



WHEN GRIEVANCE BECOMES A GOOD PRACTICE

An efficient workplace grievance procedure can be utilised to effectively resolve issues quickly without harming relationships.



THE FOLLOWING ARE IMPORTANT TOOLS TO IMPLEMENT TO ENSURE A HAPPY WORKPLACE:



Effective Communication

Communication is the process through which thoughts, feelings and/or information are exchanged. Information is sent and received through talking, listening, and writing. This includes verbal- (words) and non-verbal (body language, tone, gestures) communication as well as communication via cell phones (social media, email, phone calls etc).

Remember to:

- Speak clearly
- Avoid talking too fast
- Ensure understanding
- Limit unnecessary talk
- Correct non-verbal use
- Ask if you don't understand
- Listen attentively and with interest
- Don't interrupt
- Have a positive attitude
- Have a non-judgmental attitude
- Avoid making assumptions



Effective Listening

When communicating with others, we often focus on what we need to say. However, **effective communication is less about talking and more about listening**. Listening means not only understanding the words and information being said, but also understanding the emotions the speaker is trying to convey.



Remember to:

- Look at the person and maintain eye contact
- Pay attention but be relaxed
- Show that you are listening
- Be open to the information and the conversation
- Listen to the words and try to understand
- Do not interrupt or add your "solutions"
- Wait for a break before asking questions
- Just ask questions to make sure you understand
- Try to feel what the speaker feels
- Give regular feedback
- Pay attention to non-verbal communication



Effective Conflict Management

Conflict situations occur when people's values, needs, interests, and goals differ. Conflict is natural and normal. Where there are people, there will be conflict. It is, however, important to deal with conflict effectively.



Remember to:

- Focus on positive outcome
- Make sure you understand correctly
- Use "I" rather than "YOU" messages
- Manage one topic at a time and stay on the topic
- Choose the right time
- Don't make decisions for others
- Manage your emotions and avoid aggression
- Listen attentively
- Forget about the past
- Acknowledge what the person is saying
- Be willing to reach a compromise
- Be creative in problem-solving



Trust Development

If we trust, we can be open. Trust in the workplace creates a mutual feeling of understanding and a willingness to listen to each other. If trust is absent, this can lead to misunderstandings and conflict.

What can you do to build trust in the workplace?

- Spend time on engaging with each other
- Show you care by focusing on your body language and attitude
- Keep an open mind and listen attentively
- Avoid making assumptions



Grievance Procedure

A grievance is a concern raised by an employee towards an employer / supervisor / fellow employee and can be formal or informal. Grievances can be lodged by an individual or a group. A grievance procedure can be seen as a vehicle to address issues effectively and timeously to ensure positive outcomes for everyone involved.

Important aspects to remember:

- Happiness in the workplace is everyone's responsibility
- Grievances are normal in the workplace
- Don't be afraid to use the procedure - every employee has the right to lodge a grievance
- Focus of grievance procedure is to find solutions
- Grievance procedure prevents minor disagreements developing into more serious disputes
- Grievance procedure can be dealt with either through an informal (discussion) or formal (written) process.
- When lodging a grievance, provide complete information (who, what, when, where and how)
- Confidentiality is of utmost importance
- Know where to submit or report grievance according to farm policy (ask if you are unsure)
- Feedback must be provided within time limit according to farm policy

Examples of grievances can include gender-based violence and harassment, verbal abuse, physical abuse, name calling, workplace bullying etc.

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