

Handling Difficult Employees Effectively

HANDLING DIFFICULT EMPLOYEES CHECKLIST

- Be fair and base judgments about difficult employees on objective, work-related facts, not feelings.
- Investigate before you act, and try to pinpoint the specific behavior and attitudes that are causing a workplace problem.
- Be sure to follow established procedures when investigating problem behavior that might involve legal issues (for example, sexual harassment, discriminatory activity, or threatening behavior).
- Meet with the employee privately to discuss the problem.
- Try to remain calm and professional in all interactions with difficult employees.
- Explain your concerns in work-related terms and give specific examples.
- Give the employee an opportunity to respond, and really listen.
- Agree on a plan to improve behavior and/or attitudes, and set a timetable for improvement.
- Make sure the employee understands what you expect—clearly state standards and consequences for failing to meet standards.
- Follow up to make sure progress is being made.
- Provide positive feedback on performance, and corrective feedback as well when necessary.
- Use additional counseling and discipline, if necessary, to try to turn things around.

