

8. HR Management



Strategically Design Your Team

Let's ask ourselves some important questions:

1. What are the gaps in my team right now? Is there a specific skill set we're missing?

2. Does my team agree with me on these gaps, or do they see things differently?

3. What specific skills and experiences should our new hire bring to the table?

4. What level of seniority are we looking for? We want someone who can hit the ground running but also fit in with our team dynamics.

5. How does our budget for this role match up with the ideal candidate we have in mind? Do we need to make any adjustments?

Reflective Exercise: Understanding Positive Departures

To really deepen your understanding, take some time to reflect on these questions:

1. Think back on past experiences with colleagues who left for good reasons.

- How did their managers and the team handle these departures?
- Is there anything you would have done differently?

2. Review your own career moves.

- How many were motivated by positive reasons, and how did these transitions shape your path to your current role?

Structured Technique for Communicating Termination

1. Introduction: Setting the Tone

- Begin with a clear and calm introduction, ensuring the conversation is held in a private and comfortable setting.
- Example: "Thank you for meeting with me today. I want to have an important conversation about your role at the company."

2. State the Decision

- Concisely and directly communicate the decision to terminate employment.
- Example: "After much consideration and despite our efforts to support your growth here, we've made the difficult decision to end your employment with the company."

3. Explain the Reasoning

- Provide a clear rationale that focuses on performance issues and business needs, avoiding personal criticisms.
- Example: "Despite our attempts, including feedback and additional resources to help meet your goals, the challenges in achieving the necessary performance benchmarks for your role have led us to this decision."

4. Outline Next Steps

- Discuss practical matters such as final paycheck, benefits, and any company property to be returned.
- Example: "We'll process your final paycheck to include any unused vacation days. HR will follow up with details about your benefits and the return of any company property."

5. Offer Support

- If applicable, offer support for the transition, such as references or outplacement services.
- Example: "We're prepared to provide a reference based on your time with us, and we'll offer support through our outplacement services to help with your job search."

6. Closure

- Close the conversation with empathy, thanking the employee for their contributions.
- Example: "I want to thank you for your efforts and contributions to the company. We wish you all the best in your future endeavors."

Tips for Conducting the Conversation:

- Maintain a respectful and empathetic tone throughout.
- Be prepared for a range of emotional responses and handle them with compassion.
- Keep the conversation focused and avoid getting drawn into debates about the decision.
- Ensure privacy and confidentiality.

Role Play Scenario: Conducting a Termination Conversation

Context

You're Susan, a manager at InnovateTech, a software startup. Susan has been with the company since its early stages and has built the team. Jordan was Susan's first hire during rapid expansion, chosen for their enthusiasm and cultural fit.

Over the past six months, despite the team's success, Jordan has consistently underperformed. Susan has provided mentoring, feedback, and clear expectations, but Jordan's performance hasn't improved. This is now impacting team progress and morale.

Given the importance of current projects and the need for high performance from all team members, Susan has decided to terminate Jordan's employment after careful consideration and multiple improvement attempts.

Task

Draft key phrases for each stage of the conversation you are going to use to fire Jordan.

1. Opening the Discussion
2. Communicating the Decision
3. Providing Rationale
4. Explaining Next Steps
5. Offering Transition Support
6. Concluding the Meeting

Note: You can pause the video now if you want to think about it a bit longer.

Here's an example of how you can do this.

1. Opening the Discussion: "Jordan, thank you for meeting with me. I've scheduled this time to have an important conversation about your position at InnovateTech. This may be difficult, but I want to ensure we discuss this matter thoroughly and openly."

2. Communicating the Decision: "After careful consideration and review of your performance over the past months, we've come to the difficult decision to terminate your employment with InnovateTech, effective immediately. I know this is challenging news to receive, and I want to explain our reasoning fully."

3. Providing Rationale: "This decision follows our previous discussions about performance expectations and the goals set for your role. Despite our efforts to provide support and opportunities for improvement, we haven't seen the necessary progress in key areas critical to our team's success. The gap between expectations and performance has continued to impact our projects and team dynamics."

4. Explaining Next Steps: "I'd like to walk you through the next steps to ensure a smooth transition. We'll discuss your final paycheck, which will include compensation for any unused vacation time. I'll also explain the status of your benefits and the process for returning any company property. HR will provide a detailed document outlining all of this information."

5. Offering Transition Support: "While this marks the end of your time with InnovateTech, we want to support your transition. We're prepared to provide a reference that reflects your contributions during your time here. Additionally, we offer outplacement services to assist with your job search, including resume review and interview preparation, if you're interested."

6. Concluding the Meeting: "I want to acknowledge your efforts and the positive aspects you've brought to the team during your time here. While this is the end of your journey with InnovateTech, we genuinely wish you success in your future endeavors. Do you have any immediate questions or concerns you'd like to discuss before we conclude?"

Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) Template

Employee Information:

- Team Member Name:
- Manager:
- Role:
- Department:
- Date of Plan:

Plan Duration:

- Length of PIP:
- Start Date:
- End Date:

Overview of Performance Improvement Plan:

- Brief description of the PIP purpose and importance
- [Guiding questions to help the manager articulate where the team member has not met expectations]

Areas of Improvement:

- Area 1:
 - Specific Expectation:
 - Example(s) of Performance Gap:
- Area 2:
 - Specific Expectation:
 - Example(s) of Performance Gap:
- [Additional areas as necessary, focusing on no more than 3-4 key areas]

SMART Goals for Improvement:

- Goal 1: [Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound]
- Goal 2: [Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound]
- [Additional goals as necessary]

Action Plan for Improvement:

- Key Activities:
 - Activity 1:
 - Additional Details:
 - Success Indicator:
 - Timing/Deadline:
 - Activity 2:
 - Additional Details:
 - Success Indicator:
 - Timing/Deadline:
 - [Additional activities as necessary]

Support and Resources:

- Training Sessions:
- Mentorship Opportunities:
- Scheduled Feedback Meetings:
- Additional Resources:

Employee Feedback:

- Employee's initial comments:
- [Space for the employee to provide input or perspective on the PIP]

Progress Indicators and Check-Ins:

- Check-In Date 1: [Goals to be reviewed, method of review]
- Check-In Date 2: [Goals to be reviewed, method of review]
- [Additional check-ins as necessary]

Follow-Up Plan:

- Steps following successful PIP completion:
- Steps if performance does not improve:

Signatures:

- Team Member Signature: _____ Date: _____
- Manager Signature: _____ Date: _____

Confidentiality Note:

- [Statement regarding the confidentiality and professional handling of the PIP]