

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1651 The Checklist for Terminating a Worker – Part 2

Terminating a worker is never easy. Every time you hire someone, if you do it carefully and thoughtfully, you have high hopes that the good fit you think you have will last for years. Sadly, some of those decisions that we think we got right, turn out wrong and we have to do what's necessary for organization, and is right for the worker. I'm Jerry Roberts, and today, part two of our checklist on how to let a worker go. That's next on the Extra Point.

Yesterday, we gave you the first five items on the termination checklist created by labor attorney Stuart Silverman, who published it on LinkedIn.

These are his rules, with my comments added in. Hopefully, the combination will help you think through your own situations.

- 1. Do not bring additional people into it.** Just the supervisor and HR if needed.
- 2. Do not fire by e-mail, text, or any other impersonal method.** Unless there's a security risk, the personal way is best.
- 3. Do not terminate on a Friday or early Monday.** There is a lot of controversy on the when to terminate. I'll relate other issues that may be considered.
- 4. Do not escort the person from the building in the view of others.** Again, if there's no security issue, let the person exit quietly. If they want to say goodbye to their favorite coworkers, let them do it.
- 5. Do not embarrass the person or tell them they were a subpar employee.** If it's an issue of performance, simply explain that. Unless the termination is a huge surprise, the worker is likely anticipating it.

Okay, let's pick up with number six.

- 6. Treat individuals respectfully. How would**

you want your boss to treat you? Do that. Nothing more needs to be added to that.

7. Have all the benefits and details worked out. If your paperwork isn't ready, don't do the termination. I've seen this happen and it's not pretty. The manager delivers the news and then tells the worker to come back a couple days later to pick up the final paycheck and finalize things. Just don't.

8. Give hope and encouragement. If they have been a good worker and the reason for the termination is because you're cutting back, let them know how you feel about their work. If you know any other company that could use their skills, ask the worker if you can make a few phone calls for them.

Yes, this is extra work. However, you're honoring their commitment and trying to help them. This kind of thing gets around in a small community.

9. Again, unless this was a disciplinary matter, tell the person you wish things could have turned out differently and that you wish them well. Give them support on how to move forward in whatever ways you can.

10. Let the person know what will be said to co-workers and clients. I've spoken to many people over the years who were fired from a job, said their goodbyes and, and only later came to find out that management trashed them to the staff. It happened to me.

Let me add on to number 10, in fact we'll call it...

11. Never forget that the way you terminate a worker will leave a lasting impression on the remaining members of your team. I don't believe a lot of managers think about that.

(Con't.)

If you badmouth the exiting worker and say they really didn't mean much to the operation, and everybody is better off with them gone, I can almost guarantee that somebody on your staff — maybe a lot of somebodies — will be thinking, "Maybe that's what he/she is going say about me if I get canned."

Don't let your ego get in the way. Here's the rule to remember: Treat them well on the way in and treat them well on the way out.

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