

Communication Standards

If one of your direct reports is having difficulty meeting appropriate standards for communication, consider these tips:

- 1. Document.** Compile examples of the person's inappropriate written or verbal communication. Consider if the problem is something that might be addressed through training and education or if the difficulty is related to behavior (such as using inappropriate or aggressive language).
- 2. Consult with Human Resources.** Talk to HR about your concerns and the impact the behavior is having on both internal and external customers. Investigate what resources the organization may provide for improvement. The LifeMatters Management Consultation Service is also available to provide guidance and suggestions.
- 3. Schedule a private meeting.** Discuss your concerns and their impact.

Sample language: "I've noticed a lot of spelling errors in your emails. I am concerned that your correspondence with customers may have the same errors and create a poor impression."

- 4. Listen to the individual's response.** In some instances, the errors may be a result of discomfort with software or a lack of familiarity with technical terminology. Working remotely from home, where



previously the person may have been less reliant on email, may be having an impact too. Determine what you can do to provide necessary training or support.

- 5. Make a referral to LifeMatters.** If communication errors indicate a drop in engagement, consider making a performance referral to LifeMatters. LifeMatters can also assist with addressing personal issues that may be affecting the team member's performance.
- 6. Follow up.** Periodically meet with the worker to discuss his or her progress and areas in need of continued improvement. If performance expectations are still not being met, talk to Human Resources about appropriate next steps. Consult with HR before taking any disciplinary action.

The LifeMatters Management Consultation Service is available to provide coaching and assistance with a variety of management-related concerns. Call anytime.

Call the **LifeMatters®** by Empathia Management Consultation Service toll-free anytime. **1-800-367-7474**

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