



## Personal Hygiene Issues: A Guide for Managers

Does a member of your team have a body odor or other personal hygiene problem? Keep these points in mind.

### Steps to Take

- If you receive a complaint from one or more team members, say that you will address the situation. Remind the complaining person(s) to avoid saying or doing anything that their colleague might find hurtful or offensive.
- Spend time in the individual's presence to determine if there is a hygiene concern.
- If the person's hygiene does not meet organizational standards, consult with Human Resources.
- Schedule a private, confidential meeting. Be specific and direct about your concerns. Sample language: "I have noticed the smell of (the offensive odor). I am concerned that it is impacting your ability to interact with co-workers and customers."
- Review any relevant organizational policies. Be clear about what changes are needed to meet performance expectations.
- Refer the individual to LifeMatters and other relevant organizational resources.



- Schedule a follow-up meeting to provide feedback and address any ongoing concerns.

### Other Helpful Tips

- While it's important to be tactful, make sure to clearly state the problem.
- Don't imply that there is something wrong with the person or make personal judgments. Keep in mind that the odor may be related to a health issue. It could also be the byproduct of an uncertain living situation.
- Avoid making statements that could be construed as discriminatory under either the Americans with Disabilities Act or the Civil Rights Act.

The LifeMatters Management Consultation Service can help you address this or any other management concern. Call 24/7/365.

## 1-800-367-7474

Assistance with Life, Work, Family, and Wellbeing  
[mylifematters.com](https://mylifematters.com) • 24/7/365

Call collect to **262-574-2509** if outside of North America

Language assistance services in your preferred spoken and written languages are available at no cost by calling 1-800-367-7474.

