

The 5 Biggest Termination Mistakes

Unfortunately, at times it is necessary to make the difficult choice to terminate an employee. Whether it is one person or a large number of people who are terminated, it is critical to disengage an employee in a professional and dignified manner that reduces any risk to the company, and any unnecessary embarrassment to the departing employee. Below are five mistakes that we have consistently seen. Be sure to consider these in your process.



- **They don't fire at all** - sometimes the biggest termination issue you can face is not taking action. Dragging your feet in firing a poor performer kills morale.
- **Ignoring precedent** - consistency is key. Be sure to consider how the company has handled similar terminations in the past. This mitigates any challenges on favoritism or discrimination. It also highlights that the company has a thoughtful process for this difficult action.
- **Providing no explanation** – be concise and honest. Best not to sugarcoat the reason you're firing someone — or over-exaggerate. Either way, you'll have a hard time defending if challenged.
- **Treating departing employees as “less than”** - you and your company will be judged on how you handle difficult and sensitive situations. Be sure to take the “high road” and provide meaningful assistance and support. This should include some form of severance, and doing all you can to speak positively, or not at all, of departing employees.
- **Not providing transition support** – when an employee is impacted they are left with no infrastructure or direction. This can be stressful and disorienting to them and their families. Providing meaningful outplacement support will reduce the stress for everyone, decrease the employee's desire to take legal action, and signals to the surviving employees that everyone is valued including the departing employee.

Countering these five mistakes will mitigate the downside of terminations, and can even help drive higher levels of engagement, and company loyalty. For further support in the termination process, please contact CMP at 972-680-9200.

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CMP is a talent and transition firm in the business of developing people and organizations across the full talent life cycle – from talent acquisition and leadership development, to organization development and career transition support.