

## Case Study

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### The company

***An international financial services company operating in high-risk, high-value markets, widely renowned for its success, operating across Europe and the US, and with three separate UK sites;***

In the UK, core business for this company is mortgage servicing and loan origination, including both commercial and residential portfolios, for a growing client base. One of few rated services in Europe and the first servicer to be rated in the UK, the company manages over 20,000 loans, with funds under management totalling £9 billion. With three sites in the South East of England, the company employs 150 staff, including a small HR team comprising one manager and two assistants.

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### The challenge

The Managing Director was concerned about a growing employee relations problem in one of the company's three sites. A number of informal and formal complaints of bullying, harassment and intimidating behaviour had been made. Low moral and increasing absenteeism was having a significant impact on productivity and making this an acute situation that needed to be resolved quickly and effectively.

### Key business needs

- Clear and decisive management intervention to investigate and tackle problems.
  - A formal investigation of staff complaints.
  - Development and implementation of formal grievance and disciplinary procedures.
  - A shared understanding between staff and managers of acceptable workplace behaviours.
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### The approach

Following in-depth discussions with the Managing Director to fully understand the issues and agree a set of desirable outcomes, NHR initiated a formal investigation process to take place within 48 hours, signalling management's recognition of the urgency of the situation and commitment to resolving it. As a result of the investigation:

- An analysis of written complaints established common themes, which were drawn up into a report for management.
- A list of staff against whom allegations had been made was drawn up.
- A series of interviews were held with staff and managers, involving a carefully constructed set of questions designed by NHR, to establish the facts relating to each case.

Following this initial investigation, NHR:

- Set up and trained a disciplinary panel to conduct the grievance hearings.
  - Arranged and conducted confidential grievance hearings and feedback sessions with dialogue recorded and copied for both parties, according to the new procedure.
  - Provided regular feedback, a formal report and recommendations to the Managing Director.
  - Suggested a series of workshops be implemented across the organisation to discuss topics including discrimination, bullying and harassment, to educate staff and communicate a strong message about appropriate workplace behaviours to all staff.
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### The outcome

- The investigation identified a number of managers who had consistently been subjecting certain members of staff to a variety of inappropriate behaviours.
- Formal disciplinary hearings were held with all of these managers; one was suspended immediately as a result of the initial investigation.
- Legally compliant grievance and disciplinary procedures are in place, and staff have been trained to implement them effectively.