

Acas Top Ten Tips for dealing with workplace problems

1. **Raise concerns early with an informal chat.** *Employees may feel nervous about raising an issue, but employers should be open to resolving problems quickly without going through a formal procedure*
2. **Employers - take it seriously** - *If an employee raises a problem informally, you should still take it seriously. If you do not, it might be raised as a formal grievance later.*
3. **Keep a record** - *You should keep a record of how you dealt with the problem, even if it was informal.*
4. **Follow up** - *You should ask the employee if the problem is now resolved for them. If it is not, to move things forward you could:*
 - *check any next steps have been completed*
 - *set up more informal discussions*
 - *find out if anything else can be done*
5. **Refer to your policy** - *If the employee raises a formal grievance. You should have a workplace grievance policy that says who employees should raise grievances to. If you don't have a policy - they should raise it to a manager – either their own manager or someone else (such as an HR manager).*
6. **If the employee raises a grievance during a disciplinary procedure** - *The employer can pause the disciplinary procedure and deal with the grievance first. If the disciplinary and grievance cases are related, the employer can deal with both at the same time.*
7. **Before any disciplinary meeting, there should be a thorough investigation** to establish the facts of the case.
8. **Allow the worker to be accompanied** they have the right to be accompanied by a fellow worker, trade union representative, or an official employed by a trade union.
9. **Suspend only if necessary** while investigations are carried out
10. **Try mediation** *You can use mediation at any stage of the procedure. Mediation involves an independent, impartial person helping both sides to find a solution. The mediator can be someone from inside or outside your business. If they're from outside your business, you might need to pay. Both sides will need to agree to mediation.*

You can find out more in [Discipline and grievances at work: the Acas guide](#) (PDF, 841KB, 79 pages).