

Problem solving

requires a joint effort

It is important for employers and employees to have and maintain regular discussions. About work but also about other matters. Sometimes, problems arise, and it is difficult to make them discussable. Still, this is an important first step to solve problems and not let them become bigger than they are unnecessarily.

Unaddressed problems can lead to underlying frustration, misunderstandings and conflict. The employee may experience more stress and tension, possibly resulting in more health symptoms. The employer may be concerned about the employee's well-being but may not know how to start a conversation. This is not good for either party.

That is why we do not recommend avoiding problems but instead putting them on the table and finding a solution together. Here, you will find tips on how to start talking to each other and what steps are needed to find a solution.

Tips for employers

- Schedule a meeting with the employee and reserve enough time.
- Clearly state your concern(s).
- Make clear what consequences this has for you as an employer or manager.
- Indicate that you want to look for a solution together and what goal you want to achieve.
- Make sure you hear, recognise and understand the employee's complaints during the conversation.
- Recognise and value the contribution and achievements of the employee.
- Ask the employee to indicate what is necessary for them to achieve the goal. What can the employee contribute to this? What support might be needed? And within what timeframe can this be achieved?

Tips for employees

- Talk with your employer early on. Ignoring problems often only leads to bigger problems.
- If you are invited to have a discussion, you can always ask what the discussion is about so you can prepare.
- Clearly state your concerns.
- Work with your employer to find solutions and make good working arrangements.
- Do you need support with the conversation? Then engage a confidential advisor.
- Make an appointment with the occupational physician if there are medical issues affecting your employability.

Topics to discuss

- Work overload.
- Insufficient job satisfaction.
- Difficult cooperation with colleagues or supervisors.
- Bullying, aggression or discrimination in the workplace.
- Difficulty with changes in the organisation, such as a reorganisation.
- Personal worries or duties that make the balance between work and private life come under pressure.
- Knowledge and/or skills no longer matching what is needed in the job.
- Disagreements on work performance.

Three steps to a solution

1. Talking together

Talk to each other and use the tips for employees and employers. Can't work it out together? Then enlist support for a three-way conversation.

2. Support in a three-way conversation

In a three-way conversation, an independent party is present in addition to the employer and employee. This can be someone from your own organisation. Is this not possible or desirable? An employability coach from Zorg van de Zaak offers a solution for guiding a conversation that does not involve labour conflicts. If labour conflicts are involved, other guidance is needed, for example mediation. Here too, Zorg van de Zaak can help.

3. Specific support

If an employee is experiencing problems at work or in their work-life balance, coaching can be an important tool. Sometimes, medical issues in relation to work play a role. Call in the occupational physician in good time so that the right follow-up steps can be taken together.

Visit www.snelverwijspunt.nl for a handy overview of all solutions and interventions.

In very rare cases: What if it doesn't work out together?

Despite multiple attempts to discuss and resolve the problems, it does not always work out. If you can't work it out together, then make a decision. Accept the situation or agree on another form of cooperation or on saying goodbye. Remember to involve the occupational physician in medical issues that affect your work.

More information

Got a question or want to know more about this topic?
Contact your customer team.