

## My employee isn't doing their job properly

Managing employees who aren't doing their job properly can be difficult. Examples of an employee not doing their job properly include consistent unsatisfactory work quality, displaying disruptive behaviour in the workplace and not following workplace policies.

Managing these issues effectively can improve workplace productivity and culture, reduce staff turnover, and improve the viability of your business.

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### How to discuss performance management

#### Before you start - information you need

- Details of the specific issues you want to resolve.
- A clear idea of your expectations for your employee and the role they're performing.
- Information about [performance in the workplace \(www.fairwork.gov.au/employee-entitlements/managing-performance-and-warnings\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/employee-entitlements/managing-performance-and-warnings).

#### Steps to take

##### 1. Identify the problems and your expectations

- Before you speak to the employee you should write down the issues you've identified.
- Be clear about what expectations you have of your employee and the role they're performing.

##### 2. Meet with the employee

- Organise a meeting with your employee to discuss the problem. You should let the employee know in advance and allow them to bring a support person.
- Prepare for the discussion. Our online courses can help you prepare for [difficult conversations \(www.fairwork.gov.au/tools-and-resources/online-learning-centre/difficult-conversations-in-the-workplace-manager-course\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/tools-and-resources/online-learning-centre/difficult-conversations-in-the-workplace-manager-course).
- Remember that this may be a stressful time for your employee and you should focus on the issues rather than the individual.
- In the meeting, you should clearly outline your expectations about their performance or behaviour at work, and your concerns, and allow the employee to respond to them.
- In some cases of serious or ongoing underperformance, you may need to issue a warning to your employee. You can use our [Warning letter template \(www.fairwork.gov.au/tools-and-resources/templates/warning-letter\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/tools-and-resources/templates/warning-letter).

##### 3. Work through a solution

- During the meeting, you and your employee should come up with a solution to the issues raised.
- Possible solutions can include:
  - extra work-related training
  - ongoing performance management or meetings
  - redeployment to another area of the business.
- Make sure you and your employee have a clear understanding of what your expectations are and the next steps you've agreed to. You should follow up the meeting with this information in writing in an email or letter to the employee and give them an opportunity

to respond in case there's been a misunderstanding.

- At the end of the meeting, schedule a follow up meeting so you can track and discuss the employee's progress.

#### 4. Follow up with the employee

- It's important to follow up with the employee later or on a regular basis if needed.
- Follow up meetings are an opportunity to talk about the employee's progress and identify any other opportunities.

### **Example: Employee is regularly late to work**

Sam runs a newsagency and has a part-time employee, Jack, who is rostered to start work at 12pm 3 days a week.

For the past 3 weeks, Jack has arrived 30 minutes late to work for most of his shifts.

Sam has spoken to Jack informally about the issue, but Jack continues to arrive late.

Sam tells Jack that she'd like to have a meeting with him about this issue. Prior to the meeting, Sam gathers her time records and Jack's contract.

In the meeting, Sam explains to Jack that as part of his contract he agreed to start work at 12pm. Sam also outlines how Jack starting late affects the other employees who have been working extra time to cover the start of his shift.

Jack agrees to make sure that he'll arrive before his rostered time from now on, and they agree to have another meeting in 2 weeks to review how this is going.

### **Best practice tip**

It's a good idea to set clear expectations from the start, such as writing performance expectations in a position description or performance plan.

You should also raise issues with your employees as soon as they occur. This prevents small issues becoming major problems for your business.

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## **If you need more support**

If you are a member of an employer association, you may be able to seek additional guidance from them. You can also contact the Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman (<https://www.asbfeo.gov.au/>) [↗](#).

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## **Other common workplace problems**

- [I'm not sure what to pay my employees \(www.fairwork.gov.au/workplace-problems/common-workplace-problems/im-not-sure-what-to-pay-my-employees\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/workplace-problems/common-workplace-problems/im-not-sure-what-to-pay-my-employees)
- [I'm not sure which award covers my business \(www.fairwork.gov.au/workplace-problems/common-workplace-problems/im-not-sure-which-award-covers-my-business\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/workplace-problems/common-workplace-problems/im-not-sure-which-award-covers-my-business)
- [I think I've underpaid my employee \(www.fairwork.gov.au/workplace-problems/common-workplace-problems/i-think-ive-underpaid-my-employee\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/workplace-problems/common-workplace-problems/i-think-ive-underpaid-my-employee)
- [My employee left without giving notice \(www.fairwork.gov.au/workplace-problems/common-workplace-problems/my-employee-left-without-giving-notice\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/workplace-problems/common-workplace-problems/my-employee-left-without-giving-notice)

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## **Tools and resources**

- [An employer's guide to resolving workplace issues \(DOCX 397.1KB\) \(www.fairwork.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/712/an-employers-guide-to-resolving-workplace-issues.docx.aspx\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/712/an-employers-guide-to-resolving-workplace-issues.docx.aspx)  [\(PDF 470.3KB\) \(www.fairwork.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/712/an-employers-guide-to-resolving-workplace-issues.pdf.aspx\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/712/an-employers-guide-to-resolving-workplace-issues.pdf.aspx)
- [Managing performance course \(www.fairwork.gov.au/tools-and-resources/online-learning-centre/managing-performance\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/tools-and-resources/online-learning-centre/managing-performance)
- [Managing performance best practice guide \(www.fairwork.gov.au/tools-and-resources/best-practice-guides/managing-underperformance\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/tools-and-resources/best-practice-guides/managing-underperformance)
- [Warning letter template \(www.fairwork.gov.au/tools-and-resources/templates/warning-letter\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/tools-and-resources/templates/warning-letter)
- [Pay and Conditions Tool \(https://calculate.fairwork.gov.au/EndingEmployment\)](https://calculate.fairwork.gov.au/EndingEmployment)

- [Small Business Fair Dismissal Code and checklist \(www.fairwork.gov.au/ending-employment/unfair-dismissal\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/ending-employment/unfair-dismissal)

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## Related information

- [Performance in the workplace \(www.fairwork.gov.au/employee-entitlements/managing-performance-and-warnings\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/employee-entitlements/managing-performance-and-warnings)
- [Ending employment \(www.fairwork.gov.au/ending-employment\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/ending-employment)
- [Unfair dismissal \(www.fairwork.gov.au/ending-employment/unfair-dismissal\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/ending-employment/unfair-dismissal)

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