

## **Verbal Warning**

Also called verbal counseling, a verbal warning is a wonderful tool to informally provide guidance to an employee, usually in a less-threatening manner than other types of correction. Documentation is crucial, right from this step. HR recommends either summarizing the verbal warning meeting and giving it to the employee as a **Summary of Meeting** or just document the action/behavior observed, what was said in the verbal warning and dates and times of both. This documentation should be kept in the supervisor's file for that employee.

## **Letter of Warning**

A letter of warning can be a great step between a verbal warning and a letter of reprimand. As always, the situation will help guide us to the right step so you don't have to feel compelled to issue a letter of warning before a letter of reprimand. It depends on the transgression or performance issue, the timing, circumstances, how you have handled similar situations in the past and your expectations. A Letter of Warning often follows a verbal discussion with the employee to establish the facts. Templates for all of these letters are available from your HR Business Partner.

## **Letter of Reprimand**

A letter of reprimand is a step up the seriousness scale and may be the last step before discipline. Reprimands can be accompanied by a Performance Development Plan and/or Probation but need not be – saving probation for the right circumstances if the reprimand does not work.

Some supervisors are wary of jumping to a reprimand, often worrying about angering the employee or making the situation worse. If we recall that the whole purpose at this point is to help the employee succeed, also helping those around the employee, then a clear, definitive and serious step like this can be a great tool to get an employee's attention and help them understand their employment could be at risk. HR rarely advises administering a letter of reprimand twice for the same or similar issue.