

MANAGER TRAINING

**Wait! Don't Terminate!
At least not until you've read this training.**

If you're like most managers, terminating an employee is one of your least favorite duties. Unfortunately, we can't make it a pleasant experience for you, but we can provide you with basic questions to ask yourself that will help you reduce the likelihood of a post-termination claim and hopefully make the painful process of terminating an employee, a little *less* painful.



**You're
FIRED!**



Five Questions to Ask Yourself Before Terminating an Employee

Question 1: Before deciding to terminate the employee, did I document prior conversations I had with this employee regarding his/her performance?

Before terminating an employee, you should have already conducted at least one disciplinary meeting and given the employee an opportunity to correct/improve their conduct. During the disciplinary meeting you should have identified the problem, rule or policy violation, and what the company's expectation is regarding any of these issues.

The employee and manager should have a clear picture of what happened in the past and what is expected going forward. Document the overall purpose of the meeting and any performance improvement plan or statement signed by the employee.

If an employee does something so egregious, like violence or stealing, then we recommend skipping the disciplinary meeting and proceeding with termination. This is, however, the exception.

Question 2: Does the employee have any "red-flags" that I should worry about?

A red flag is anything that makes terminating the employee especially risky. For example, did the employee recently return from a medical leave of absence? Is the employee a member of a minority group? Has the employee filed a workers' compensation claim?

The above are just some examples of red flags. If you find a red flag, it doesn't mean that you can't fire the employee, but it certainly makes it much more risky for the company. In these situations, we recommend you consult with an employment attorney.

Question 3: Do I have all the required paperwork prepared?

You will need to make sure that all the required paperwork, forms, etc. are completed and ready for the termination meeting.

Depending on the laws of your state, you may need to have a final paycheck ready to provide to the employee at the time of termination. You will also likely need to give the employee a change in relationship form, any unemployment forms, COBRA/HIPPA notices – just to name a few.

Question 4: Am I prepared for the termination meeting?

Make sure that you have thought about where the meeting will take place and what you will say to the employee. Try to find a place where the employee can process the information privately. You do not want to make a spectacle out of the situation.

Make a written outline of the points you want to make sure to communicate during the meeting. Chances are you will be nervous and thus more likely to forget to cover all of your points unless you write them down. Your written outline can also help you if you need to summarize the termination meeting at a later date.

Question 5: Do I have an exit strategy for the employee?

After the termination meeting, the employee will need to gather their belongings, return all company property (e.g. keys, laptops) and physically leave the worksite.

Be prepared. Have a box ready for the employee to use. Make sure that you have a list of the company property provided to the employee. The last thing you want is for the now terminated employee to loiter around the worksite while you gather paperwork or a box.

If you are worried about the employee's reaction, you should arrange for security or another manager to be present during the meeting and the exit.