

# Absenteeism resolution essay



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For Employees Who Are Absent For Supervisors/Managers: Recently, I was asked by a manager how he should deal with the fact that on any given day 10% of his employees are absent from work.

I informed the manager that the problem of employee absenteeism is a problem best resolved by taking the following four positive interventions versus taking a negative or punitive approach. Change Management Style: We are all aware of the fact that when employees call in ill, it does not mean they are truly too physically ill to work. One reason, outside of illness, that employees are absent is stress, and the number one reason employees are stressed has to do with their relationship with their manager/supervisor. Management styles that are too authoritarian tend to promote high levels of absenteeism among employees.

Authoritarian managers are managers who have poor listening skills, set unreachable goals, have poor communication skills, and are inflexible. In other words, they yell too much, blame others for problems, and make others feel that it must be their way or the "highway. Authoritarian managers tend to produce high absenteeism rates. By identifying managers who use an authoritarian style, and providing them with management training, you will be taking a positive step not only toward reducing absenteeism, but also reducing turnover, job burnout, and employee health problems such as backaches and headaches. Change Working Conditions: The employees in your company probably work in a well-lighted climate controlled building. The working conditions I am referring to relate to coworker relationships.

Not only does relationship stress occur between the employee and manager, but it also exists between employees. Frequently I hear employees say they did not go to work because they are fearful of or angry with another employee. These employees usually report they just could not deal with “so and so” today, so they called in ill. Companies that adopted policies and values that promote employee respect and professionalism, and promote an internal conflict resolution procedure, are companies that reduce employee stress.

A reduction in employee stress reduces employee absenteeism. Provide Incentives: Giving employees incentives for reduced absenteeism is not the same as rewarding or giving employees bonuses for reduced absenteeism. An incentive provides an employee with a boost to their motivation to avoid unnecessary absenteeism. It simply helps the employee decide to go to work versus staying home and watching Jerry Springer.

The types of incentive programs used by companies are numerous. Some companies allow employees to cash-in unused sick days at the end of every quarter, others give an employee two hours of bonus pay for every month of perfect attendance; and still others provide employees with a buffet lunch, a certificate of achievement, or even a scratch-off card concealing prizes. The type of incentive program that your company uses should be one created especially for your company. You can create an incentive program tailored to your unique company by allowing employees to help you develop the incentive program. For example, your employees may not care about receiving a \$25.

00 U. S. saving bond for perfect attendance, but they might respond very well to being able to leave one hour early on Friday if they have perfect attendance all week. The duration of the incentive program is also very important. Once again allow your employees to help guide you to determine the length of time between incentives. Some companies find that they can simply reward employees with perfect attendance once a year, while others decide once a month is best, and still others decide once a week works best.

The general rule of thumb is to reward workers more frequently the younger they are and the more difficult the work is to perform. Also, it is best to start with small incentives and work up to larger ones if necessary. Develop an Attendance Policy: Every company should have an attendance policy. An attendance policy allows a manager to intervene with an employee who is frequently absent. Besides stress as a primary reason for employee absenteeism, other causes relate to alcoholism, domestic violence, and family problems. If you confront an employee about his or her frequent absenteeism, and they inform you it is due to personal problems, consider referring the employee to an Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

If the employee's absenteeism relates to a medical problem or a family member with a medical problem, you may have to consider allowing the employee to use the benefits allowed to them under the American's with Disability Act (ADA) or the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Early identification of these employees will get them back to work as fast as possible. Lastly, make sure that you have an attorney review your attendance policy to make sure it does not violate any State or Federal labor laws. By incorporating the above four strategies into your company you will

not only reduce absenteeism you will reduce employee burnout, turnover, poor morale, and workplace negativism.

by Gary Vikesland, MA LP CEAP <http://www.employer-employee.com/absent.html> Dealing with employee absence

Over two million people are reported to suffer from an illness which they believe was caused by or made worse by their current or past work.

5 million working days are lost every year (1.5 days per worker), 28 million due to work-related ill health and seven million due to workplace injury.

Employee absences are both costly and disruptive. In any year, workplace absence typically averages 8.1 days per employee at a cost of ? 850 to the employer. Multiply this figure by the number of staff in your company, and take into account the disruption and lost work caused by other employees having to cover for absent colleagues, and you can see that absenteeism is a significant factor in damaging your profits.

Here are some practical steps to take. Track the problem Can you identify any particular problem areas? Are there patterns of absence? Does a particular department or employee have a below average record? A Focus on morale Unhappy staff are more likely to take time off. A financial incentive for low absence is one solution but creating a friendly environment, where staff feel valued as part of a team and where flexible, family friendly policies are in place is likely to prove more effective at keeping absenteeism to a minimum. Support sick employees Long-term sickness must be handled sensitively. An employee's permission must be sought and given before

applying for a medical report. Establish whether you should keep in touch so that the employee doesn't feel isolated.

Consider referring them to an occupational health specialist. This can identify ways of helping them return to work and give you an indication of how long the absence is likely to last. Have a clear policy – and enforce it. Make sure staff are well informed regarding sickness policy and procedures and that these are seen to be followed, and keep accurate records. It is sensible to ensure that employers are aware of the right to request an independent medical assessment in the event of an employee taking substantial numbers of days off work. When recruiting you could check a potential employee's attendance record with their previous employer, and you may consider requiring all prospective staff to undergo a medical examination.

Make it company policy always to carry out a return to work interview. This may just let the employee know that their contribution was missed, or it could help identify underlying problems that will affect your management strategy. It may also deter staff from feigning illness. Remember that disciplinary action for unacceptable absence must be distinguished from capability procedures related to illness. Employers need to be aware of the full range of conditions which come under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

In this case, reasonable adjustments must be made to help the employee return to work. Employee absence is a serious issue for most small businesses, but there are steps you can take to minimise its impact.

However, we recommend that you take professional advice before altering contracts or terms and conditions of employment. [http://www.cromptonward.co.uk/content/forums\\_bus\\_manage/employee\\_absence.html](http://www.cromptonward.co.uk/content/forums_bus_manage/employee_absence.html)

How to Solve Your Employee Absentee Problem Mary was furious with Paul, one of the customer service phone reps she supervised. He had called in sick again, forcing the other employees to pick up the slack. Paul was averaging one sick day every two weeks. It simply wasn't fair.

"Please get Paul on the phone for me," Mary said to one of her staff. As she sat angrily at her desk, she thought about how she would let Paul have it for showing so little respect for his colleagues. But then she had a sudden doubt. What, legally, could she say to Paul? Would the fact that she had called him at all mean that she was harassing him? Suppose she fired Paul, and he sued for harassment? Would she be fired-and all because she was trying to manage as effectively as she knew how? PROACTIVE STEPS Many employers get caught up in a cycle of repeated attempts to reform these types.

That's a mistake because the costs of employee absenteeism-reflected in lost production, overtime and temporary replacements for the absent worker-can add up quickly. In fact, some personnel experts estimate that an absent employee costs a company 1.75 to 2. times his daily salary. Some large companies estimate that absenteeism may be costing them more than \$500,00 per year.

How can companies combat the problem? Approaches vary, but most successful absenteeism programs include three elements: a clearly

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enunciated company policy, careful documentation and consistent application of the policy. Set a clear policy Frequently, absenteeism problems arise because a company has no clear policy on the issue. A company policy statement should be distributed to all employees, indicating when and under what conditions an employee will be paid (or not paid) for absences. Determinations can be based on average absence rates for a company or industry based on a survey of what other companies offer. Variations include no-fault policies, which count all absences toward an established maximum, or those that differentiate between excused and unexcused absences. The policy should indicate types and stages of discipline that will apply to employees who violate the policy, as well as positive measures and awards that will accrue for individuals or departments that meet zero-absence targets.

Caution: Realize that an employee discharged under a no-fault attendance policy may be eligible to collect unemployment benefits. In addition, be aware that no-fault absentee policies could violate the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Some courts have found that an employer might have to reasonably accommodate an employee's qualified disability under the ADA regardless of its no-fault absentee policy. Also, you cannot count FMLA leave time in determining whether a threshold number of absences has been reached under a no-fault policy.

Always document absences Documentation is a cardinal rule in any activity for which an employee may be disciplined. You should keep attendance/absence records for all employees. An absence rate can be <https://assignbuster.com/absenteeism-resolution-essay/>



figured by dividing the number of days an employee was scheduled to work for a given period into the number of absences. You can also calculate average absence rates for each department and for the company as a whole. Be consistent No company policy is going to remain effective unless it is applied consistently and fairly to all employees.

For this reason, supervisory personnel should be clear on their responsibilities for recording data and for counseling and disciplining employees. Yet, an absenteeism policy must also remain flexible enough to allow for special problems and situations that might arise. (Lack of flexibility is one of the reasons most often given by professional arbitrators for overruling company disciplinary actions arising from employee absenteeism. ) Observation: Perhaps the most important point a company can make concerning employee absenteeism is that a sick leave or absence policy is not a benefit to be equated with vacation time or personal leave. The more employees understand this and recognize your commitment to disciplining chronic absenteeism, the fewer problems you are likely to have.

**USE POSITIVE DISCIPLINE** When you're faced with an employee who is chronically absent, it's best to have a positive discipline program in effect. For example, assume that a worker has an absenteeism problem resulting in lower productivity. Because absenteeism typically comes under the "minor problem" category, the first step is a precounseling session between the individual and his supervisor. In this session the supervisor determines if the employee understands the company's policy on absences. The positive discipline approach then consists of the following stages: Oral reminder

stage. This stage follows the counseling session and lasts three months or however long seems to be in the company's best interest.

But the period has to be uniform for all employees. If you resolve the problem, the slate is wiped clean and so is the documentation of the incident. Written reminder stage. If the problem still exists after the counseling session, a second counseling session between the employee and his supervisor is scheduled. This time, however, the supervisor writes a memo to the individual spelling out the problem, the worker's acknowledgment of it and his agreement to work toward its resolution.

A copy is placed in the employee's personnel file. The written reminder stage lasts six months, or however long you think is best for the company. If the problem is resolved within this time, the memo is considered inactive and there are no repercussions for the worker. However, don't discard the memo-keep it in the employee's personnel file.

Decision-making stage. If the absenteeism problem still exists after the written reminder stage, the supervisor has a final meeting with the employee, during which he spells out the company's policies again. Then the employee is given a one-day leave of absence to decide if he wants to continue working for the company on the condition that he agrees to abide by its rules. An issue related to absenteeism is whether you can legally terminate an employee who routinely has to take time off because of his service obligations to the Reserve or National Guard. Generally speaking, workers have an absolute right to the time off because of their service

obligations-even if it is inconvenient for you-and a job has to be waiting for them when they return.

But it doesn't have to be the same job, just one with the same status, pay and benefits as the previous one. So be sure that you can objectively show that the new job is of equal status. [http://www. businessmanagementdaily. com/articles/4675/1/How-to-Solve-Your-Employee-Absentee-Problem/Page1. html#](http://www.businessmanagementdaily.com/articles/4675/1/How-to-Solve-Your-Employee-Absentee-Problem/Page1.html#)