

# Insubordination

## It Can Get You Fired

Insubordination is one of the major contributing factors in many employee dismissals and is one of the easiest charges to prove. However, it is a concept that is misunderstood by many employees and, as a result, they place themselves in the position of being insubordinate. In order to avoid this hazard, a thorough understanding of the concept is necessary.

## Who's Boss!

First, it is important to understand that the principal/immediate supervisor has some **management rights** simply because he or she is the "boss". Any principal/immediate supervisor has the right to exert leadership, to direct the institutional operations, to enforce rules, policies, reasonable orders and directions so long as they conform to the contract and are clear and unambiguous, not injurious to your health, applied uniformly and justly administered.

## Definition

Second, insubordination is defined as "failure to obey authority." If a member at your site comes to you and questions a "directive" issued by the principal/immediate supervisor, advise him/her to discuss the objections with the principal. If the principal insists that the order be obeyed, advise the member to comply unless it is a threat to the health or safety of the staff, the member or the students. A member may ask for the "mandate" to be in writing. The administrator does not have to put it in writing in order to later claim you were insubordinate for failure to carry out the order.

## Work Then Grieve

The member may then file a grievance. **This is the "Work then Grieve" rule.**