

# THE *Front-line Supervisor*

Presented by *dor and associates, inc.*

Helping you to manage your company's most valuable resource -- your employees.

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## CASE 1.

➤ **Q. I have postponed addressing my employee's attitude problem for many years. I admit that not confronting her has made the problem worse. Is it possible to confront her and expect changes after such a long period of time?**

A. Although it will be difficult to step in suddenly to intervene with your employee's behavior, it is possible. Begin by considering exactly what behaviors you want changed. Write them down and assign a degree of importance to each. A bad attitude can mean many things, so clearly define what specific behaviors constitute a bad attitude. Just as important, define their costs to the organization. Do they cause morale problems? Lost productivity? Work errors? Hold a corrective interview and discuss the changes you want. Provide the rationale for change, but be candid with your employee if she asks why you are suddenly requiring her to change. Explain how you've postponed confronting her, but that your priorities have now made the changes in her conduct paramount. Do not ignore any future behavior problems, or you will reinforce her problematic behavior. Be sure to praise any progress you see. A supervisory coaching session with a trained counselor at **dor and associates** may be very beneficial to you as you begin this process. This type of session can help you clearly define your goals and provide you with a strategy to work through this challenge.

## CASE 2.

➤ **Q. My documentation of employee performance has been criticized for not being effective enough to support administrative actions I have proposed. What are some of the most common problems with supervisor documentation?**

- A. The most common problems with supervisor documentation include:
- 1) The documentation lacks specifics. Example: "The employee regularly has poor attendance." It would be better to record: "Eight days of work were missed between March 3<sup>rd</sup> and March 20<sup>th</sup>."
  - 2) The documentation includes emotional, subjective or distracting language. For example: "The employee can't be trusted, takes advantage of everyone, and thinks he's better than others, etc." It would be better to record: "The employee took 5 unauthorized breaks last week which burdened coworkers and their work schedules, thus causing major disruptions"
  - 3) The documentation discusses performance problems, but the employee has not been made aware of the specific events contained in the documentation. Keep in mind this guideline for documentation: if it's not documented, it didn't happen!

**dor and associates, inc.**

Employee Assistance Services

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