



Employment Rights Helpline at Equip for Equality

SELF-ADVOCACY ASSISTANCE ★ LEGAL ADVICE ABOUT EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS ★ SAMPLE LETTERS & FORMS ★ REFERRALS

FACT SHEET: Best Practices for Meetings

Why do I need to meet with my employer?

There are many different reasons you may need to meet with your employer. For instance, your employer may initiate a meeting to discuss your performance or discipline. There are also reasons you might initiate a meeting, such as to discuss a discrimination complaint or request a reasonable accommodation. Regardless of the reason, review these best practices to help ensure an effective and productive meeting.

What should I do before the meeting?

It is important that you prepare before the meeting. Tips for preparation include:

- Think carefully about what you hope to accomplish in the meeting. Use the Employee Worksheet attached to this Fact Sheet to help organize your thoughts.
- Create an outline to use during the meeting. An outline will help you remember what you want to say, even if the meeting becomes hectic.
- If your meeting is about a request for a reasonable accommodation or about an employment complaint, consider sending the request or complaint in writing in advance.
- Collect any relevant documents and bring at least two copies with you.
- If you are a member of a union, inform your union representative.
- Practice what you are going to say.

What should I do during the meeting?

- Arrive on time.
- Be polite and calm.
- Stick to the points you had prepared before the meeting. Don't try to bring up other issues at this time.
- Take thorough notes of everything that you and your employer said. If you do not want to take notes during the meeting, write down everything you remember immediately after the meeting.

- Ask your employer to follow up with you in writing about everything that was agreed upon during the meeting.
- Do not record the conversation without the other parties' consent.
- Remember that you don't have to agree to anything on the spot. If you need to, ask for time to think over your employer's response or comments.

What should I do after the meeting?

- Follow up in writing, recapping everything that was discussed and agreed upon. An effective way to do this is to send a thank you note.
 - *Example: Thank you for meeting with me to discuss my request for an accommodation...*
 - *Example: Thank you for your time today to discuss my concerns about... During this conversation, you said that...*

My meeting is about my request for reasonable accommodations. What else should I know?

If your meeting is about your request for reasonable accommodations, also consider the following:

Before the meeting

- Provide your employer with a written request for an accommodation beforehand. Please see the Employment Rights Helpline Fact Sheet about [Requesting a Reasonable Accommodation](#) for a template letter.
- Determine what accommodations you think would allow you to effectively do your job. Try to come up with as many alternative accommodations as possible. Make a list of possible effective accommodations.
- Provide any necessary medical documentation.
- Review the Employment Rights Helpline Fact Sheet about Requesting Reasonable Accommodations for additional information about requesting reasonable accommodations.

During the meeting

- Be prepared to negotiate and be open to alternative accommodations.

EMPLOYEE WORKSHEET: Preparing for a Meeting

Use this worksheet to help organize your thoughts to prepare for your meeting. You can use this worksheet as an outline for your meeting as well.

List all issues that you want to address

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

Issue 1

What information is necessary to share with your employer about this issue? Do your best to share critical information, but not to provide unnecessary information.

What is your proposed solution? Why is this solution best for you? Why would it work for your employer? Do your best to focus on how to resolve the issue.

What are alternative solutions? Do your best to be open-minded about resolutions.

***Gather but not always necessary to share.* What support do you have for your position? Possible support can include relevant documents, note, emails, etc.**

What else do you need to share about this issue?

Issue 2

What information is necessary to share with your employer about this issue? Do your best to share critical information, but not to provide unnecessary information.

What is your proposed solution? Why is this solution best for you? Why would it work for your employer? Do your best to focus on how to resolve the issue.

What are alternative solutions? Do your best to be open-minded about resolutions.

***Gather but not always necessary to share.* What support do you have for your position? Possible support can include relevant documents, note, emails, etc.**

What else do you need to share about this issue?

Issue 3

What information is necessary to share with your employer about this issue? Do your best to share critical information, but not to provide unnecessary information.

What is your proposed solution? Why is this solution best for you? Why would it work for your employer? Do your best to focus on how to resolve the issue.

What are alternative solutions? Do your best to be open-minded about resolutions.

***Gather but not always necessary to share.* What support do you have for your position?
Possible support can include relevant documents, note, emails, etc.**

What else do you need to share about this issue?



DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION?

Contact Equip for Equality's Employment Rights Helpline
1-844-RIGHTS-9 (1-844-744-4879) (toll free - voice)
800-610-2779 (tty)
employment@equipforequality.org
www.equipforequality.org

This resource material is intended as a guide for people with disabilities. Nothing written here shall be understood to be legal advice. For specific legal advice, an attorney should be consulted.

Equip for Equality, an independent nonprofit organization, is the Illinois state Protection & Advocacy System whose mission is to advance the human and civil rights of children and adults with disabilities. The Employment Rights Helpline seeks to empower individuals with disabilities to advocate effectively. This publication is made possible by funding support from The Chicago Community Trust, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and the Center for Mental Health Services of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration; the U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration; and the Social Security Administration. The contents of this publication are solely the responsibility of Equip for Equality and do not necessarily represent the official views of any of these agencies.

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