

Difficult Employee – Errors and Distractions

written by Jeffrey Turner | September 15, 2023

New HR here (1 month into my job – 1 year into HR).

Employee has been with this company for 1.5 years. Has sat at the reception desk for the entirety of their time here so far. Title is administrative assistant. There to answer phones, order office supplies, and has been doing payroll clerk duties as well.

I was informed when I started that this particular employee has been causing some issues. Firstly, they make substantial mistakes in every payroll which causes work for other admin who also have a hand in payroll. When confronted (before my time here), they said they had too much on their plate and that was causing issues with accuracy. So, to accommodate, they took away 90% of their duties (other than reception and some other basic admin tasks) to allow them to focus on payroll duties. Still a lot of mistakes. They have addressed this (before my time – no documentation) a few times with this person. The Company has offered to pay for their training in excel to help them better understand and the employee has shown no initiative or effort to improve.

The issue is persisting, and since my time here I have noticed that this person whispers in the office / doesn't do their work / distracts other employees and is constantly complaining about sitting at the reception desk (which is distracting to everyone).

What are your thoughts on this? The employees manager is also newly in leadership so has been relying on me a lot to give guidance. My gut tells me that we have to A) start documenting EVERYTHING for her file – all disciplinary conversations, etc. and B) We need to be honest with them and we are noticing some concerning behaviour that is distracting to everyone in the office.

Curious to your thoughts.