

# **Effective Workplace Investigations 101**

## **An Outline For Properly Conducting Investigations**

### **A. Sources: Discovering Workplace Problems**

- 1. Formal Complaints**
- 2. Anonymous Complaints**
- 3. Reports by Managers and Supervisors**
- 4. Indirect Complaints**
- 5. Information From Departing Workers**
- 6. Workplace Observation**
- 7. Third Party Reports**

### **B. Decision: Is It Necessary To Investigate**

- 1. Are the Facts in Dispute?**
- 2. How Serious Is the Problem?**
- 3. How Have Similar Problems Been Handled in the Past?**

### **C. Immediacy: Do Not Delay**

### **D. Selection: Choosing The Appropriate Investigative Team**

- 1. Experience**
- 2. Impartiality**
- 3. Professionalism**
- 4. Hiring an Outside Investigator**

### **E. Planning: Minimize Waste, Maximize Success**

- 1. Start With What You Know**
- 2. Figure Out What You Need to Know**

**F. Interview:**

- 1. Tips on Conducting Effective Interviews**
- 2. Interviewing the Complaining Employee**
- 3. Interviewing the Accused Employee**
- 4. Interviewing Witnesses**

**G. Gathering Other Evidence**

- 1. Documents**
- 2. Other Evidence**
- 3. Clues From the Scene**

**H. Follow-Up Interviews**

**I. Evaluate the Evidence**

- 1. Look at the Facts**
- 2. Assess Credibility**
- 3. Put It All Together**

**J. Decide Whether Misconduct Occurred**

**K. Take Action**

- 1. No Misconduct**
- 2. Inconclusive Results**
- 3. Misconduct**

**L. Document Your Decision**

- 1. Prepare an Investigation Report**
- 2. Where to Keep Investigation Records**

**M. Follow Up**

- 1. Meet With Employees**
- 2. Verify Corrective Actions**
- 3. Consider the Big Picture**