Employee Relations – The Sanctuary Way

Keri P. Thatcher, MA-HRIR, SPHR, SHRM-SCP
Finding Balance in...

• Employee Feedback
• Performance Improvement Plans
• Mediations
• Terminations
• Self-Care in the Workday
• Feedback should be timely and “in the moment”
• *It should also be nonviolent*...

• How do you feel in the moment?
Employee Feedback

- How do you feel in the moment?
  - Check in with yourself
  - Think through the conversation
  - Bullet point what you want to cover
  - Have your safety plan ready
To give feedback - SBI

• Situation
• Behavior
• Impact

• “Employee, in our team meeting on Friday, I noticed that you rolled your eyes and audibly sighed when I spoke about our new program. Your behavior made me feel like you don’t support our new initiative.”
Employee feedback

• To find balance... use your Safety Plan.

• Address the incident in a timely manner, but not so timely that it’s not focused, intentional, and nonviolent.

• Use the SBI technique for both positive and negative feedback.
Performance Improvement Discussions

• What are your intentions – are you coaching or documenting?

• Coaching – providing feedback and offering a chance to improve.

• Documenting – providing paperwork for legal defense.
Performance Improvement Discussions

• Whether coaching or documenting... We want the employee to focus on the future.

• This is the perfect opportunity for SELF – both before and during the meeting.
Performance Improvement Discussions

• SELF before the meeting:
  • Safety – are the performance issues causing any safety concerns? Do you feel safe having the discussion?
  • Emotions – what emotions are the performance issues bringing up in you? In others?
  • Loss – Has trust been impacted? Might having the conversation impact your camaraderie? What other losses are you experiencing as a supervisor?
  • Future – what does the future of the department look like after this discussion?
Performance Improvement Discussions

• SELF during the meeting:
  • Safety – How would you start the meeting by establishing Safety?

• “Employee, we’re here today to discuss some performance concerns that we have related to your attendance. Our goal is to provide you with the tools that you will need to successfully meet our attendance standards and a timeline in which to meet those standards. We want you to feel safe having this conversation, and we want you to know that we’re here to support you”.
Performance Improvement Discussions

• SELF during the meeting:
  • Emotions – What can you do to mitigate embarrassment or defensiveness?

• Speak it – empathize and share as appropriate. Make the problem seem easy to correct. Encourage.
Performance Improvement Discussions

• SELF during the meeting:
  - Loss – Are there any anticipated losses as a result of the performance plan?

• Address the losses – be honest
• SELF during the meeting:
  • Future – what does the employee’s future look like after this discussion?

• Encourage, offer support, talk timelines and resources
Performance Improvement Discussions

• BOTH coaching and documentation are critical!

• To find balance... SELF it out – before and during the meeting.
Performance Improvement Discussions

• Let’s practice!
• Pre Problem Solving Worksheet – built by our Core Team

• Based in Emotional Intelligence, Nonviolence, Growth & Change, Social Learning, and Social Responsibility

• Shared with each other. Followed by a mediated conversation.
# Pre-Problem Solving Meeting Worksheet

The transition from opponents to problem-solving teammates is a powerful tool.

## WHAT IS THE ISSUE YOU WISH TO ADDRESS?

## IDENTIFY AND ACKNOWLEDGE HOW YOU FEEL:


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>WHY?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are you afraid of getting fired or of reprisal?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Were your feelings hurt?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you feel that your ideas will be or were rejected?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you afraid of being put in your place?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you afraid of feeling stupid?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you feel unimportant?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you feel a lack of respect for your ideas or concerns?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you think it will be helpful to have a mediator guide you through solving the problem?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How do you feel about the issue?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What would you want from the outcome?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do you need from the outcome?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### BE WILLING AND PREPARED TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM:

Forgiveness is the key to conflict resolution.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>WHY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are you willing to be open-minded about solutions?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you open to considering that someone else’s problem is your problem too, because we are a community with shared concerns?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you really want to resolve the problem?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will you treat the other person(s) with respect?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will you treat the other person(s) like they’re important to you?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you prepared to be open and honest about your feelings and the issue(s)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you prepared to meet as two peers--to solve a problem together?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you willing to take responsibility for your part in the conflict?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you willing to compromise on a solution?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### ABIDE BY GROUND RULES:

Whenever you’re in conflict with someone, one factor can make a difference between damaging your relationship and deepening it: Attitude.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>WHY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are you willing to meet in a mutually neutral space?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you willing to actively participate even if you feel annoyed, angry, or hurt?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will you listen to the other person without interrupting?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will you try to understand the other person’s position and/or feelings?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you prepared to make eye contact?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you prepared to watch your tone of voice?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you willing to try to refrain from jumping to conclusions?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will you minimize distractions by shutting your phone off?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will you give the other person your full attention?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### BE WILLING TO ENTERTAIN CRAZY SOUNDING SOLUTIONS:

Great ideas often receive violent opposition from mediocre minds. — Einstein

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>WHY?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are you willing to be open-minded about possible solutions?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you prepared to record all ideas even if they seem far-fetched or have never been done before?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you willing to take a “what if” approach to solving the problem?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you think it’s possible that a happier staff member is a mutual gain?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mediations

• Trends that I’ve noticed:
  • Usually one person is hurting and the other is unaware
  • Great tool for building emotional intelligence
  • SELF can be used in the mediated conversation

• To find balance... draw on the 7 Commitments and SELF.
Terminations

• Both planned and unplanned exits are an opportunity for SELF

• For planned exits, it’s a way to help your staff process.
• For unplanned exits, it’s a way to structure the conversation.
Terminations – unplanned

• Safety: Get to the point quickly. Plan for physical & emotional safety.
• Emotions: Be kind, but be direct. Anticipate negative reactions.
• Loss: Remember that job loss comes with many other losses – camaraderie, security.
• Future: What resources can you provide? What are the next steps?
Self-Care in the Workday

• Cut Yourself a Break – what would a colleague or friend say?
• Value Your Time – 15 minutes to plan. Are requests helping or harming your goals?
• Take a Victory Lap – celebrate!
• Surround Yourself with Good People – set boundaries. Invest in what fills you up.
• Update Your Workspace – clean up. Post things that inspire.
• Recharge and Reboot - Sleep. Eat. Mental breaks.
When Self-Care Slips

- Self-Neglect – not taking care of self
- Self-Management – inauthenticity
- Self-Sabotage – unproductive habits
- Self-Preservation – scarcity mindset

Commitment to Self

• What employee relations challenge will you be ready to face?

• How are you going to incorporate self-care into your workday next week?
Thank you