

Employee involvement in this activity reduces workplace harassment, safety violations, and an assortment of other violations that warrant a warning.

Employees Need More Than a Warning

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Many businesses use progressive discipline as a strategy to reduce disciplinary infractions. For some employees the strategy has a positive impact while for others it results in receiving additional warnings. In many cases additional warnings lead to dismissal for cause which impacts employee turnover. Businesses can reduce the adverse effects of providing employees additional warnings which lead to dismissal for cause by providing employees with professional development when they receive a warning.

The left-hand column activity provides employers with a professional development tool that reduces employee disciplinary infractions. Individuals come to the workplace with a set of values and beliefs that remain unchanged unless they have the opportunity to evaluate their thinking. The left-hand column activity provides the opportunity to evaluate employee thinking and dialogue that corresponds to involvement in disciplinary infractions. Many businesses and educational organizations have used the left-hand column professional development activity which Argyris and Schon developed in 1974.

Businesses assist employees in changing their behavior by using discipline. This requires that employees have adequate information regarding their behavior. In many instances the employee is given a warning to remind them of the employee behavioral expectations. Afterwards the supervisor documents the counseling session with a formal memo or informal note in the

What I was Thinking	What was said

Left Hand Column Activity Chart

employee's personnel file. However, this process falls short of providing the employee with professional development that will produce the desired behavior.

Warnings are designed to protect the business and supervisor from union grievances and potential lawsuits. Warnings fall short of altering the employees' individual assumptions. Businesses that incorporate the

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Employees Need More Than a Warning (Continued)

left-hand activity into the progressive discipline process will reduce reoccurrences of unacceptable employee behavior that leads to disciplinary infractions.

Left-hand activity incorporation reduces workplace harassment. Many workplace harassment incidents result from what one employee has said to another employee. The employee is given a warning without benefiting from evaluating their values and beliefs. Without this evaluation the employee's behavior may continue or the employee may become resentful which can lead to many other complications.

Using the left-hand column activity reduces employee safety violations. Employees may disregard safety rules that they believe are unnecessary. It is this thinking that can jeopardize the health and well being of the employee and other staff members as well as the business. Of course the employee

has to receive a warning but without an evaluation of the employees values and beliefs the behavior may continue.

Businesses must provide employees with professional development by using the left-hand column activity. Employee involvement in this activity reduces workplace harassment, safety violations, and an assortment of other violations that warrant a warning. It also provides leadership an opportunity to evaluate the employees values and beliefs which could determine future training possibilities. Incorporate the left-hand column activity as follows:

1. The activity begins with identifying a specific challenge that an employee has had which may warrant a warning.
2. The employee prepares a dialogue script in the right column.

3. In the matching rows, the employee writes down what they were thinking.
4. Use as many rows as needed.
5. The supervisor determines the turning point that would have prevented the violation.
6. The supervisor recommends alternatives for the employee.

References

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Osterman, K., & Kottkamp, R. (2004). *Reflective Practice for Educators: Professional Development to Improve Student Learning*. Thousand Oaks: Corwin Press