

BE CONNECTED

EMPLOYEE DOCUMENTATION

A guide for keeping essential personal records



Why keep personnel records?

Documentation is essential for managers and HR staff because you need to make a serious effort to record all of the events in the employment history of your employees—both positive and negative incidents of performance.



Documentation helps you as the manager/supervisor to:

- Recognize patterns over time
- Comprehend the problem for what it really is
- Provide objective feedback
- Communicate that you are serious about good performance
- Initiate a corrective process or referral to EAP
- Substantiate a need for disciplinary action when necessary

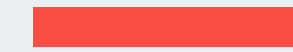


Documentation helps your employees to:

- Understand what is expected as the performance standard
- Recognize what needs to be changed
- Receive appropriate feedback
- Take steps towards improvement
- Avoid denial of a problem necessary



ABC's of Documentation



ACCURATE

Record the facts objectively and in writing as they occur – do not rely on memory.




BEHAVIORAL

Describe specific, observed behavior.

CONSISTENT

Be fair, detailed and precise. Be sure to document improvement and positive behaviors as well.

YOUR EMPLOYEE RECORDS SHOULD INCLUDE INCIDENTS OF:

-  *Attendance problems*
-  *Unsatisfactory or declining performance*
-  *Sudden shifts in mood*
-  *Accidents, near misses, or equipment breakage*
-  *Violent or erratic behavior including flights, verbal abuse/assault*
-  *Verbal warnings received, and any further disciplinary actions taken*
-  *Troubling comments or behaviors in the workplace*
-  *Any discussion between you and the employee regarding their performance issues or inappropriate behavior*
-  *Your offers to EAP to help*



A TIP FOR ELECTRONIC RECORD KEEPING

Some people prefer to keep their employee records offline, but an easy way to manage them electronically is to create a dedicated folder in your g-mail and google drive for each employee. Anytime I have a conversation with an employee that I may want to reference later, I just send myself an email with the date, time, and topic, and save it in their folder.

-A REAL CITY OF BOSTON MANAGER

THE BOTTOM LINE:

Make sure employees are informed about what is expected regarding their work performance. Keep an accurate and up-to-date file of their work performance according to the City of Boston's policies – without it, your approach could turn out to be a case of “your word against mine.”

In addition, the employee may be unaware that his or her job performance is affected. Providing evidence through written documentation helps both you and the employee to comprehend the problem as it really is.