the person

Tips for a Successful Intervention

- 📌 Allow the employee time to talk, but don't be overly sympathetic (*Don't become part of the problem*)
- 📌 Don't lose your cool
- 📌 Stay out of *'The DRAMA'*
- 📌 Remember that it may require a number of discussions / interventions to improve the situation – **ALWAYS FOLLOW-UP**
- 📌 Get consultation / support as needed before, during and after

Steps for Effective CONFRONTATION

C Cease assuming responsibility for solving an employee's problem

O Observe and document performance deficiencies

- Part of ongoing appraisal process

N Note behaviors in specific, detailed terms

- Specific
- Observable/countable
- Non-judgmental
- Timely

F Familiarize yourself with your people

R Refer troubled employees for professional assistance

- **Center for Work and Family Life (213) 821-0800**

O Offer to listen

N Negotiate an action plan & follow-up date with employee

T Take time to utilize the performance appraisal process

Consultation: Important Campus Contacts

Office of Personnel Services:

Sharon Haymond-UPC (213) 740-7953

Maria Chacon-HSC (323) 442-1010

Office of Equity & Diversity:

Jody Shipper (213) 740-5086

Employee Relations:

LaVetta Hudson (213) 740-7734

Risk Management / *Violence in the Workplace:*

Doug Moore (213) 740-6204

Legal Counsel:

Jim Ball (213) 740-7922

Center for Work and Family Life:

John Gaspari (213) 821-0800

Personality Disorders

Operational Definition



An individual who engages in a reliable, repetitive, predictable behavior pattern that amplifies problems, creates difficulties, or distracts from rather than assists in finding solutions to problems.



In non-personality disordered individuals, the trouble and upset of something going wrong leads to a **survival-based pattern of problem solving.**

1. Define the problem
2. Consider possible solutions
3. Select an option
4. Implement the solution
5. Evaluate the outcome

Personality Disorders

Social Definition

- 📌 A person with whom you feel like you're the '*crazy*' one
- 📌 Useful in identifying personality disorders by the reactions of others in non-clinical settings
(i.e. the workplace, social events).

Personality Disorders

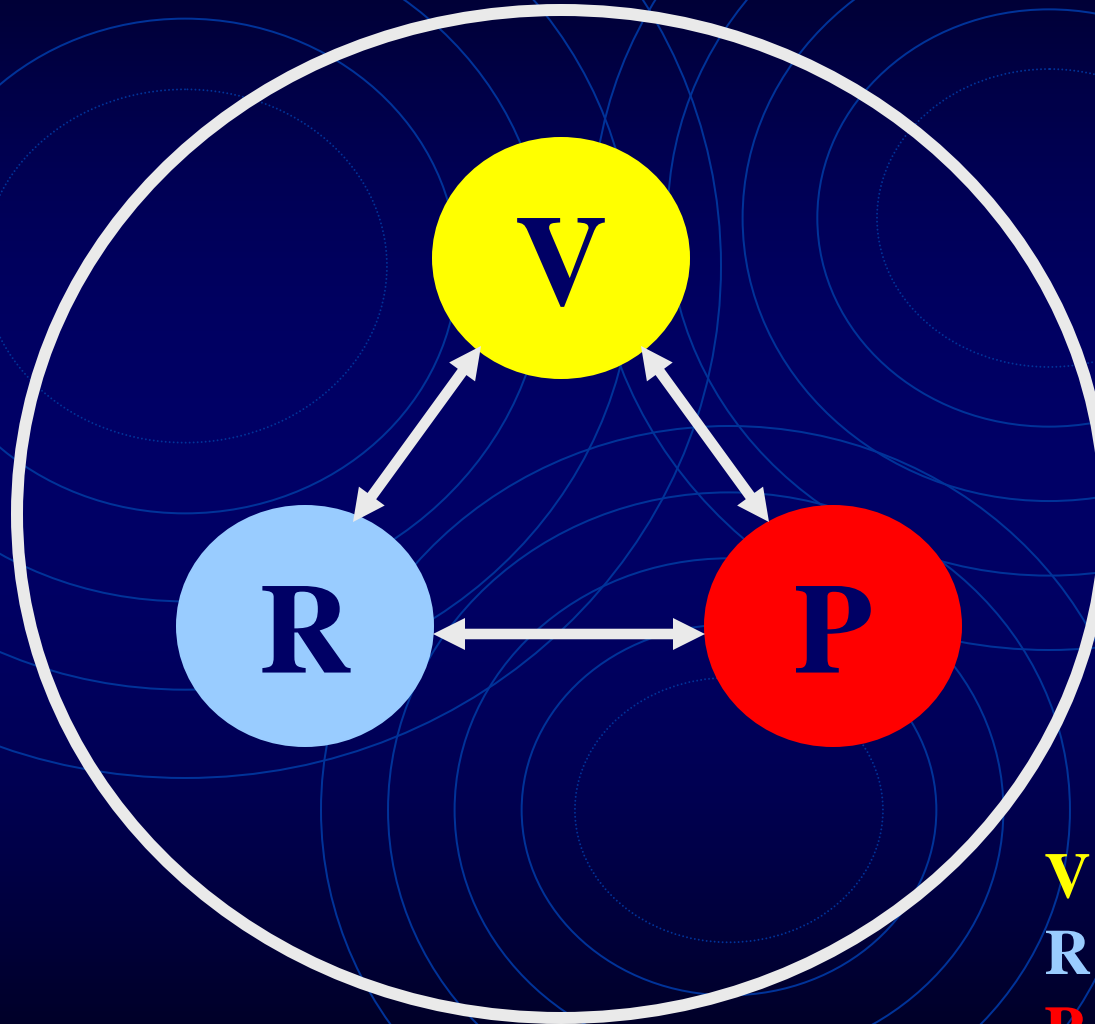
Emotional Definition

📌 A person you feel angry with or annoyed by and you don't want to feel this way.

📌 Useful in using your own reactions to help confirm the presence of a personality disorder

(i.e. you lack empathy for the person or want to distance yourself).

The “DRAMA”



V = Victim

R = Rescuer

P = Persecutor

Characteristics of DRAMA

📌 In personality disordered individuals the trouble and upset of something going wrong leads to a survival based pattern of distraction called DRAMA (**Not Conscious**).

1. Drama is driven by ulterior motives:

Position	Apparent Motive	Ulterior Motive
Rescuer	“I’m trying to help”	“I’m good (acceptable)”
Persecutor	“I’m trying to fix”	“I’m right (powerful)”
Victim	“I’m trying to recover”	“I’m blameless (safe)”

Characteristics of DRAMA

2. Drama is designed to maintain an existential position, rather than to reach a practical goal.
3. Drama is designed to create stimulation, usually confusion and upset.
4. Drama is designed to produce new problems or to intensify problems in service of maintaining existential position.
5. Drama is survival-based and resists both exposure and intervention.

Characteristics of DRAMA

6. Drama is designed to get everyone to participate.
7. The severity of the personality disorder is determined by the intensity at which the drama is played out.
8. The type of intervention used to deal with personality disorders is defined by:
 - ↳ **The way it intervenes in the process of drama.**
 - ↳ **The outcome it is designed to produce.**

Personality Disorders

Hallmark Operating Characteristic of
Personality Disorders is a :

Lack of Internal Conflict

This is the core element responsible for:

- 1. Creating external social conflict
(*drama*)**
- 2. Creating internal conflict in others**

Questions / Discussion

????????

Supervisor 1

Average worker. Excessive absences. S/he often confides in you and tells you a lot of personal information about his/her life and the problems s/he's facing. You've tried to help him/her through difficult problems at home.

Employee 1

You've missed a lot of days. Your work performance is average. You've already told your supervisor about the troubles you have at home, and s/he's been very understanding. It's true you have lots of family and financial troubles.

You want to continue to get your supervisor to excuse your behavior. S/he's a nice guy/gal and you get along well. S/he'll understand. You also want to ask your supervisor for his/her advice with your problems.

Supervisor 2

Long-time employee. Long history of good work and dedication to the department. Always helpful and willing to take on overtime when you needed someone. You know his/her spouse died 1 ½ years ago. The quality of his/her work has dramatically declined since then (many more errors).

Employee 2

You're a well-liked person at work. You generally do a great job. Over the years you've helped your supervisor out when s/he needed someone to cover or fill in. You're a nice, quiet, private sort of person. You never share much about yourself. Since your husband/wife died 1 ½ years ago, you've been drinking every day after work and you look forward to that drink.

You still seldom miss work, but the quality of your work has been affected. There is a noticeable increase in your errors. Your co-workers and supervisor have noticed the recent problems with your work, but no one has said anything because you're such a nice guy/gal!

Now you want to get your supervisor to continue to ignore the situation because of his/her loyalty to you. After all, you've been a good worker for 15 years.

Supervisor 3

New employee. Erratic worker. Has a lot of potential and can really be one of the most productive workers in the department and do a very good job. Co-workers have been complaining about him/her, saying that s/he leaves things undone and sometimes doesn't make deadlines. They also complain that s/he is uncooperative and irritable. Rumor has it that the worker uses cocaine.

Employee 3

Your co-workers have been complaining. Your attitude has made it extremely difficult for them to work with you. Half the time your work is perfect, and you do twice as much as everyone else. The other half of the time, things don't get done on schedule.

You are sloppy and uncooperative. When your co-workers comment on your irritability and the loose ends you leave behind, you get furious. When your supervisor tries to address what's going on, **you get enraged. You get defensive! How dare s/he assume anything is wrong!**

You know there's a rumor in your department that you use cocaine. You feel that if you choose to do cocaine on the weekends, it's your own business. You never use it at work!

Supervisor 4

Excellent worker. Work always gets done well, but worker takes long lunch hours and is often late to work on Monday. You know that s/he occasionally drinks a beer at lunch.

Employee 4

You're a great worker. Your job is done well. You like to have a drink (only a beer) at lunch and make no bones about it. You tell everybody that you love to drink beer (your only vice). It relaxes you, and you're completely in control. Over the past year, you've been late many Monday mornings, and you keep telling your supervisor that your car is on the blink.

Work means a lot to you, and you don't believe you have an alcohol problem, but you know your spouse and kids think you do.

You want to remind and impress upon your supervisor that you do your job well and take pride in it. You want that to distract him/her from your long lunch hours and late arrivals on Monday.

Supervisor 5

Lively young employee. About every four months, misses a day, usually Friday, without calling in ahead of time. S/he has a fond reputation of being the department's "partier", but now co-workers are starting to get annoyed.

Employee 5

You're young and often party on weekends. You're unreliable at times – you occasionally miss work without calling in ahead of time (about once ever 3 or 4 month or so. You just forgot all about work after freebasing coke, drinking and smoking pot.

This time, you missed one day and didn't call in until noon. Last time, you did come in to work after partying all weekend, but you felt and looked like hell. You could hardly function. You're the young, swingin' single to the rest of the crew, but now they're beginning to feel annoyed and taken advantage of when they have to cover for you after one of your episodes.

You feel that maybe you've pushed your luck too far and had better watch your step. **You want to get your supervisor to understand and laugh-off your crazy adventures, ask for a little fatherly/motherly advise, and promise you won't do it again.**

Supervisor 6

Long-time employee. Deadwood. Chronic poor performance and no improvement despite prior talks. Only three years to go until s/he retires.

Employee 6

You're a long-time employee. You've functioned minimally on the job – just barely making “Satisfactory” on performance evaluations. You've been on the same job for 22 years. You constantly make careless errors and are very inefficient. You have no motivation to change.

When your supervisor talks to you, you “yes” him/her and make promises to shape up. You remind him/her that you only have 3 more years to go before s/he's rid of you.