



**Texas Fire Chiefs
Association**

ONLINE

THE VOICE OF LEADERSHIP OF THE TEXAS FIRE SERVICE



“Counseling Employees”

Texas Fire Chiefs Academy

Garland, Texas

October 28, 2011

Presented by:

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Overview

- **Administrative Responsibilities/Duties**
- **Employee Evaluations**
- **Employee Counseling**
- **Performance Improvement**
- **Employee Discipline**
- **Specific Situations**
- **SimpliCITY**



Administrative Responsibilities

- **Know the department's policies, procedures and update SOPs**
- **Understand the department's progressive discipline system**
- **Counseling Employees**
- **Documenting a substandard employee**
- **Taking appropriate action**

Administrative Duties

- **Conducting meetings**
- **Training probationary firefighters**
- **Coaching, mentoring, and ongoing training**
- **Performance Evaluations**



Employee Counseling Steps

- **Start with friendly greeting**
- **Briefly state the problem**
- **Employee talks, you listen**
- **You talk (facts, what you witnessed), employee listens**
- **State rules for desired behavior**
- **Develop an action plan**
- **Review with employee / get feedback**
- **Positive closing**

Performance Improvement

- **Performance is inadequate**
- **Articulate reasons performance is inadequate or unacceptable**
- **Reference policies, procedures, SOPs**
- **Detail Future Expectations**
- **Define consequences**



Employee Evaluations

- **Job Description**
- **Evaluation Form**
- **Outline Goals**
- **Ask Questions/Listen for Response**
- **Performance Data**
- **Areas for Improvement**
- **Areas of Strength**



Types of Employee Discipline

- **Non-Punitive Discipline**
 - Record of discussion
 - Verbal counseling
 - Written counseling
- **Punitive Discipline**
 - Letter of reprimand
 - Reduction in pay
 - Suspension
- **Demotion**
- **Termination**



How to Handle

- Firefighter under the influence
- Firefighters involved in a fight in the station
- Unmotivated firefighter
- Firefighter habitually late
- Firefighter with a poor attitude
- Injury on Duty



SimpliCITY

- Policy
- Progressive
- Protections
- Process
- Practicalities

Employment Incident Interview Checklist™



HR tool for Inquires regarding potential violations of state or federal law, or the city's personnel policy.

Obtain Background

- Obtain as much info about the incident as possible (e.g., who was involved, departments, witnesses, subject matter, location).
- Visit with supervisor of employee involved in the incident.
- Become familiar with the employee's history (e.g., what type of employee is this person, and note any disciplinary issues).

Interview Process

- Determine who will sit in on the interview with you (e.g., should the city manager or city attorney be present).
- Maintain a professional tone and manner throughout the entire interview process. Stay objective. Don't accuse.
- Clarify your role in the interview process. Identify your role in the process and inform the interviewee.
- Decide whether to tape record the interview. Determine if city policy allows for such recordings. Decide if recording is warranted. If you record, provide the date and time.
- Inform interviewee of recording. If you decide to record the interview, you may inform the interviewee that the conversation will be recorded (but are not required to by law).

Why is the interview occurring? Explain the reason for the interview, providing only details necessary and applicable to the interviewee (e.g., it may not be prudent to provide names to the interviewee of "victims" or witnesses at this time).

Ask interviewee for information they would like to provide. Allow interviewee to explain "their side of the story" and to provide information the interviewee feels is important to the incident.

Inform interviewee of confidentiality issues. If interviewee agrees to provide their side of the story, inform them that what they say in the interview might not be kept confidential and may be used throughout the remainder of the inquiry.

Address any retaliation concerns. If interviewee is the complainant, victim or witness, inform the interviewee there will be no retaliation by the city for coming forth and providing information.

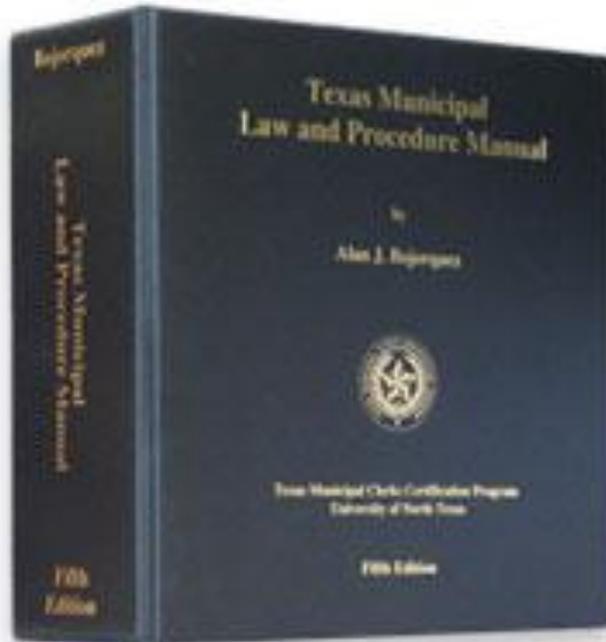
Interview Questions

- What do you recall from the incident? Without prompting interviewee or influencing their statement, allow them to open up about anything they recall. Use open-ended questions.
- Who was present during the incident? Allow interviewee the opportunity to inform you if the interviewee has any witnesses that may corroborate or counter their statement.
- Did anyone influence the incident? Determine if interviewee was acting alone or if they were prompted by another party.
- When did the incident occur? Find out if it occurred during business hours, on a shift, during a break or off-duty.

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Resources



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