

Sample Supervisory Interview

First Interview

1. Describe the Problem

Supervisor: Mary, I know you're busy with clients, so I won't take too much of your time. I have a few concerns that I wanted to chat with you about. I've noticed over the past few weeks that you appear to be more withdrawn. At our team meetings, you're not asking questions, like you usually do, or making some of your witty comments. I've also noticed a few mistakes in your case notes, and an increase in absences from work, which is not like you. Normally, you never make mistakes and have one of the best attendance records in the company. Do you have any ideas why?

2. Listen

Mary: I don't know. I guess I'm not getting enough sleep. Since my 96-year old mother moved in with us, it seems that we've been constantly on the run. I'm sure things will settle down over the next couple of weeks, once we finalize arrangements with the home support services.

Supervisor: Yes, that must be very difficult to balance work and life pressures.

Mary: Yes, it's not easy.

3. Brainstorm Solutions

Supervisor: If you need any time off, please don't hesitate to ask. Also, don't forget that we have an EAP that offers confidential assistance in a number of areas, including eldercare. Here is a pamphlet outlining their various services and how to access them. Since they are confidential, no one in the company will know if you contact them.

Mary: Thanks. I will keep this in mind.

Supervisor: I would like to schedule a follow-up meeting two weeks from now to see how things are going. In the meantime, if you want to talk about any of this further, you know that you can drop by my office anytime.

Second Interview

(follow-up in supervisor's office)

1. Describe Problem

Supervisor: Mary, I wanted to follow-up on our last meeting. As you remember, we talked about some of the changes that I had noticed in your performance and you mentioned that you were finding it challenging to take care of your mother. Have you been able to put the necessary supports in place?

Mary: Yes, pretty well. There's a few other things, but it's a lot better.

Supervisor: That's good to hear. How do you feel things are going at work?

Mary: Alright, I think.

2. Listen

Supervisor: Mary, I am still seeing similar problems in your performance that we previously talked about. Any ideas why?

Mary: Maybe I'm still a bit tired, which affects my speed and accuracy, I guess...

3. Brainstorm Solutions

Supervisor: If there are any other reasons for your performance problems, including health or medical reasons, we need to know so that we can accommodate you. I don't need to know the specifics, but I do need to know of any limitations that you may have. As you are probably aware, our company also offers various types of accommodation, including sick leave, vacation, flexible scheduling and modified duties. In addition to myself, you can also talk with your union representative, Occupational Health Nurse or Human Resources.

Mary: Thanks, I'll keep it in mind.

Supervisor: I am going to schedule another follow-up meeting in two weeks. It's important that you show some signs of improvement, so if we can help you out in any way, please let us know. Okay?

Mary: Yes.

***Note:** Before the next interview, if the supervisor has strong evidence to believe that these performance problems may be due to a medical problem, he/she may

request Mary to see a doctor and bring in medical information, rather than proceeding with progressive discipline. It is always advisable to consult with legal counsel and a union representative in such cases.

Source: Workplace Health Program, CAMH.