How to Manage Problem Employees

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Attorney Editor
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Introduction

The last decade brought with it enormous changes to the workplace — and concomitant pressures for employers. In addition to huge technological advances, the advent of globalization and the proliferation of mergers have transformed the way we do business. As a result, motivating, guiding, and keeping employees who are part of a rapidly changing workforce and business environment have become monumental tasks for employers at the dawn of this new century.

At the same time, you must deal with record numbers of disgruntled, suspicious, and apathetic employees. Employee lawsuits have reached an all-time high and are still rising. Managing problem employees in the face of our increasingly litigious society is one of your most serious challenges today.

This report shows you how to manage more effectively — not just to deal with problem employees, but to prevent employees from becoming problems in the first place:

• be clear about your expectations from the beginning by creating and maintaining accurate job descriptions
• educate employees up front by planning and presenting a thorough orientation for new employees
• monitor and develop employees through effective, ongoing performance appraisals
• guide employee conduct by applying fair and objective discipline
• respond to employee grievances and carry out investigations
• end poor employment relationships through discharges

In addition, this report addresses the one employee behavior that affects every employer: absences — including late arrivals, long lunches, and early departures — and the most effective means by which you can decrease employee absences. The report concludes by examining the elements of employee personnel files and the rules that govern access to those files, as well as a reminder about the types of offhand and informal comments that a court may consider to be evidence — to your detriment.
About the Author

An expert on business and legal writing, D. Michelle Adkerson freelances her writing, editing, and seminar skills through Adkerson Communications in Nashville, Tennessee. She publishes a regular grammar newsletter, *The Red Pen Diaries*, and teaches writing through business and legal seminars and in local colleges and universities. For three years, she ran the in-house legal writing program for the Northwest’s fifth largest law firm.

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