



SCRIPT FOR A SEPARATION MEETING

It is essential to prepare for any employment separation. When preparing for an event such as separation, keep meetings focused on the meeting's event and purpose. Regardless of the reason for the separation of an employee, treating them with respect is vital. A script will enable you to remain focused on the purpose of the meeting and prepare for what is often an emotional event.

Prepare your meeting space. Prepare any documents you plan to give the employee, e.g., separation letter, which should include information about the employee's last paycheck and benefits.

Your employee should have been contacted by your Human Resources, asking them to come in for a meeting. We recommend having another manager/supervisor or Human Resources present for the meeting. We do not recommend having more than two managers or supervisors present, as this is very intimidating for the employee who is already in a difficult situation.

Step 1: Greet your employee, be cordial but not overly friendly/upbeat as this is a serious meeting.

Step 2: Explain the meeting's purpose.

If disciplinary, the employee should already know their employment is at risk because they should be interviewed prior to a decision being made.

Possible opener: We asked you to meet with us today to discuss your employment status with us.

Step 3: Share the reason the employee's employment is ending.

Possible explanation: We are ending your employment due to your not successfully meeting the requirements of your performance improvement plan.

Possible explanation: Our company is eliminating your department as those functions are being outsourced.

Step 4: Once you have described the conclusion, you need to share the consequences of the employee's behaviors and actions [if applicable].

Possible follow-up: Your inability to meet your PIP goals has an affect on our business and our customers. We have decided to end your employment effective immediately.

Possible follow-up: The business conditions have dictated that we need to restructure [add in appropriate verbiage] to remain competitive and profitable. Unfortunately, this will affect you directly and your employment will be ending on [DATE].

Step 5: Allow the employee to respond and note their response.

Employees may express frustration or upset. They may become tearful. While we believe it is important to give an employee an opportunity to respond, don't allow them to "grandstand" and take over the meeting. Do not argue or blame someone else. If they become argumentative or if they start to repeat themselves, that's a good time to move on.

Step 6: Lastly, you need to share the next steps.

If the separation was for cause, provide the separation documents you have prepared. Allow them to collect personal belongings supervised, if appropriate, or arrange a time that works better for them. You may want to mail personal belongings to the employee in some cases. Remember, no one needs an audience as they are collecting their items or leaving. Consider having them collect their items after hours. Respect the employee and provide as much dignity as possible for them. Don't forget to collect any company property, tools, passwords, computers, etc.

If the separation results from restructuring, layoff, reduction in hours, or other events, provide the separation documents and provide the employee with a timeline, if possible, and what communication they can expect about the future. Work with the employee to retrieve personal property and collect company property. As this separation event affects other employees, prepare to meet with them once you have taken care of affected employees.

Consider, too, what follow up will be helpful after the meeting. It may be helpful to follow up a couple of days after the meeting to ensure the individual doesn't have any questions regarding unemployment or other benefits - especially if the individual is a "regrettable loss" whose employment ended due to a business downturn. If business needs change, there may be a possibility to recapture lost talent.