

Case Study: How to deal with lateness, self-harming and absence in the workplace

1. Client Overview

- **Sector:** Waste Management
- **Size:** 180+ employees
- **HR Setup:** No in-house UK HR team but Group HR Manager present (not day to day operational - Managers handle day to day employment matters).
- **Key Employment Context:** Health and Safety critical environment and high absence rate on site.

Employees work in a potentially dangerous environment, and the business operates under strict Health and Safety obligations. It's important for employees to be on time to work for Health and Safety morning briefings.



2. The Challenge

- Employee had self-harmed outside of work and the business were concerned whether the individual was safe in the environment due to dangerous activity and equipment.
- Employee had high levels of lateness which was impacting the team.
- Other colleagues have also recently been off sick which has impacted operations.
- Informal discussions and support had been offered to the employee previously and they were directed to the business's EAP.
- Potential physical and emotional damage for employee and concerns with Health and Safety regulations, duty of care and alignment with Health and Safety culture.

The business was exposed to a risk of not providing for the employee under the psychological contract and providing a safe environment for them, also potential implications of the Health and Safety at Work Act, and engagement.



WHERE WE CAN HELP

3. Our Approach

Initial Assessment:

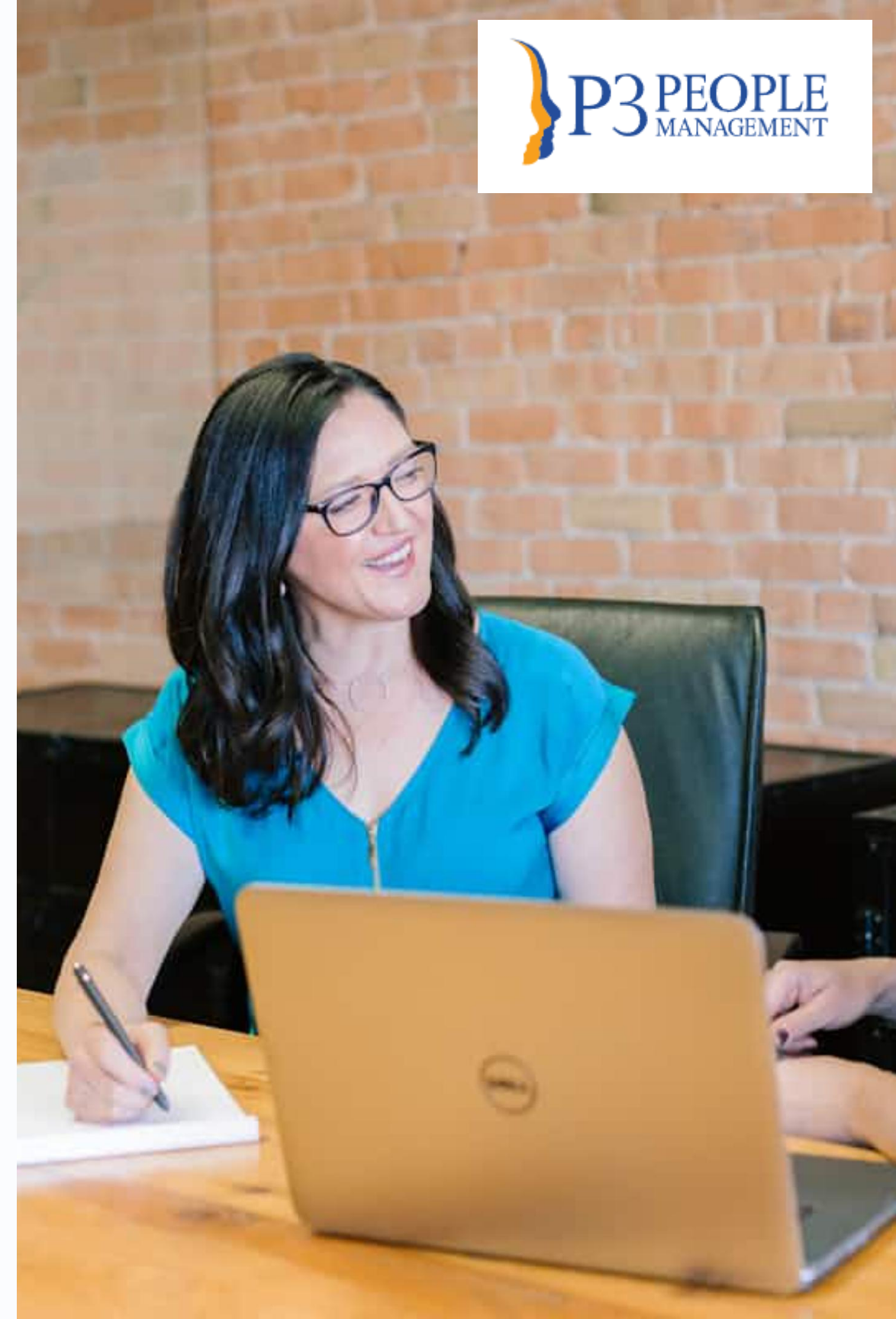
- Understand managers concerns and expectations
- Reviewed absence / lateness record (including dates, time off and reasons)
- Reviewed previous discussions / return to works
- Reviewed contract of employment
- Reviewed EAP details
- Reviewed any relevant policies



WHERE WE CAN HELP

Advice & Guidance:

- Outlined clear questions/discussion points for the manager to better understand personal challenges of the employee
- Reviewed responses and discussed with the manager
- Requested copy of job descriptions and risks associated with the role
- Prepared Occupational Health assessment for managers' review
- Discussed interim adjustments with the manager
- Provided summary letter for manager to provide employee confirming any adjustments
- Outlined clear questions/discussion points for the manager to discuss outcome of the Occupational Health referral
- Coached the manager on how to have the conversation
- Provided summary letter for manager to provide to employee confirming any amends to adjustments on the back of the referral report
- Followed up with the manager on monitoring of lateness and wellbeing



4. Outcome & Impact

- Maintained a safe working environment for the employee and his colleagues
- Helped the employee feel supported and engaged
- Avoided risks of employee grievance or claims (such as disability discrimination, injury at work) by not exploring condition and support first
- Managed to resolve lateness issues, in turn supporting operational needs



5. Lessons & Next Steps

What the client learnt about their own people management approach:

To consider supportive measures
before jumping to disciplinary or
other matters

1

2

To re-launch EAP support services
and look at other mechanisms of
communicating this to the wider
teams

To include wellbeing as part of
regular 121s

3

6. What would have happened without our support?

- Risk of discrimination claims
- Damage to culture i.e., H&S paramount
- Damage to reputation should the employee have been harmed
- Lack of engagement and pressures on the operations

💡 Consultant's Note

It's really important that a manager thinks before they act. When there are pressures operationally it can be difficult to take a step back and see the bigger picture. With our help, the manager was able to see that disciplinary action wasn't the best step forward at this stage, and actually, could have harmed the business more.

Thank you for your time. We are here to answer any questions you may have.