

# Struggling with Deadlines

Do you have a team member who struggles with time management or meeting deadlines? These steps may help:

- 1. Evaluate performance patterns.** Review the person's work history to see if you can detect any patterns related to time management, such as backlogs during a busy season. Consider if the issues with delivering work on time are related to behavior or if they result from workload.
- 2. Consult with Human Resources.** HR can provide suggestions on how to address any performance concerns. (LifeMatters is also available to consult about performance issues.) In addition, HR can provide input regarding whether the role can or should be reconfigured due to changing business needs.
- 3. Schedule a private meeting with the worker.** Outline your concerns about missed deadlines. Ask the person to explain why he or she has been struggling to complete work on time.  
  
**Sample language:** "You've missed deadlines twice in the last two weeks, and have turned in work at the last minute several times recently. Can you tell me what's going on?"
- 4. Listen.** Ask the person to explain the reasons for the tardy work and offer suggestions for improving workflow.

**Sample language:** "Can you pinpoint specific times when you might need more assistance?"

- 5. Review workflow and time management strategies.** If you determine that the deadline struggles are due to poor time management, review the steps required to complete the task. Help determine an ideal workflow.

**Sample language:** "Let's break down what's needed. What is the target date for each step so the overall task is finished on time?" (It may be helpful to work backwards from the due date when creating this timeline.)

- 6. Refer the individual to LifeMatters.** If warranted, make a performance referral to LifeMatters. LifeMatters can also assist with addressing underlying personal issues that may be affecting performance.

**Sample language:** "LifeMatters is available to help you get your performance back on track. I urge you to call."

- 7. Follow up.** Schedule a meeting to review any changes in workflow and performance improvements. If the worker has met your expectations and is still struggling to meet the target date, it may be time to consider reconfiguring your team or adjusting the project's workflow or deadline.

The LifeMatters Management Consultation Service is available to provide suggestions for keeping your team on track. Call 24/7/365.

Call the **LifeMatters®** Management Consultation Service toll-free anytime. **1-800-634-6433**

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