

Question:

We have an employee who generally performs well, but at times behaves immaturely. When she gets upset, she slams things and stomps around the office. She also often says "That's not my job" when asked to help with something.

She's younger and this is her first job. Is there a best way to address this behavior without it sounding personal? I know I can't tell her to "grow up," but I also can't allow this immature behavior to continue.

Answer from Kim, SPHR, AAM, CPIW:



Yes, I would suggest you give the employee a verbal warning concerning her unprofessional behavior. While you could, in fact, tell her to "grow up," that may not be the most useful advice. You can tell her that slamming and stomping are not acceptable behaviors in a professional setting, and that you would appreciate it if she addressed frustrations with her direct supervisor or with you. You should also remind her that you're on the same team and helping the team is part of everyone's job description. You might also let her know that you're there to support her, that you want her to succeed, and that while first jobs can be especially stressful, she's not alone.

After this sort of discussion, if an employee continues to display the same type of behavior, I find it's best to pull the employee aside, let them know right away that this is an example of what you consider to be unprofessional behavior, and warn them that further discipline will occur if the unprofessional behavior doesn't stop.