

**Q. My employee is supposed to be at work at 8 a.m. but is consistently 20 minutes late, despite repeated reminders. Should I allow a 10-minute grace period or stick to the 8 a.m. time as non-negotiable? This seems to be a long-standing debate, and I have yet to find a solution.**

**A.** The answer depends on the organization's culture, policies, impact on the team, and disruption caused by not being punctual. There are many reasons employees may not make it to work on time, and sometimes these reasons combine, creating a compounding effect. Some employees may be late because they are simply unmotivated or disengaged, while others may be dealing with clinical depression, childcare issues, or traffic congestion. During the next conversation with the employee, you can recommend UR Medicine EAP to the employee to offer support.



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**Q. I strive to be objective when evaluating employees. However, I recognize that a likable personality can sometimes hinder my ability to provide critical feedback. How do I avoid this bias?**

**A.** To be more objective, especially when you have a favorable opinion of an employee's personality, it's crucial to use objective measures to maintain fairness. Follow your organization's performance evaluation process and consider the following tips to help set aside personal feelings:

1. **Keep accurate records:** Throughout the year document the employee's achievements and concerns. When evaluation time arrives, it won't feel so challenging to recall past performances accurately.
2. **Give specific feedback:** Non-specific criticism is unhelpful. Quantify performance with specific examples, such as, "In August, there were three instances where you were late with project deadlines."
3. **Commit the time to document:** It requires effort and time to be consistent with documentation, especially in a busy supervisor role. But, having documentation to rely on will help ensure you are objective and accurate.

4. Provide constructive criticism throughout the year: Don't overlook constructive criticism during the year due to your bias. It can make evaluations more difficult if employees only hear praise all year.

**Q. My employee has made valuable contributions in the past, but his current performance is lacking. I referred him to EAP several months ago, but he verbalized he did not attend. I believe he thinks his past stellar performance protects him from dismissal. How should I proceed given that I made a referral and have seen no changes?**

**A.** It isn't unusual to recommend EAP and then have the employee decline the offer. Continue with your intervention steps by documenting performance and meeting with your employee to discuss. If your organization has a performance improvement plan (PIP) process, refer to this as your solution. You can also discuss the value of past successes, but make it clear you can't look past the current performance issues and that without changes, disciplinary actions will likely follow. Make another attempt to recommend seeking EAP support. Monitor the PIP frequently, give feedback, and if the performance issues do not improve, consult with human resources or senior leadership for your next steps. EAP also provides unlimited supervisor consults available 24/7 to support you as you develop a course of action.