

Frequently asked Questions during an Attendance Management Meeting

Meetings to discuss attendance can be difficult. Although a sample script can be helpful, it is recognized that some employees may view these discussions as an invasion of privacy and/or disciplinary. As such, listed below are questions one can anticipate during an attendance meeting and suggested responses to address the questions.

1. **“Why are you interviewing me? John’s attendance is much worse.”** *We are here today to discuss your record of attendance, not John’s and as I have mentioned I am concerned that your attendance record currently exceeds the average. I would not discuss John’s attendance with you just like I would not discuss your attendance with him if he asked.*
2. **“Are you saying that you do not believe that I am really sick when I call in sick?”** *I am not questioning the legitimacy of your sick leave, but I am concerned about your amount of absenteeism as the facility needs you here on a regular basis. We would like to explore with you ways to help you improve your regular attendance.*
3. **“Why are you singling me out? You are harassing me.”** *I am not singling you out; your record of absenteeism requires that I meet with you to discuss it. I am not harassing you. As your supervisor I have an obligation and a responsibility to make you aware of any concerns I have which may affect your ability to perform your duties. I care about the staff and want to ensure everyone is ok and employees are able to be present.*
4. **“Do you expect me to come to work when I am sick and infect everyone else”**
No, if you are unable to work due to illness you should not attend work. However, I do expect you to take care of yourself and make an effort to focus on your health in order that you may improve your attendance at work. If you are unable to work but are concerned about infecting fellow employees, I encourage you to discuss with your health care professional.
5. **“Why am I being disciplined for being sick? I am a good employee.”** *You are not being disciplined. This meeting is about your record of attendance. When you are at work you are a good performer. However, I need you at work on a regular basis so that your skills and talents can be used consistently.*
6. **“Why are you speaking to me now? My attendance has been this way for years.”** *Your absenteeism has been excessive for a very lengthy period. This has had an impact on the department, but I am also concerned for you. I want to meet with you now so we can have this initial discussion around your attendance.*
7. **“Are you going to fire me for being sick?”** *Termination is not being considered. I am meeting with you to discuss your absenteeism record and to provide assistance as I want to support you. Termination of employment is always used as a last resort. However, if your attendance continues to be excessive and there is no likelihood of improvement, it is possible that the employment relationship could be terminated for attendance concerns as all employees have a contractual obligation to attend work.*