

Types of Excuses and Their Solutions

Category	Excuse: Employee Says...	Solution: You Do This...
<p>Diversions Employee redirects blame for performance problem back to supervisor.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“That’s not my job.”</i> • <i>“I didn’t know that’s what you wanted.”</i> • <i>“You never told me that.”</i> • <i>“No one ever told me it was a priority.”</i> • <i>“I thought someone else was going to do it.”</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accept partial responsibility for not making expectations clear. • Clarify your expectations for the future. • Note date and time of conversation.
<p>Discounts Employee minimizes importance of performance problem by referring to past or pointing out that others do the same thing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“It’s been done that way for years.”</i> • <i>“I’ve never done it that way before.”</i> • <i>“My previous boss never said anything to me about this.”</i> • <i>“Other people do the same thing.”</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge that you see how your expectations could be a surprise if there haven’t been similar expectations in the past. Or, agree that others have done the same thing. But point out that you’re bringing it up because the employee has done it more frequently. (cite specifics). • Clarify your expectations for the future. • Note date and time of conversation.
<p>Denials Employee rejects responsibility for problem.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“It’s not my fault.”</i> • <i>“I hope you’re not blaming me.”</i> • <i>“It didn’t happen on my shift.”</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let employee know you are not trying to cast blame. But you do want to talk about the situation and find a solution to prevent the issue from reoccurring. • Note date and time of conversation.
<p>Half-truths Employee points out possible obstacle as cause for performance problem.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I got sick.”</i> • <i>“I didn’t get the paperwork.”</i> • <i>“I forgot.”</i> • <i>“The equipment didn’t work.”</i> • <i>“I didn’t have enough time.”</i> • <i>“I didn’t have enough help.”</i> • <i>“I had personal problems.”</i> • <i>“I didn’t know how to do it.”</i> 	<p><i>1st Time:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge excuse. Clarify your expectations. • Note date and time of conversation. <p><i>2nd Time:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind employee of previous conversation. • Restate your expectations. • Turn into problem solving discussion. • Note date and time of discussion. <p><i>3rd Time:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind employee of previous conversation. • Restate your understanding of agreement. • Ask for agreement on problem.