



Director, Equal Opportunity

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Witness Intimidation

Source: 355 FW/JA Mr. Tom Burhenn

Occasionally federal employees are required to speak to an investigator or provide a written witness statement. This could happen in a variety of matters; for example, EEO complaints or hearings, command directed investigations, report of surveys etc. Generally, when asked, employees are required to provide any information they have concerning the issue under investigation. Employees who refuse to cooperate, lie or mislead investigator are subject to discipline. See AFI 36-703 (Civilian Conduct and Responsibility) paragraph 5.1 for details on when discipline may be imposed.

However, what happens if a co-worker or supervisor knows you will be providing a witness statement and they "encourage you" to take their side? Or, in the alternative, they simply ask you not to cooperate. Requests which amount to improper intimidation could be a blatant threat or rather subtle. For example, it may be improper for a supervisor to tell a subordinate they hope their working relationship will not be impacted after the subordinate's testimony. In the alternative, employees who file an EEO complaint can't badger or bully co-workers into supporting their claim of discrimination.

Obviously disciplinary action may result if a federal employee intimidates another employee during an investigation. Also, if the intimidation impacted a hearing the judge could require a second hearing.

When asked to provide written or oral testimony the most important rule to remember is to simply tell the truth. If you believe anyone is pressuring you or you will be subject to adverse consequences because of your testimony report the

matter to the investigator or office requesting your statement.

Tips for Effective Communication

The Equal Opportunity Office also serves as the Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) Office for Davis-Monthan. In 2009 we experienced an increase in workplace disputes; the majority of which involved miscommunication. With an increase in Ops Tempo, and a decrease in manning, many detractors to communication remain. The following article may help provide insight to effective communication for both managers and employees.

Make This Your New Year's Resolution

Source: Fedmanager

It's a perfect time to really reflect on what we hope to make of 2010 - and the new decade - both at home and at work. We offer you some ideas for a 2010 New Year's resolution related to improving and advancing your career. But, like all those experts say, don't overload yourself. Pick a few and really focus your efforts on making the most of this year's resolution:

1. Be a patient listener. Need we say more? Listening to those you work with and work for is the hallmark of a good manager. Not only should this improve the morale and productivity of your subordinates (who will feel like they are being heard), but it also will allow for a better flow of information - some good, some not so good. But being a good listener allows you to edit out the good from the bad. And good ideas are worth listening to!
2. The flip side to Resolution #1 is to be a better communicator. If you view this to be your weakness, then make this the year to work on communicating effectively. For most federal supervisors and managers, it's the difficult discussions with subordinates that cause angst. So read up on how to have those conversations (the Internet is full of free advice), and then put it to use. Be clear, concise, and professional when having a difficult conversation with a subordinate. Say what you mean. And remember that tone counts! Don't let your words go unheard because you've used either an overly authoritative or too casual of a tone.
3. Give others a pat on the back when they deserve it. Not much goes as far towards morale and productivity than a pat on the back. Whether it is in private with an employee or in front of a group, try to consistently recognize your staff when a job is well done. And be sure to be even-handed so that no one can say you have favorites. Remember that even "difficult" employees can perform well on occasion - so be sure to recognize that too.

4. Don't take it personally. That goes for news from above or from below. The federal workplace has layers of bureaucratic actors, interested parties, recommenders and decision-makers. For the most part, everyone is just doing his or her job. Personalizing disagreements in the workplace can lead to unnecessary distractions and make you less effective as a manager. If you think someone is intentionally trying to personalize a disagreement with you, diffuse the situation by recognizing his or her right to have a different opinion. Then, move on and re-focus your time and attention on the mission issue - not the person.

5. Stay better connected. That could be a real chore given 2010 technology. Be practical about this. Think about what connections (personal and/or electronic) you see yourself as needing to work on, and pay attention to improving just those. So if your staff or management chain has previously observed that you're slow to respond to emails, then there's the connection to work on. But there are other professional connections to consider, such as building more professional relationships among colleagues or in a professional organization. Networking (in-person or through social media) always remains critical to staying on top of your career and its advancement.

English – The AF Operational Language

Source: U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

English-Only Rules/English-only rules must be adopted for nondiscriminatory reasons. An English-only rule may be used if it isn't needed to promote the safe or efficient operation for the employer's business.

Language & Accent Discrimination/An employer may not base a decision on an employee's foreign accent unless the accent materially interferes with job performance.

English Fluency/A fluency requirement is only permissible if required for the effective performance of the position for which it is imposed.

Source: AFI 36-2706 Secion 1A Para 1.1.3

"The operational language of the Air Force is English. Air Force personnel must maintain sufficient proficiency in English to perform their military duties. All official communications must be understood by everyone who has a need to know their content. Commanders may require Air Force personnel to use English only when such use is clearly necessary and proper for the performance of military duties. Accordingly, commanders, supervisors, and managers at all levels must not require the use of English for personal communication which are unrelated to military functions"

Special Observance Calendar of Events



African American/Black History Month 1-28 February

5 Feb/5k Fun Run @ Sunglow
12 Feb/Free Showing of "Pursuit of Happiness"
@ Base Theater
18 Feb/Luncheon 1100 @ Mirage Club
POC TSgt Tibetha Pascal 228-0021

Women's History Month 1-31 March

5 March/5k Fun Run @ Sunglow
15 March/Luncheon 1130 @ Mirage Club
POC MSgt Carissa Saugstad 228-9393

Training Opportunities

True Colors – What is your temperament type?

Two & Three Day Facilitation Classes – Learn how to facilitate training and resolve concerns in your organization.

Miscellaneous- Leadership, Team Building, Improving Communication, and Problem Solving classes are available upon request.

"Every Issues is Not an Equal Opportunity Issue, But It Is a Leadership Issue"

