

How to Write a Better Grievance Outcome Letter

Here is an example of a grievance outcome letter which needs improving. The table on the following page highlights some of the issues to consider and a revised outcome letter.

Example Letter

Dear Fred

I am writing to confirm the outcome of the grievance meeting which you attended on 2 September with myself and Chris Smith.

You complained that you are not being given fair opportunity to work any available overtime and that your supervisor is giving the overtime opportunities to his favourites.

After speaking with your supervisor, I don't believe that there is favouritism taking place and that there has probably been a misunderstanding.

I therefore suggest that you inform your supervisor of what overtime hours you are willing to work so that he has this information to hand when any opportunities arise. However, it is important to note that there may be times when the overtime needs to be agreed quickly and whoever is nearest may be asked first.

I trust that this clears the matter up and that you will be comfortable with the allocation of overtime going forwards. However, you have the right of appeal against my decision. If you wish to appeal, you should do so in writing to Alice Felwright within 5 working days.

Yours sincerely

John Westwood

Manager

How to Improve this Outcome Letter

| Original Text | Vista Comments | Revision |
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| <i>I am writing to confirm the outcome of the grievance meeting which you attended on 2 July with myself and Chris Smith.</i> | It's wise to refer to whether the complainant was accompanied at the meeting or not, and if not confirm they were given the opportunity. | <i>I am writing to confirm the outcome of the grievance meeting which you attended on 2 July with myself and Chris Smith. You were accompanied by Alan Keating, your work colleague. OR You were offered the right to be accompanied to the grievance meeting but declined and confirmed you were happy to continue alone.</i> |
| | It's also good to give some structure, summarise what happened and give an indication of the outcome at the beginning rather than build up to a closing sentence. The employee is more likely to read the remaining information more carefully if they already know the final outcome rather than be rushing through in anticipation of the outcome at the end. | <i>At the hearing you were given the opportunity to fully explain your grievance. We then discussed what you said. Having now considered what you had to say, investigated your concerns and having reviewed all of the evidence, I have decided to reject your grievance for the reasons given.</i> |
| <i>You complained that you are not being given fair opportunity to work any available overtime and that your supervisor is giving the overtime opportunities to his favourites. After speaking with your supervisor, I don't believe there is any favouritism taking place and that there has probably been a misunderstanding.</i> | <p>There are 2 main issues here:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not being given a fair opportunity to work any available overtime 2. Supervisor is giving the opportunities to his favourites <p>It is important to ensure that both of these points have been investigated and the evidence and findings in relation to each one set out clearly.</p> <p>What examples did Fred give, what investigation took place into this, why did Fred believe favouritism was taking place? Set out each complaint, say why you have accepted/rejected what the employee has said about each complaint, make reference to the evidence available to support each finding and set out your justification for doing so.</p> | <p>Within your grievance you raised two issues:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not being given a fair opportunity to work any available overtime; and 2. That your Supervisor is giving the opportunities to his favourites. <p>Taking each of these in turn:</p> <p>1. You gave 3 specific examples of times where you were not offered overtime and suggested that the overtime was offered to others as they are friends with your supervisor. You did not give any other reason as to why you would believe that your supervisor would not offer you overtime. I investigated each of these occasions, spoke with your supervisor and with other employees who undertook overtime on those occasions. You were not able to give me details of any other witnesses to speak to.</p> <p>I established that on 2 August your supervisor needed to secure people to come in early and work overtime the following day. He explained that he had to telephone around as your team's shift had already ended and you had all gone home. He decided to start by calling people who had agreed to start early previously as this would mean a better chance of getting those who would definitely be interested and avoid wasting time on calls.</p> <p>Your supervisor was unable to recall the specific detail of who he asked first to stay on for overtime at the end of shift on 8 August. However, he was clear that you had arrived late for work that day due to traffic. He explained that he had spoken to you informally about</p> |

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| | | <p>being late and that you had been unhappy about this. He therefore felt that it wouldn't have been appropriate to offer overtime when you had arrived late for work.</p> <p>You stated that on 18 August everyone on the shift was aware that overtime would be needed the following day and you had informed your supervisor that you would be available. However, you were not offered the overtime. When I asked your supervisor about this, he agreed that he knew that you and others were interested but that he only had need for 4 people. He therefore decided to offer overtime to those who had not had the opportunity recently. He said that he did this from memory rather than checking through previous overtime sheets. I then reviewed previous overtime sheets with him to establish whether his memory was accurate. It was clear that those who were offered the overtime on that occasion had not done overtime in the previous 3 weeks, however this only clarified who had done the overtime and not who had been offered it. I noted that you had not done any overtime for 2 weeks.</p> |
| <p>I therefore suggest that you inform your supervisor of what overtime hours you are willing to work so that he has this information to hand when any opportunities arise. However, it is important to note that there may be times when the overtime needs to be agreed quickly and whoever is nearest may be asked first.</p> | <p>Ensure each allegation is addressed.</p> <p>This could be extended to include actions from the supervisor to avoid future issues.</p> | <p>I therefore concluded that there was no evidence that your supervisor had sought to deny you overtime opportunities.</p> <p>With reference to your Supervisor allocating overtime to favourites...</p> <p>Although having full regard to the evidence, I cannot uphold your grievance, I do believe that there may be better ways of ensuring clear and fair allocation going forwards to avoid misunderstandings. I suggest that you inform your supervisor of what overtime hours you are willing to work so that he has this information to hand when any opportunities arise. I have also suggested to your supervisor that he keeps some kind of transparent overtime scheduling record. However, it is important to note that there may be times when the overtime needs to be agreed quickly and whoever is nearest may be asked first.</p> |
| <p>I trust that this clears the matter up and that you will be comfortable with the allocation of overtime going forwards. However, you have the right of appeal against my decision. If you wish to appeal, you should do so in writing to Alice Felwright within 5 working days.</p> <p>Yours sincerely</p> <p>John Westwood Manager</p> | <p>The wording on this could be improved to be specific about addressing all concerns raised.</p> | <p>I trust that the above response is satisfactory and addresses all of your concerns.</p> <p>You have the right of appeal against my decision. If you wish to appeal, you should do so in writing to Alice Felwright within 5 working days. OR This decision is final and constitutes the end of Company procedure</p> <p>Yours sincerely</p> <p>John Westwood Manager</p> |