

How to Conquer Discipline in the Fire Service

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Progressive Discipline

- Applies Federally to all Unionized Fire Departments
- Even if You're Not, You Should Use it

The Progressive Discipline Process

- **C** – Counseling
 - **O** – Oral Warning
 - **W** – Written Reprimand
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Pre-Disciplinary Procedures

- **S** – Substantial Discipline

- Time off without pay
- Reduction in pay
- Demotion
- Suspension
- Termination

Formal Discipline

*** Your CBA may vary**

When can you skip steps?

When does Weingarten apply?

Actions That Warrant Discipline

- ***P*** – Performance Issues
- ***I*** – Insubordination
- ***V*** – Violation of Rules
and Regulations

Performance Issues

- **Was the Infraction the Result of a Lack of Training?**
- **Was Training Ever provided?**
- **Is Discipline Warranted or is Training Needed?**

- **Establish Performance Expected**
- **Set Measurable Standards (realistic)**
- **Set Time Frame for Expected Performance**
- **Establish Method to Confirm Performance Has Been reached**
- **Establish Ramifications if Performance Can Not be Achieved**
 - ✓ **Demotion**
 - ✓ **Termination**

Insubordination

- **Was a Direct order Given?**
- **Do Clear Rules Cover the Situation?**
- **Was the Employee Advised of Consequences?**
- **Was the Order a Legal Order?**
- **Did the Order Jeopardize Their Safety?**
- **Was the Conduct an Expression of Frustration?**

Violation of Rules & Regulations

- **Tardiness**
- **Dereliction of Duty**
- **Discourteous to Employees or Public**
- **False or Misleading Statements**
- **Appearing for Work Under the Effects of Alcohol or Drugs**
- **Negligent or Willful Conduct Resulting in Damage to Public Property**
- **Nexus (Actions that Cause Discredit to Employer)**

Steps to Proper Discipline

- 1. Investigate / Gather Info.**
- 2. Assess Severity**
- 3. Review Employee History**
- 4. Determine Discipline**
(subject to change based on employee meeting)
- 5. Meet with Employee**
- 6. Use the Sandwich Method**
- 7. Document Meeting**
- 8. Follow Up**

The Sandwich Method

Step 1
**Friendly
Greeting**

Very brief, just
to break the ice

Step 2
**Briefly
Explain
Your View**

Don't assume
guilt

Step 3
**Let
Employee
Explain**

Deal with
deflecting

Step 4
**Repeat
Back**

Look for
EAP

Step 5
**State
Rules/Regs
for
Performance**

Do
coaching

Step 6
**Plan
of Action/
Admin.
Control**

What will
happen if it
occurs again

Step 7
**Review
Feedback**

Commitment
to change
behavior

Step 8
**Positive
Supporting
Closing**

Separate
person from
behavior

Excuses not to Discipline

- 1. “We Live Together 24-7”**
- 2. “I Don’t Want to be a Jerk”**
- 3. “I Did the Same Thing
Before I Promoted”**
- 4. “I Want to be on Their Side”**
- 5. “Everyone Else Lets Everyone Get
Away With it...”**

General Conflict Diffusion Tools

- ✓ **Maintain eye contact**
- ✓ **Stand or sit at same level**
- ✓ **Talk slower**
- ✓ **Talk softer**
- ✓ **Check body language**
- ✓ **Don't interrupt or get defensive**
- ✓ **LISTEN!**

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