

Training my own replacement?

Question: I am a human resource coordinator who handles payroll, benefits and related work for about 100 employees, and I am being "forced" in very stern written communications from my direct supervisor to "fully cross-train" a co-worker "in all aspects of all duties and provide instruction and access to all documentation."

This co-worker does the same job as I do, but for a separate division of our department. She handles approximately 60 employees.

This is a very unusual circumstance; not warranted, in my opinion. (We do the same job but for different employees.)

The other side of this story is that this co-worker (female) is very good friends with my direct supervisor (male). They tell each other everything, and my co-worker has been asking me for all of my information but has told me nothing about her job. It's almost as if this cross-training is a ruse, convincing me that they just want my information so they can easily be rid of me.

I have been having some health issues lately. I have fibromyalgia and perhaps lupus, along with some other issues, and have had a lot of physician appointments. But my work is always completed, no matter what I have to do to get it done. Nevertheless, I cannot help but feel as if they are pushing me out.

What should I do? I have been complying and have been cooperative and nice, but I am not happy.

Please help! -- *Being Pushed Out in Ohio*

Comments

As a person who has fibromyalgia (and several other medical issues) who use to be an HR Admin and whose duties included everything the HR rep did, I understand where you are coming from. Your condition is covered under FMLA and the ADA.

If your boss is truly trying to cross train this other person and push you out, they better have really good substantial evidence that you cannot do your job. If it is valid cross-training then he must give you the same opportunity and access that your co-worker is getting. If he doesn't than it is discrimination.

My advice, get your condition in writing from your doctor along with any limitations you may have and then consult an attorney. Make sure you are prepared before anything happens.

If your job is treating you with such disregard, than maybe it's time to move on anyway.

Posted by: Lisa | May 19, 2006 at 03:48 PM

document, document and document what is going on, when and you cross train this employee on. Save the emails and correspondences you are receiving from your direct supervisor, if direction was given verbally on something follow up with an email from you outlining what the conversation was about and put it in such away that he will have to respond.

Are you being cross trained on her duties? If not find out how you can be cross trained in her position also, can you submit an email to your direct supervisor and hers in order to get this accomplished? When you are cross training steer the training sessions to include her how to also. such as how do you currently handle this, wait for her answer then respond with that's smiliar to what I am doing etc.

The company you work for may just want to cover all aspects of your position in case you are not able to perform your duties sometime in the future. Keep the personal issues out of it because all that will do is aggravate your health issues.

Posted by: | May 19, 2006 at 03:49 PM

That does like it would be very disappointing--to think you are being tricked into training your replacement. What first came to my mind is just that you'll have to ask what is going on. My company is very good at making sure everyone knows everything thats going on with a major project or situation. We had a merger recently and we knew pretty much everything along the way with regular conference calls. I have always appreciated their honesty and they have always appreciated our concerns by asking us for any questions. We were all worried we were going to lose our jobs and basically flat out asked. I certainly don't know what kind of relationship you have with your supervisor, but I would hope that if you made an appointment to discuss the 'cross-training' and asked more questions about what the goals really are with the cross-training, maybe you'll get some answers. If after talking to him, you feel your concerns are valid, I would suggest talking to his boss (if that person is available). I'm sure this is something that person would want to be aware of. You could also have a meeting with the supervisor and this coworker you are supposed to be training and discuss when she will be cross-training you. I would hope if the three of you were in a room together asking these types of questions, they'd have to give you answers and not be able to dodge the questions. Questions regarding your work, her work, and just the goal of the entire situation. I think in doing that, would make your supervisor see that you possibly are on to him if they are trying to replace you. And if so, assuming this supervisor is a good manager, would want to discuss with you before letting you continue to train your replacement. I do wish you the best! If you are a hard worker, any of your health issues should not be a factor. That's probably discrimination, if so. So, I guess if it was me I'd sort of pretend to be totally on board with the project asking questions, having meetings, including that supervisor in all the progress; and if along the way, you still feel the same way, then you'll just have to discuss it. I hope that was helpful! The other suggestions were good too

Posted by: | May 19, 2006 at 04:04 PM

That sounds horrible but unfortunately is not unusual. If you have been at your job a year, you should be protected by FMLA. KNOW YOUR RIGHTS! Also, don't "react" to what you think may be a push out but continue your poise and demeanor and DOCUMENT everything that seems peculiar or unusual. I say this because if you start reacting, becoming defensive, that assumed "uncooperative, bad attitude" of yours may be what they use as latitude to get rid of you. Make sure you continue to do as you should and let them hang themselves by their own bad tactics. Wishing you the best.

Posted by: Marketer | May 19, 2006 at 04:06 PM

It know it's difficult, but try to disregard the personal issues. It sounds to me that your manager is just making

sure your job will temporarily be covered should your health decline further. Try to think positively that if (Heaven forbid!) you would ever need to take some time off with your illness, that there is someone there to carry on until you can return. I would also document, document, document just in case.

Posted by: ohiogirl | May 19, 2006 at 04:10 PM

First thing you should do is take care of your health. Stress just exacerbates both of those health issues. No job is worth the deterioration of your health. Do you like this job? Is it causing you a lot of stress? If so, maybe it is time for you to find something that will be less stressful. If you do like the job, then I agree, document, and consult with a lawyer. Also, have you asked your boss point blank why he wants her cross-trained?

Posted by: Mary | May 19, 2006 at 04:37 PM

Try to disregard the personal issues. It sounds to me that your manager is just making sure your job will temporarily be covered should your health decline further. Try to think positively that if (Heaven forbid!) you would ever need to take some time off with your illness, that there is someone there to carry on until you can return. You sound so insecure.

Posted by: Annie | May 20, 2006 at 06:44 AM

The best advice is contact a labor lawyer and go from there.

Posted by: Booper | May 21, 2006 at 08:51 AM

They may just be anticipating that you may take leave in the future, and training a backup to cover for you in your absence.

DO NOT refuse to train your coworker! Insubordination is the perfect excuse to get rid of you if that's what your supervisor is trying to do.

If you take leave, make sure it is FMLA protected and document everything.

Posted by: | May 22, 2006 at 09:14 AM

i agree with most of the other comments. point blank ask what is going on so your mind can be at ease. being stressed worrying about this will only aggravate your health issues. also get the fmla forms, fill them out and turn them back in asap. you will be protected.

Posted by: | May 22, 2006 at 12:44 PM

I'm sorry to hear about your fibromyalgia. I had it, and it wasn't any fun. I was healed about 3 1/2 years ago and have had no symptoms since. Outside of the perfect suggestions everyone else has had, and I do think they are right on; I would suggest going to your local Healing Rooms. The following is just one site, but I'm sure they

could tell you if there was a location near you. Greater Cincinnati Healing Rooms afdance@yahoo.com 513-722-3408. The Healing Rooms are based out of Spokane, Washington, and were started by John G. Lake. Please feel free to look up any information you may need on the internet. At the time Lake had his ministry in Spokane in the early 1900's, there was next to no illness in that area, and almost all the hospitals went out of business because of the Healing Rooms. There were over 100,000 documented healings. Anyway, I don't know what you believe, but I believe in the healing power of Jesus Christ, and I know He can help you with your fibromyalgia, lupus and anything else you may have. I'm living proof.

Posted by: Dianne | August 27, 2006 at 04:31 PM