

JOHN READINGS PTY LTD

Policy and Procedures

POLICY TITLE:	PERFROMANCE COUNSELLING
ADMINISTERED BY:	DIRECTOR, HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT
APPLICABILITY:	ALL NEW EMPLOYEES

Policy Statement

Where an employee's work performance is unsatisfactory or conduct is unacceptable, performance counselling procedures should be implemented by the employee's immediate supervisor or department manager. Appropriate improvement planning and counselling should occur before termination of employment is considered. Where an employee's performance is such that it would be unreasonable to continue employment while counselling occurs, then summary dismissal may need to be considered.

Policy Objective

The objective of this policy is to implement a fair and reasonable process whereby an employee's unsatisfactory performance is identified and discussed with the employee. Due process should be followed in any performance counselling and/or dismissal procedures.

Procedures

- Performance problems should be addressed immediately to prevent customer dissatisfaction and reduced team morale, and in the interests of fairness to the employee,
- The cause of the problem should be identified. Managers/supervisors need to determine whether the employee was aware of what was expected, if the employee was adequately trained, if there are outside influences (ie personal or family problems), and if there is a previous history of unsatisfactory performance,
- Care should be taken when dealing with performance problems, which should be dealt with privately,
- Where performance problems are caused by problems in the employee's private life, the employee should be referred to the employee assistance program manager,
- For each step in the formal counselling process, the employee should be advised that a witness to the counselling session may accompany them. The witness may be another employee, a union delegate or a mentor,
- The following procedures are to be implemented when counselling employees. The procedures fall into three basic categories:
 1. Standard Counselling,
 2. First and Final Warning,
 3. Summary Dismissal.

1. Standard Counselling Procedures

- **Step 1: Verbal Warning.** This is an informal part of the process. The employee is verbally advised by the supervisor/manager that

performance is unsatisfactory. A diary note is made of the discussion/incident,

- **Step 2: First Counselling Interview.** This begins the formal part of the process. The supervisor/manager meets with the employee to discuss their unsatisfactory performance and to agree on a performance improvement program. The employee is informed that further action may result if performance does not improve to an acceptable level,
- **Step 3: Second Counselling/Final Warning Interview.** This is the second step in the formal process where the employee is informed whether their performance has returned to an acceptable level. If performance is still below standard then the employee is informed that further action may result if performance does not improve to an acceptable level. The employee should be advised that this is a final warning,
- **Step 4: Consideration of Dismissal.** If performance continues to be unsatisfactory then the employee should be informed that another interview is to be held. The employee's performance needs to be discussed again with the employee and the employee's explanation considered. Management should then consider the explanation of the employee and make a decision as to the continued employment of the employee.

2. First and Final Warning

There may be circumstances whereby the unsatisfactory performance of the employee is so serious that the standard counselling process should not be followed. However, the unsatisfactory performance is not such as to warrant summary dismissal. In such a situation the employee should receive a counselling interview and the criteria for satisfactory performance should be clearly explained. The employee's explanation should be considered, and if not accepted, a first and final warning should be issued.

3. Summary Dismissal

Summary dismissal means termination of employment without notice. This is a serious action and should only occur where the unsatisfactory performance is such that it would be unreasonable for the employer to continue employment during a notice period.

Examples of such unsatisfactory performance are physical assault of another employee or customer, gross insubordination, neglect or refusal of duty, failure to follow lawful and reasonable instructions, and fraudulent conduct.

Care should be taken when considering summary dismissal and advice should be sought from the Human Resources Department prior to any action being taken.