1. Basic Guidelines

The following are some basic guidelines that are likely to maximise the success of this procedure.

Availability

Managers should be prepared to be available for the employee. Employees may need emotional and practical support throughout this period of time. You may find that they seek you out more than usual, perhaps with no specific purpose. It is important for the employee to know that you are there for them.

Some employees may avoid their line manager as a result of the situation they find themselves in, so managers may find the need to offer support in a different way.

An employee who has made an error may find it particularly difficult to understand why the error or mistake occurred. They may feel alone with this experience. It is important that the line manager maintains contact and communication lines with the employee and wherever possible shares information available which can help in bringing down stress and anxiety levels.

Confidentiality

Staff may share personal and sensitive information with their line manager about situations that may be happening in their life, so it is absolutely critical that the line manager maintains confidentiality and is discreet with the information that may be shared with them.

Resilience

Line managers should be prepared to have their actions questioned or criticised by less proactive individuals who may not understand what is trying to be achieved.

Non-Judgmental

There are likely to be others who take a less supportive approach to the employee and the manager may have to compensate for that.

Encouragement

Line managers are advised to give constant encouragement (as appropriate) to staff during this process and will need to maintain and demonstrate their own levels of enthusiasm and commitment.

Allowing colleagues to take the lead

In some situations it may be more appropriate for colleagues rather than managers to take the lead in providing support to staff. Depending upon the circumstances and the individuals involved, managers may need to facilitate or co-ordinate that support. This will involve both encouraging others to demonstrate emotional support for staff throughout their rehabilitation or development period and providing practical support where appropriate.

2. Feedback

For consideration during review meetings or informal ‘chats’.

What aspects of the rehabilitation plan does the employee feel is working well?

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What aspects of the rehabilitation plan does the line manager feel is working well?

Are there any measurable changes in performance?

Is the employee experiencing any difficulties or obstacles?

A discussion of the aspects of the rehabilitation plan that the employee and/or line manager does not feel is working well.

It is important that dates are agreed upon and that appointments are kept, however busy. If the manager shows commitment to the process, then it is more likely that the member of staff will be committed.

Above all, keep communicating with the employee, so that you are up-to-date and aware of progress.

3. Developing A Rehabilitation Plan

Developing a rehabilitation plan:

a) short-term activities with short-term benefits can be motivational;

b) set achievable and realistic targets;

c) focus on issues that are causing a problem;

d) do not overload the employee;

e) check the process is consultative so that you get buy in;

f) check the employee feels comfortable with the activities selected.

NB - When agreeing dates for reviewing progress, set realistic timescales which will not result in increased pressure and stress for the member of staff and subsequent disappointment. Consider:

a) does the employee have a holiday planned?

b) what other commitments are there which will impact upon the support available?

c) the support you may need from others.

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