



Five Questions to Ask Before Terminating a Poor Performer

Introduction 1

Do I think this person can improve 1

Have I done everything I can to help this person? 1

Can I afford to give this person time to improve? 1

Will this person deter other people from doing well? 2

Will the company be open to liabilities if I terminate? 2

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Its 2 AM, you are up, you cannot sleep. Your mind is swirling with thoughts of your company's performance and that one person who is not carrying his weight.

What should you do?

Begin by taking time to reflect on the following - Is there still value in this work relationship? Five questions to consider when formulating the answer:

1. Do I think this person can improve their performance? If not... do I have a quantifiable and objective reason for terminating them? Unless behavior warrants immediate dismissal, an appropriate course of action should be followed. Common practice consists of a verbal warning, followed by at least one written warning, and a final written warning. When giving any kind of warning, desired performance and future assessment periods should be clearly defined, as well as the possible outcomes should no improvement be made. After setting new performance goals, keep assessment periods to 30 days or less so that you can limit

company losses. This extra review period also provides the company time to find a good replacement. However, if you give a final warning, consider limiting the review period to 5 days.

2. Have I done everything I can to help this person perform well? If you have not given prior feedback to the individual, now is the time. Feedback should be specific, measurable, achievable, and relevant. When you do give feedback, be prepared to monitor and follow-up consistently. To assess whether this person can improve quickly, a noticeable change should occur in 5-10 days. In addition: have you given this person the kind of work they are good at? Giving people tasks that they will never excel in does not support anyone's long-term goals. Are they working to their strengths?



Begin by taking the time to reflect on the following –Is there still value in this work relationship?

3. Can I afford to give this person time to improve?
Employee turnover has many hidden costs. Rectifying an employee's performance may cost you less in the end. Turnover not only affects productivity but also has an impact on recruiting, interviewing, training, and time to gain the knowledge and expertise for peak performance.

4. Will keeping this person deter other people from performing well? It is a fact, keeping a poor performer negatively affects high-level performers. Often, a poor performer receives more time and attention from management. If you think your poor performer is affecting the team, set a short performance improvement goal.

5. Will the company be open to liabilities if I terminate? Terminations should be handled with the utmost care. Before you take action, be sure your company is prepared to handle the legalities mandated by your state and the federal government about terminations. If you feel that it is best to let this person go now, be sure you have clear documentation to support your actions. Terminations should be a conversation about not meeting goals and objectives. It should not be a personal attack. Of course, it is always advisable to review terminations with legal counsel if available. The following compliance section on the US Dept of Labor website is a helpful resource:

<http://www.dol.gov/compliance>

If your answers suggest that you give your poor performer time to improve, you should still take immediate action. Set realistic and measurable goals for this person. Be

clear about the outcomes if performance does not improve and set a timeline for meetings to review where things stand. Make sure you provide all the necessary tools for the person to be successful. If there is no improvement, the next step is much easier to take because you have been clear from the beginning.

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Whatever you choose, keep an eye on the business goals and weigh the course of action in relation to the implications. Poor performers can be addressed to avoid extra time and costs to your company. But, more importantly, you can move forward to ensure your team is comprised of excellent people, in the right jobs, poised to succeed.

Understanding your People is what Our People do.

Retensa is a leader and innovator of Employee Retention Strategies. They combine experience and web-based technology to develop, motivate, and retain a company's best employees. Retensa builds solutions and metrics to help firms reduce turnover and create a high-performing workforce.

To create the "Retention Environment," Retensa provides additional expertise in Leadership Development, Human Capital ROI, Mentoring, On-line Employee Surveys, On-line Exit Interviews, Executive Coaching, and Succession Planning. For more information about the results you can achieve visit www.retensa.com or [contact](#) a specialist at 212.545.1280.



RETENSA SERVICE INQUIRY

Please answer these questions to the best of your ability. Fax completed form to: (212) 545-8677. We will contact you at your desired time to discuss your goals in more detail and identify a range of solution to fit your budget.

When this project is complete, what has been accomplished? _____

In regards to your workforce, what does your organization do well? _____

In regards to your workforce, what are the challenges? _____

What, if anything, has been done to address this issue? _____

I am interested in a solution that includes (Check all that apply):

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attracting, Orienting, or On-boarding employees | <input type="checkbox"/> Benchmarking, Quantifying, or HR Metrics |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cost of Turnover Analysis (Turnover Audit) | <input type="checkbox"/> Diversity Retention (Gender, Generation, Culture) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improving Employee Morale or Motivation | <input type="checkbox"/> Mergers & Acquisitions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reducing employee costs | <input type="checkbox"/> Retention of best employees (Reducing Turnover) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Executive Coaching | <input type="checkbox"/> Training & Development |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employee Surveys | <input type="checkbox"/> Exit Interviews |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Complete the following:

Your Name: _____ Title: _____ Phone: _____

Organization: _____ Email: _____

City: _____ State/Province: _____ Country: _____

URGENCY:

- Urgent:* Please contact me ASAP
- High:* Need to move quickly
- Moderate:* Searching for solutions
- Mild:* Researching options

--- Fax completed form to: (212) 545-8677 ---

For faster service, **call** (212) 545-1280 or complete our online inquiry form at www.retensa.com

