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# DOCUMENTING DISCIPLINE II

## Leader's Guide

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## INTRODUCTION

### About This Program

Handling performance problems and disciplining employees are major parts of every supervisor's job. This program, *Documenting Discipline II*, helps to answer many questions supervisors have about handling performance problems with their employees and documenting the progressive discipline process. In the program you will meet Fred, a manager, who, like many supervisors, discovers that he is having a hard time dealing with the performance problems of his employees. With the help of Claudia, the Human Resources Manager, Fred learns the process of progressive discipline and how to properly document the process.

This Leader's Guide is designed to help you conduct a thorough training session on documenting discipline. It permits you to use this program in many different ways, giving you the flexibility to determine which training format is best for your organization's needs. The program is 20 minutes long. On the DVD, there is an option of showing the program in scenes.

Training Points have been created on the DVD format of this program to provide visual aids when sharing important training material, or reviewing content of the program. Video links are included to provide visual reinforcement of some of the training points.

A PowerPoint® presentation, identical to the Training Points content of this program, has been included in both formats for your use. The customizable version is available for you to add specific information for your company. Tips for customizing this presentation are included at the end of this guide. As an alternative, the slide information may be printed or transferred to transparency sheets or a flipchart when used in conjunction with the program.

The How-To workbook, *Documenting Discipline* is available for use with this program. Written in a user-friendly, easy-to-understand style, the workbook includes interactive exercises in each chapter to help the reader process the information and put it into action—ensuring that the information makes an impact.

We recommend that you tailor the program to your organization's needs by including specific information unique to your employees. The specifics of how you facilitate this course are up to you.

## Training Materials

There are a few things you'll need for an effective training session:

- A training room located away from major distractions or interruptions
- A comfortable arrangement of chairs with an opening for a TV monitor or projection screen and other visual aids. (Be certain all participants can see the screen and each other.)
- Adequate lighting that can be adjusted while viewing the program
- A location, possibly including a podium from which the trainer/speaker can lead discussion
- The training program, *Documenting Discipline II*
- TV and DVD player/computer with a DVD-ROM drive
- Copies of the class agenda
- A copy of the How-To workbook *Documenting Discipline*, paper and pencil for each participant
- A flipchart or dry-erase board and appropriate markers
- A computer with PowerPoint® software and the PowerPoint® presentation
- Copies of the Post-Test, Acknowledgment Form and Evaluation.

## Preparation

Preparation is the key to effective training. There are several things you need to do prior to the session:

### Establish Objectives

Determine the training objectives in advance so that you can identify the approach to take for the training session. It is also important to decide what level of understanding is expected from participants upon completion of the training. Suggested training objectives for this presentation are:

- Describe the elements and purpose of FOSA.
- Follow FOSA when addressing a problem or concern.
- Establish the purpose of an oral warning.
- Differentiate between a written warning and an oral warning.
- List the final options in progressive discipline.
- Describe how to issue a final option.

Feel free to edit the training objectives to meet the particular needs of your organization. Training objectives should reflect the content of the program.

### Determine the Audience

Another aspect to consider in planning this training session is the audience. Tailor your presentation to the skills or experience of the participants. The focus of your discussion and the depth of content presented may vary, depending on whether you are providing an orientation for new employees or a refresher course for experienced employees.

The training group size should range from 10 to 20 people. When the group is too large, individual attention may be lost and participation will not be as high.

## Agenda

### 1½-Hour Session

Activity	Time
Introduce Session to Participants	15 minutes
Show Program and Review	40 minutes
Exercise	15 minutes
Post-Test	10 minutes
Summary and Evaluation	10 minutes

### 3-Hour Session

Activity	Time
Introduce Session to Participants	15 minutes
Show Program and Review	40 minutes
Exercise	15 minutes
Break	5 minutes
Exercises	55 minutes
Break	5 minutes
Exercise	25 minutes
Post-Test	15 minutes
Evaluation	5 minutes

### Invite participants

Send out letters or memos to participants or post a notice two weeks in advance of the training date. (Sample on next page.) State the location, date and time, and meeting agenda. Administer the Pre-Test in advance.

## Sample of Invitation Memo

**Date:** August 10, 20\_\_

**To:** All Managers

**From:** Claudia DeGallo, Human Resources Manager

**Re:** *Documenting Discipline II*

What do you do with employees who are not living up to expectations? Do you fire them on the spot? Do you give them another chance? How many chances do you give them before you terminate them? These questions and many more are being asked every day by supervisors and managers. Do you know the answers?

As a valued supervisor at (Company Name), a very important part of your job is handling performance problems and disciplining employees. However, if this is not done appropriately and your actions are not documented fully, you can leave yourself and our company open to legal consequences.

On June 20 at 2:00 p.m., we will be holding a training session on the disciplinary process at (Company Name) and how proper documentation is essential for a successful working relationship within our organization. During the session, you will learn to:

- Describe the elements and purpose of FOSA.
- Follow FOSA when addressing a problem or concern.
- Establish the purpose of an oral warning.
- Differentiate between a written warning and an oral warning.
- List the final options in progressive discipline.
- Describe how to issue a final option.

To help us get the most out of our training session, please take the time to complete the enclosed Pre-Test and return it to me by (insert date). Your honest response to these questions will help us place emphasis on critical areas.

We will be meeting in the main conference room for a 1-1/2 hour session. If you are unable to attend, please contact me at 555-8890 as soon as possible.

### **Agenda:**

Introduction	15 minutes
Show Program and Review	40 minutes
Exercise	15 minutes
Post-Test	10 minutes
Summary and Evaluation	10 minutes

We look forward to seeing you on Thursday, June 20.

## Presentation Tips

### Overcoming anxiety

The best way to overcome anxiety about speaking before a group is to be prepared. Although it is natural to be nervous, your sweaty palms will disappear once you focus on what you are saying. Concentrate on communicating your message and your presentation will flow naturally.

### Choosing your vocabulary

It's best to use the same comfortable language that you would use when speaking one-on-one. Avoid jargon and overly complicated words or phrases.

### Getting rid of the "umms"

One of the most annoying mistakes a speaker makes is saying "umm" every time there is a break between thoughts. Remain silent while you think about what you're going to say next. The silence will seem longer to you than it will to the audience. If you remember this, you'll feel less pressure to fill the silence. You can control your "umms" by jotting down notes beforehand. If you want to include personal anecdotes or examples, write down a few notes to trigger your memory. Beware of writing down too much, however. You'll deliver your message to your note cards instead of your audience.

### Controlling the speed and tone of your voice

You'll put your audience to sleep if you speak too slowly, and they won't be able to keep up with the content if you speak too quickly. Approximately 150 words per minute is the best speed (that's about two thirds of a page, typed, double-spaced). Vary your tone often, especially when making an important point. Adding emotion to your presentation will keep your audience involved. Again, strive for a conversational tone.

### Sticking to the schedule

Begin class on time and restart the session promptly at the end of the break. Except for emergencies, participants should not be interrupted for messages.

### Asking for questions

Ask for questions throughout the session. Be prepared to answer all types of questions, but don't be worried you don't know every answer. You can simply say, "Let me find out for you and get back to you." Keep in mind many questions are best answered through discussion. An appropriate response might be, "Good question. Let's hear some discussion on that one." Watch the clock, though. Too many unplanned discussions can eat up your time.

## TRAINING SESSION OVERVIEW

### Giving the Pre-Test

**It is recommended** that you give the Pre-Test prior to the training session. That way, you will have an opportunity before the session begins to review participant answers and get an idea of what they already know.

### Presentation Outline

**Open the session.** Welcome the participants and introduce yourself to the group. Give a brief explanation of the purpose of the session and quickly review the agenda. Have participants introduce themselves, stating their name, areas of responsibility in the company, and what they hope to gain from the session.

Objectives for this training session are:

- Describe the elements and purpose of FOSA.
- Follow FOSA when addressing a problem or concern.
- Establish the purpose of an oral warning.
- Differentiate between a written warning and an oral warning.
- List the final options in progressive discipline.
- Describe how to issue a final option.

Read or paraphrase the following to the group:

Documenting discipline is increasingly important in today's workplace. When documenting an employee's work habits or performance levels, your documentation should be:

1. Objective
2. Accurate
3. Factual

The FOSA method is a proven way to document work activities accurately and fairly. (Use Slide 3 to review the FOSA acronym.) The key ideas behind FOSA are:

- F – Facts
- O – Objectives
- S – Solutions
- A – Actions.

Today we are going to view several situations that could require disciplinary action and consider how they should be documented.

We will learn the method of progressive discipline – the steps that need to be taken to properly discipline and document your employee's work habits and performance.

Progressive discipline involves the following steps:

1. Oral warning
2. Written warning
3. Final option
4. Termination.

## DISCUSSION GUIDES

Two discussion guides have been developed for this program. “Scene-Specific Discussion Guide” is designed to be used if you choose to view the program in chapters and discuss each scene. “Discussion Topics” is designed to be used after watching the program in its entirety. After determining the best approach for your training group, start the program. It’s a good idea to adjust the volume of the monitor before the training session begins. Doing so avoids startling participants if the sound is too loud or frustrating the participants with missed information because the sound is too low.

### Scene-Specific Discussion Guide

The seven scenes in this program provide an opportunity to discuss the importance of documenting discipline. This guide is broken down with a summary of each scene, offering discussion questions for each segment of the program.

#### 1. Introduction

The program begins with the Human Resources Manager, Claudia, asking Fred to participate in a training program. Fred identifies several performance issues he needs to address. Use Slide 2 to review the training objectives for this program. Ask participants:

- What part of handling a discipline problem is difficult for most supervisors? Why?
- What can you do to overcome these difficulties?

#### 2. Maintain Documentation

In this scene, participants learn the value of maintaining documentation of each incident in a diary. When documenting incidents, Claudia encourages using FOSA. Use Slide 3 to review the elements of FOSA. Ask participants:

- How can using FOSA help you in managing your employees’ performance?
- What is the main goal of FOSA?
- How can you integrate FOSA into your current procedures?
- What will you use for your incidents diary?

Claudia also shares how to document behaviors. Participants are encouraged to ask (Slide 4 contains this information):

- What happened?
- When did it happen?
- Where did it happen?
- Who was involved?

Participants are also encouraged to use their five senses and ask:

- What did you see?
- What did you touch?
- What did you hear?
- What did you taste?
- What did you smell?

Ask participants:

- How can describing a performance concern using your five senses help you keep your assessment objective rather than subjective?

At the end of the scene, a multiple choice question is provided. Allow the training group to arrive at consensus and then select their response. If the answer is incorrect, a link to the program plays to reinforce the content of this scene. If the answer is correct, their response is affirmed. Use Slide 5 to review the incidents diary.

### 3. Address Performance Problems

During this scene, participants observe Fred addressing performance problems with employees. Objectives are set and solutions are agreed upon. Ask participants:

- Which of Fred's behaviors would work for you?

The scene concludes with Fred making notes in the incidents diary. Ask participants:

- What types of information should you record in your incidents diary?

The exercise for this scene asks participants to select "True" or "False" for each statement. Allow participants to arrive at consensus, and then select their response. If the answer is incorrect, the host provides remediation. If the answer is correct, the host affirms their response. Slide 6 contains a summary of tips for addressing performance problems.

### 4. The Oral Warning

During this scene, Fred continues to work with the performance concerns. A progressive process is clearly established. Claudia provides Fred with guidelines for continuing to provide feedback in the format of an oral warning. Claudia does encourage following up an oral warning with a written memo, using FOSA as a guideline. Ask participants:

- In the program Fred is encouraged to follow-up the oral warning with a written memo, using FOSA as a guideline. How would you construct a memo so that it is viewed as a step towards performance improvement, not a paper trail out the door?

At the end of this scene, participants are asked to respond to a multiple choice question. Allow the training group to arrive at consensus, and then select their response. If the answer is incorrect, a link to the program is provided to reinforce the content of this scene. Accessing this link is optional. If the answer is correct, their response is affirmed. Slide 7 may be used to review the key elements of an oral warning.

### 5. The Written Warning

The importance of providing discipline progressively is emphasized during this scene. The written warning is the next step in an effective progressive discipline system. Claudia shares with Fred how to construct and deliver a written warning. However, if a major violation such as violence, theft or other gross misconduct occurs, the next step could be termination. This would be a good opportunity to review the incidents which would be considered grounds for immediate dismissal at your organization. Ask participants:

- How is a written warning different from an oral warning?
- What are the similarities between a written warning and an oral warning?

The differences and similarities could be posted on a flipchart or white board using a Venn Diagram. The exercise for this scene asks participants to select "Yes" or "No" for each statement. Allow participants to arrive at consensus and then select their response. If the answer is incorrect, the host provides remediation. If the answer is correct, the host affirms their response. Slide 8 may be used to review the key elements of a written warning.

## 6. Final Option

During this scene, Fred suspends one of the employees he has been working through progressive discipline with. The employee is surprised by this action. Make the time to review the alternatives to termination available at your organization, such as suspension, pay reduction or probation. Ask participants:

- Under what circumstances do you feel an alternative to termination should be considered?

Fred also releases another employee from the progressive discipline cycle, because a significant improvement in behavior has occurred. Ask participants:

- How are progressive discipline and performance improvement plans similar?

This scene concludes with Fred proceeding with a termination of the employee who continues to demonstrate problems with his performance. Ask participants:

- What are the 4 stages of an effective progressive discipline process?
- Was termination warranted in this situation?
- What is the value in asking the employee for their perspective on their progress towards performance improvement?
- Should Fred accept the resignation or issue a termination?

At the end of this scene there is an on-screen discussion question, “What would your next step be if performance did not improve after oral and written warnings?” Slides 9 may be used to review the most common final options. Follow the instructions at the end of this guide to customize this slide to match the options available at your organization.

## 7. Summary

The final scene of this program shows Fred summarizing what he learned. At the end of the scene a multiple choice question is offered for discussion. Allow the training group to arrive at consensus and then select their response. Remediation is provided for an incorrect response. Ask participants:

- How will the content of this program influence how you manage discipline in the future?
- Why is progressive discipline important to the employee with a performance problem?
- Why is progressive discipline important to co-workers of an employee with a performance problem?
- Why is progressive discipline important to your credibility as a supervisor?

Using Slide 10, review the key points of the program.

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