

top 10

INVESTIGATION DOs & DON'Ts

Follow these tips for Investigation Best Practices:

1. **DON'T** rush. Create a plan for your investigation by identifying what issue(s) you are trying to resolve, what documents to review and who to interview.
2. **DO** remind all parties of their obligations including confidentiality, non-retaliation, the need for truthfulness and candor, and consequences for not cooperating.
3. **DON'T** make assumptions. As an investigator, you must remain impartial and avoid rushing to judgment. If you don't think you can do this, find someone who can.
4. **DO** treat all parties with respect. Studies show that employees who feel they are treated unfairly during their employment are five times more likely to file a claim.
5. **DON'T** promise confidentiality. You can assure the involved parties that you will treat all information with the utmost sensitivity and keep the number of people involved to a minimum, but you can't guarantee confidentiality.
6. **DO** trust your instincts. When making credibility assessments, if something doesn't make sense, isn't logical, or just sounds "off," it probably is.
7. **DON'T** lose control. Before long your boss, the subject and complainant will want to know what is going on and when you'll be finished. Remember this is your investigation. Don't compromise the process to meet someone else's timetable.
8. **DO** consider patterns of behavior or similar situations that have occurred in your organization when determining appropriate remediation.
9. **DON'T** forget a close-out report—include allegations, applicable policies, parties interviewed, evidence, facts, conclusions and actions taken.
10. **DO** follow-up with the parties a few weeks later to ensure the offending behavior has stopped, no retaliation has occurred and remediation was successful.

Conducting comprehensive investigations helps to uncover the truth, assist compliance and maintain a positive work environment.

You can't prevent every employee relations issue. But you can control how your organization responds. Achieve consistency in the way you track, investigate, and analyze with HR Acuity—the employee relations case management solution. All with software that equips you with built-in expertise to make best practice your process.

HR Acuity. Because in today's world, doing things the right way is your only option.