ABOUT ME:

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NOW WHAT?

You’ve received an allegation. What’s the next step?

• What options are allowed in your policy?
• Are you required to investigate every allegation?
INITIAL ASSESSMENT

- Is the alleged behavior, if true, a violation of your policy?
  - What is the actual potential policy violation?
- Is there another more appropriate way to handle the complaint?
- An investigation is not the way to influence or change policy
- Don’t dismiss or ignore allegations by rationalizing yourself out of the policy

INVESTIGATION INITIATED

Begin building your investigative plan immediately
- You have limited information, so create a plan articulating how you are going to obtain needed information.
• Obtain a detailed statement regarding the allegation.
• This may come from the reporting party, a third party, the victim, or an internal organization.
• What is actually being alleged as a violation of your policy?

Purpose of the interview is to build library of knowledge
Open ended questions
• More detailed follow-up questions
• You are the interviewer. You control the interview. Accept all information but focus on the policy violation
• Who, what, when, where, how, and maybe why
NEXT STEP - CORROBORATION

• Make a list of information presented as fact that needs to be corroborated.
• Corroborate the who, what, when, where, how, and maybe why
  • Motive is harder to corroborate and may not be relevant

HOW TO CORROBorate

Witness interviews
• Evidence gathering
• Records searches
ADD TO YOUR PLAN

• Just because you add something to your plan, does not make it a requirement. Continued investigation may make the information not relevant or may corroborate in a different way
• If you don’t complete a step, you should be able explain why
• Your plan should be constantly adapting to the investigation

THE WRITTEN PLAN

Writing your plan shows that you are being thorough an unbiased
• Keeps you accountable
• Allows others to know your status
• Writing helps you organize
THE WRITTEN PLAN FORMAT

- Format
  - You can use a template. See my website for an adaptable template.
  - You can write freeform
- Use the format that works best for you. But it should be legible and understandable to others.
- Think: If I quit today, will my replacement be able to pick up where I left off?

WITNESSES

Witnesses can be presented by the parties, but don’t limit yourself to those only
- Think back to the facts you need to corroborate
- Even if you think a fact is obvious, if a witness can corroborate, conduct the interview
- Be careful on what information you share with witnesses. The flow of information should be primarily one way - towards you
**CHARACTER WITNESSES**

- Consider relevance
- You may agree to interview character witnesses, but remember you are not investigating whether your respondent is a nice person. You are investigating if they violated a policy.
- Consider limiting witnesses to people with relevant information

**EVIDENCE**

Be creative in thinking about what kind of evidence will corroborate the details.
- Electronic communications
- Written communication
- Photos
- Video surveillance
- Bank records
- Audits
- Performance Reviews
EVIDENCE REVIEW

- If you have collected some form of evidence, you must review it thoroughly.
- If there are 1000 pages of text, then read 1000 pages
- Document your review
- Maintain your evidence with care. Be able to speak to how the information was received and how it was stored.

NEW LEADS

- Every interview or piece of evidence may create further information that needs to be corroborated.
- Be thorough. Update your plan.
- Beware the rabbit hole of interesting yet irrelevant facts. No need to corroborate things that don't matter. You can make a note of why in the plan or in your notes.
When you believe you have completed your investigation, refer back to your plan. Is everything completed? Are there any other steps you can take?

As you write your final report, you may find information that you did not originally consider important that you now need to corroborate.

- Add these steps to your plan and complete them as normal.

Your investigative plan should subdue any complaints of bias or incompleteness on your part.

- Your leadership should be able to see at a glance that you considered and corroborated all of the facts of the case.

- Your conclusion is evidence based and based on a thorough investigation, all documented in your plan.

- You can include dates and descriptions.
• Your plan is not your final report.
• Your plan may contain brief notes or summaries, but full details should be documented elsewhere.
• Your plan is a roadmap of the work you did.

CONCLUSION

Investigators with different levels of expertise or different styles may prepare different styles of plans, but the plan should exist.
• It is a valuable tool for the investigator, but also a valuable historical document that outlines all of the work completed in an investigation.
• A thorough plan details a thorough investigation.
WHAT'S NEXT?

Marcus Williams Training Academy

- EBook– “Bias in Investigations”
- Lesson 1 Quiz
- YouTube Supplemental Lesson Videos
- Lesson 2 – Biased Investigations

https://marcuswilliamstraining.com

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