

Another aspect of expressing your concerns to the troubled employee is the ability to deal with inconsistencies effectively. When someone is in crisis, often the facts don't match the individual's statements. These need to be clarified before a referral can be made.

Examples:

- You said that you were feeling fine and you aren't having any trouble with your hours, but you've missed three shifts in the past month and have been at least 15 minutes late twice this week and six other times this month.
- On one hand, you are saying that you may have a drinking problem and would like to do something about it but on the other hand, you are refusing to go for counselling; I don't understand.

Negotiate Plans Without Using Idle Threats

Often, when an employee is in a crisis situation, the problem has been around for some time. Also, quite often, the employee has felt threatened in the past by an attempt by someone to help them "straighten out". Making another idle threat is only going to add to the problem. Once the problem has been identified and the "I messages" are used to express the manager's concerns, the next step is to resolve the situation. After the employee and manager come to an agreement, the plan needs to be put in writing, clearly identifying the employee's responsibilities and the consequences to the employee should he or she not follow through.

Sample Agreement

I, John Smith agree to:

Make an appointment with the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba for an assessment of my alcohol use. Follow through with the recommendations made by the AFM counsellor. Advise Mr. Doe of these recommendations and provide a report from AFM when I have followed through with these recommendations.

I, Mr. Doe will provide John Smith with time off for the required assessment appointments and will arrange sick leave for counseling programs if necessary.

If I, John Smith do not follow through with the assessment and/or recommendations from the AFM, I am aware that my position with the ABC Company will be suspended until such time as I do follow through with this treatment.