

## Discipline as a Motivational Tool

It is never a nice thing to dismiss people for poor performance or for transgressions of disciplinary rules. Many managers dread having “The Disciplinary Conversation” with a member of their team. They will:

- Ignore behaviour
- Be in denial that there is an issue
- Take a small “stab” at the issue hoping for a result
- Move the person onto another department
- Make the person feel unwanted
- Use sarcasm to make a point

None of which is helpful for the staff member, the team or the reputation of the manager and his/ her organisation. It certainly does nothing for increased performance and results.

The good news is that we can use the disciplinary process as a motivational tool, when used with care, empathy and a good degree of determination.

There is a 5-step model for having “The Disciplinary Conversation” that managers may find helpful, however there is an important step everyone should take before embarking on this effective disciplinary process. Take legal advice first and let them know what you intend to say and do. Respect your country employment law when you come to implement the steps.

The approach to take is to first:

- Pinpoint the behaviour you want

Nail exactly what is required and write this in your records and for clarity during your conversations

- Record the facts

Record facts, not hearsay, input from others should be based on unemotional details, not points of view

- Involve the person

Ask them what they think. It is easy for the manager to be judge and jury, resist the urge to jump to conclusions

- Coach the person

Make the person understand the situation and their behaviour so that they value your intervention and realise that you are by their side, wanting and supporting their success.

- Evaluate progress

Hold regular stewardship interviews to ensure they are on track. Be a cheerleader for their successes, big and small.

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