

## Evaluation: Dismissal

No one wants to think about having to discipline or fire a volunteer, but a good volunteer manager is prepared if the situation should arise. The impact and possibility of a volunteer relationship coming to this stage can be greatly reduced when the proper orientation and training steps are taken.

Your decision to terminate should be a last resort, and considered as severe for non-paid staff as for your paid staff.

If it becomes evident that termination must occur:

- ❖ You must be able to prove the charges for dismissal. Don't rely on hearsay.
- ❖ These charges must be sufficient to warrant dismissal.
- ❖ The cause for dismissal must be related to job performance.
- ❖ The proper disciplinary procedures must have been followed.

Once the decision has clearly been made, here are tips to conducting the actual event of termination:

- ❖ Conduct the meeting in private. This will preserve the dignity of the volunteer as well as yourself.
- ❖ Be quick, direct and absolute. Be certain the words you choose adequately convey the message. It would be embarrassing for the volunteer to show up the next day because they didn't take the 'hint'.
- ❖ Don't argue. This is a meeting for you to announce that the decision for termination has been made. If you've followed the disciplinary procedure, all arguments have been made. Expect the volunteer to vent their feelings, but remain firm and quiet.
- ❖ Follow-up. Inform the necessary individuals of the volunteer's departure. This may include clients who had a relationship with the volunteer, co-workers and RSVP.

On rare occasion, there may be grounds for immediate dismissal. In most cases, these grounds are clearly defined in the organization's employee policy manual.

Above all, be extremely careful in what is said and to whom. A volunteer may feel a personal bond and commitment to an organization. After all, when you explain to a volunteer why you no longer want his or her services, it's very easy for the volunteer to hear a personal attack.

A  
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