



# Tough Situations

---

## **DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY:**

Toughest

## **SITUATION:**

You supervise an employee who has told you he/she is getting divorced and asks for your advice.

## **YOUR MISSION:**

Listen, be support and give advice when asked for it and if you feel comfortable giving it.

## **WHAT YOU SHOULD DO OR SAY:**

### **Listen:**

"I'm here to listen."

"Tell me what happened."

"How are you feeling?"

"What are your thoughts?"

### **Be supportive:**

"How can I help you?"

"What can I do for you?"

"Is there anything you need?"

### **When asked for advice *and* you feel comfortable giving it:**

"You might consider calling (this agency, or person)."

"As I understand your situation, I would probably speak with (attorney, member of the clergy, counselor)."

### **When asked for advice *and* you don't feel comfortable giving it:**

"I'd rather not offer any advice. I'm happy to listen and want you to know I'm supportive but don't feel comfortable giving you any personal advice. I hope you can understand."

**WHY IT WILL WORK:**

Your obligations in this situation are limited. You have only two: listen, and be supportive. YOU HAVE NO OBLIGATION TO GIVE ADVICE, EVEN IF HE/SHE ASKS YOU FOR IT.

People in sensitive situations like the possibility of divorce often simply want someone whom they trust to listen to them—that's all. Their sense of self-worth may be affected and they need someone to confirm for them that they are recognized by someone as being valued and appreciated without judging them.