

Top ten tips when arranging / presenting a case at a disciplinary hearing

1. The venue for the hearing should be away from the employee's normal workplace to give them some privacy, but be at an easy distance for them to reach.
2. Make sure the room is big enough for everyone to be comfortable – ideally with a meeting table - and make sure there are enough chairs.
3. Arrange for a separate room close by to be available throughout the hearing for the individual to meet with their union representative in private, before the hearing and at any point when an adjournment is called.
4. Arrange for a separate room for witnesses to wait in, until it is time for them to be called to attend the hearing, unless they work very close by and can be reached immediately. It isn't possible to tell witnesses when exactly they will be needed so they must be available at any point.
5. Provide a jug of drinking water and enough glasses for everyone who will be attending. A box of tissues can sometimes be useful.
6. Make sure you are very familiar with the statement of case which you have prepared beforehand. If you have noticed any mistakes in it since it was distributed to everyone, bring these to everyone's attention at the beginning of the hearing.
7. When asked to present your case, use the written statement as your guide. Tell the story of what you found out in your investigation in a logical order. If you feel really nervous you can read it out, but it is better if you can talk about the case showing what you did and why and what you concluded.
8. You must mention everything which you want to have taken into account during your presentation. The hearing officer and the employee themselves will have read your case in advance but don't assume this. If there is a need to refer to particular points of detail, draw people's attention to the relevant appendices.
9. Don't add any new material which was not part of the statement which was sent out in advance of the meeting. Nothing you are saying should come as a surprise to the employee. If important new material has come to light since, which you feel is vital to the case, you will need to inform the hearing officer, who will decide what steps to take in conjunction with the employee. The hearing may well have to be delayed in order for this new evidence to be the subject of an investigatory interview, if the employee requests it.

10. When you have made your presentation the employee and the hearing officer can ask you questions about your statement. Before the meeting try to anticipate what might be asked and have thought about your answers.