



advantage

BUSINESS TIPS FOR SUCCESS

In today's competitive business environment, we all look for ways to improve our product or service, do more with less, manage the bottom line, and increase revenues. We have taken several of the following tips from a list compiled by the American Management Association and, over the next couple of months, will continue to add to this list. We encourage you to email us with your own success tips as well.

1. **Maintain a good relationship** with your manager.
2. **Show employees the values** you want them to demonstrate.
3. **Make your expectations clear.** Don't assume your employees know.
4. **Hold productive meetings.** Use them to keep your staff focused on its goals.
5. **Don't take good performance for granted**—praise outstanding workers.
6. **Reward and recognize hard work** if you want more of it.
7. **Identify the strengths** of each employee and utilize them effectively.
8. **Accept and honor employee differences** and take advantage of them.
9. **Provide objective, honest feedback often.**
10. **Actively listen to employees**, not only to learn more about what's happening, but also to gain employee respect and loyalty.
11. **Share your goals, visions, and reasons.** Telling "why" is important.
12. **Don't tell your employees what to do**—instead, tell them your needs and let them decide how to meet them.
13. **Admit your faults**—it will be perceived as a sign of strength.
14. **Don't over-promise.** Only promise what you can deliver.
15. **Be accessible** to employees and customers.
16. **Manage your time** to include time spent with your employees.
17. **Be aware of your employees' job needs**—they won't be able to do the work if they lack critical resources.
18. **Show that you value your employees.**
19. **Ask each of your employees** what kind of rewards he or she wants and use that information to motivate each.
20. **Give employees information.** Don't decide what they need to know. Tell them everything you can. They'll use what matters to them.

INCENTIVES FOR HIRING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Organizations affected by the recent economic downturn are trying to make the most of limited budgets. Many face the dilemma of reducing costs while still ensuring jobs are covered, especially if layoffs have occurred. One way to accomplish both objectives is to take advantage of one of several assistance programs offered by the federal government to hire qualified disabled workers.

Work Opportunity Tax Credit

<http://www.uses.doleta.gov/wotcdata.asp>

A tax credit is available for employers who hire from qualified groups. One group includes disabled individuals who completed or are completing rehabilitative services from a state or U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Information is also available from the Internal Revenue Service. See IRS Publication 553.

Welfare-to-Work Tax Credit

<http://www.uses.doleta.gov/wtw.asp>

A tax credit available to businesses that hire someone from a family that received Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) or Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF).

Veterans Job Training Act

http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/vre/for_employers2.htm

Legislation that provides programs to cover training costs for employers of long-term unemployed Korean conflict or Vietnam era veterans. The Veterans Administration's Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) website includes information for employers..

Disabled Access Credit

<http://www.dol.gov/odep/pubs/ek97/tax.htm>

A tax credit available to small business for expenses related to providing access to individuals with disabilities. The credit covers such assistance as sign language interpreters or readers, purchase of adaptive equipment, alternate print form publications, and removal of architectural barriers. The expenses must enable the business to comply with the ADA. Deductions may be submitted using IRS Form 8826.

Architectural/Transportation Tax Deduction

<http://www.dol.gov/odep/pubs/ek97/tax.htm>

This business deduction is available to an organization that makes a facility or transportation vehicle more accessible and usable for the elderly or disabled. See IRS Publication 535 available from their website (www.irs.gov).

Mentor-Protégé Program

http://www.acq.osd.mil/sadbu/mentor_protege/

A program that provides incentives for Department of Defense (DoD) prime contractors who act as mentors to help qualified small disadvantaged businesses that employ severely disabled individuals.

In addition to these programs, the government has several free services to assist employers in locating, hiring, and accommodating disabled workers.

New Freedom Initiative

<http://www.eeoc.gov/initiatives/nfi/index.html>

President Bush developed this program in 2001 to promote the full integration of people with disabilities into all areas of American life. As part of this initiative, the EEO is conducting a series of workshops for small businesses on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The workshops include information on community resources and tax incentives to encourage employers to hire individuals with disabilities. Although no workshops are scheduled for the Pacific Northwest this year, the 2002 schedule includes local contact names.

DisabilityInfo.gov

<http://disabilityinfo.gov/>

The portal for the New Freedom Initiative provides access to disability-related information and programs available across the government on numerous subjects, including civil rights, education, employment, housing, health, income support, technology, transportation, and community life.

Workforce Recruitment Program

<http://www.wrpjobs.org/>

Coordinated by the Office of Disability Employment Policy and the U.S. Department of Defense, this program aims to provide summer work experience and possibly full-time employment, for college students with disabilities. Employers in the private and public sectors who are interested in more information about the program should contact Paul Meyer (meyer.paul@dol.gov). College career counselors or disability student services providers who would like to schedule a recruitment trip to their campuses in 2004 should also contact Paul Meyer.

Editor: Deborah Jeffries, PHR, CPC. Advantage is published monthly and is designed to provide information on regulations, HR practices and management ideas and concerns. The intended audience is managers, supervisors, business owners, human resource and employee relations professionals. If you have questions about the content, an opinion about the information, questions about your subscription, or if you need additional Advantage binders, please give us a call at (503) 885-9815 or e-mail djeffries@hrnorthwest.com.

Ticket to Hire

<http://www.ssa.gov/work/Ticket/TicketHire.html>

A free national referral service to assist employers in hiring motivated, qualified workers with disabilities from the Social Security Administration's Ticket to Work Program. It links employers to Employment Networks in their community that have job-ready candidates.

Employer Assistance Referral Network (EARN)

<http://www.earnworks.com/index.asp>

This national toll-free telephone and electronic information referral service is designed to assist employers in locating and recruiting qualified workers with disabilities. EARN, which is a service of the Office of Disability Employment Policy, can also provide technical assistance on general disability employment-related issues. EARN can also be reached at 1-866-EARN NOW (327-6669). They also offer tips and resources for employers to streamline the recruitment process.

Job Accommodation Network (JAN)

<http://janweb.icdi.wvu.edu/>

The network provides a comprehensive resource for job accommodation and is a free consulting service that provides information about and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) recently published a research report titled: *Employer Incentives for Hiring Individuals with Disabilities*. The purpose of the report was to learn about knowledge levels and perceptions of HR professionals regarding some of the federal programs. One interesting fact presented in the report is that each year the federal government spends 40 times more to support individuals with disabilities than it spends to help them prepare for and find jobs. This is a tremendous drain on the nations' economy. Taking advantage of these programs is a win-win-win situation for employers, employees, and the government.

Many employers mistakenly believe that accommodating disabled workers will be expensive. The SHRM report indicates that over 50% of accommodations cost under \$500 with 38% costing nothing. With tax credits, free recruitment services, online resources and referrals, inexpensive accommodations and willing, qualified workers, how can you lose?

UNFORTUNATE, BUT NECESSARY

If you haven't examined your business travel policy and practices recently, now is the time. Employers are increasingly scrutinizing their business travel accident insurance, their practice of having executives travel together, and whether they have adequate safety services for employees in the event of terrorism or other risks. The insurance world is responding with new coverages, better risk assessments to help employers determine what they can and should insure, and, in many cases, higher rates.

Some of the new coverages include medical rehabilitation for injured travelers and dependent/spouse support expenses, in addition to the traditional medical consultation and evacuation services. A recent quote from an article in *Rough Notes*, the magazine of the property and casualty industry, stated "While risk managers are involved in the purchase of business travel insurance, they rarely are involved in executive travel decisions and are unlikely to know when or where employees travel. Human resource executives may know more about employee travel and relocation, but they generally do not deal with insurers." It may be time to address this gap so that the risks are appropriately assessed and understood, and employees are afforded the level of protection they need on organization business.

Some suggestions are:

1. Assess the number of business trips, the number of employees at all levels who travel for the organization, the typical locations, and the risk associated with any of these (more risk if heading to Washington D.C or Israel, than to Boise, Idaho). Your situation may call for greater coverage and more services or represent a minimal risk.
2. Consider whether executives or key employees should travel separately when flying or staying in hotels so that if something occurs, the company has minimized its loss of talent and intellectual capital.
3. Consider whether support, such as emergency evacuation and transport services, is necessary. Do you have plans for wiring money or referring the employee abroad to contacts and services they may need?
4. Identify whether the employees who travel are married with children or single. Depending on the results of your assessment, you may need to consider strengthening your spouse and dependent support services as well.

UnumProvident provides one of the broadest packages of business travel AD&D in the market. It covers such things as Multilingual services 24/7, an around the clock 1-800 medical help line with English-speaking medical practitioners, prescription transfer and replacement, guaranteed hospital admission, emergency medical evacuation, transportation of minor children left alone due to the employee's hospitalization, transportation of a relative or friend if the injured/ill person was traveling alone, and a host of other support activities. The cost is quite reasonable, coming in at about \$2 per year per employee.

While this might not be the usual benefit program we discussed with employees, employers might want to avoid the prospect of one or more employees experiencing trouble while away on business. Today's world does not allow those possibilities to be set aside. A thorough review may show that your program is just where you want it to be, or it may help you identify that some additions are needed to protect your human assets and make employees more comfortable about their required travel.

NOT-FOR-PROFIT SALARY SURVEY

HR Answers is pleased to offer our 5th annual Non-Profit Benefit and Salary Survey for Washington and Oregon. This survey covers positions typically found in non-profit organizations, with results published by geographic area, organization size, and budget. The average salary range minimum, midpoint and maximum, a weighted average, and high and low rates are also reported. Benefit information includes both insured and voluntary programs. We are just beginning our data collection.

If you are interested in participating this year, please contact Lon Southard or Jennifer Sheets, at 503/885-9815. You may also reach them by e-mail at lsouthard@hranswers.com or jsheets@hranswers.com. We look forward to hearing from you, and as always, we appreciate your referrals. Participants will receive a substantial discount on the purchase price of the publication.

HR TOASTMASTERS CLUB

A new Toastmasters Club is being formed for **HR professionals only!!** Toastmasters is a worldwide, non-profit organization which gives its members the opportunity to develop and improve their speaking, communications, and leadership skills. As HR professionals, we are in the spotlight every day and the need to be effective in our communications to all levels of the organization is critical to our success. Toastmasters can help give us that extra edge we need when presenting to groups, meeting with employees, or even talking with the President of the organization!

HR Answers is organizing and sponsoring this new group that will meet at our facility in Tualatin. HR Answers will pay all of the club incorporation and start up fees for the group. Participants will be responsible for their individual annual membership fee (\$16) and the one-time Toastmasters enrollment fee (\$45).

If you have an interest in getting involved in an **all-HR Toastmasters Club**, please contact Jim Zwicker, SPHR, at HR Answers – (503) 885-9815 or jzwicker@hranswers.com. Please make your contact by August 22nd since we expect the first meeting to be scheduled for September.

KRISPY KREME UPDATE

Many in the Northwest have waited for a seemingly long time for Krispy Kreme donuts. They finally arrived in the Northwest, starting in Issaquah, Washington. Two new stores are scheduled to open this summer in the Portland, Oregon area and, of course, the Clackamas site opened with much fanfare in July.

Also arriving is a charge of discrimination, with allegations that Hispanic employees were sexually harassed and discriminated against in pay and promotion by the franchiser, KrispyWorks, which owns the entire Northwest franchise. These allegations have been made against the Issaquah operation. Both Krispy Kreme and KrispyWorks strongly deny the claims, and have labeled them “frivolous, groundless, and in bad faith.”

This legal action does not appear to be compromising either the sales or the interest in working for the organization. KrispyWorks reported 1,100 applicants for the positions open at the two newest Washington sites.

This is a case that will be worth watching to see if the Krispy Kreme entrance to the Northwest continues to be something sweet for both our mouths and our employment.

BEGINNING TO THINK GLOBAL

The word “global” is appearing in business communications more frequently. It’s as if everyone now realizes that business is a global enterprise. So in the interest of ensuring we all learn a bit more about what “global” might mean, we will provide a periodic global note in *Advantage*. Here is the first.

According to Healy and Baker who annually assess European cities against several business measures, the top ten business-friendly cities in Europe are:

- | | | |
|--------------|--------------|------------|
| 1. London | 5. Brussels | 8. Zurich |
| 2. Paris | 6. Barcelona | 9. Berlin |
| 3. Frankfurt | 7. Madrid | 10. Dublin |
| 4. Amsterdam | | |

Characteristics considered were access to financial services, access to markets, office availability, telecom services, transportation links, language capabilities, etc. Not in the top ten, but deserving of mention, was Portugal, with its low costs for office and secretarial support. Ireland was cited for its tax policies and financial incentives. Barcelona was tapped as the best European city to live in. Judy Clark, President and owner of HRA, says, “I’ve been there and it is simply lovely and the people are very friendly.”

So have you picked out the city for your next position? And even if you don’t see that happening, imagine the interesting bits you can drop into the next business conversation you

THREE MORE MONTHS

We’ve been waiting, but it looks as though our wait is not yet over. Anyone who is a federal contractor has been waiting for years to learn what the government will finally establish as the definition of *job applicant*. The EEOC has been leading the group of agencies and advisors who have been working on this issue.

Originally the work and the ultimate definition was to be done by June 30th. Evidently due to some internal disagreements, that date has now been moved to September 30th. We’ll wait and see if whatever internal issues there are between agencies can be resolved by then.

NEW FROM OSHA

www.osha.gov

A new fact sheet on emergency exit routes has been released. It contains requirements regarding number, design, construction, and safety features of emergency exits as well as information about emergency action and fire prevention plans.

http://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data_General_Facts/emergency-exit-routes-factsheet.pdf

An evacuation planning matrix has been developed that will help employers with emergency preparedness. The website provides ideas, assistance, and on-line resources to employers interested in implementing evacuation plans and procedures during disasters. Developed to help assess an organization’s risk for a terrorist attack, it contains links to information useful under any emergency situation.

<http://www.osha.gov/dep/evacmatrix/index.html>

Though not new, the Emergency Response web page is another great source for links to emergency and evacuation planning information.

<http://www.osha-slc.gov/SLTC/emergencyresponse/index.html>

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Going – Going – Gone? OSHA has announced that it is dropping its proposed provisions that would have required employers to record work-related musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs). A proposal was in place that would have become effective January 1, 2004, requiring employers to track these in a new column on the OSHA 300 Log.

Many in the HR profession actively worked to advise OSHA that the way MSDs were being defined and the remedies that were being suggested were simply impossible standards. The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) suggested to OSHA that there “is no way to assess the originating cause of the injury or to determine how much work-related activities contributed to the injury.”

Ergonomics injuries are some of the most challenging for employers. Did the injury actually occur at work, or was it the result of a weekend event. Did the injury occur all at once, or it is the result of a compilation of events and activities? Complications are inevitable when there is no guidance regarding how genetics and age are to be considered when determining how much of the injury is work-related.

OSHA has invited comment on two issues in its most recent Federal Register posting. One issue is whether or not to reinstate the MSD column on the OSHA 300 form. The question remains, "Would the statistics generated by an additional column of information be superior to the statistics now generated by the BLS?"

The second issue OSHA needs input on is, "If a separate column is included for MSD injuries and illnesses, what definition of MSD should be used?"

OSHA says the final rule on recording and reporting occupational injuries and illnesses will become effective on January 1, 2004. If you have an opinion about this and feel it would affect your reporting or employee population, please take this opportunity to use the OSHA website to provide information.

EEO-1 FILING CHANGE

EEO, EEOC, EEO-1. Enough acronyms to make you crazy, but important to pay attention to, especially now. EEO stands for Equal Employment Opportunity. EEOC is the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the agency that oversees a number of discrimination laws, and the EEO-1 is a **required** form to report organizational employee data.

September 30 is the filing deadline for the 2003 EEO-1 Survey Form. You are required to file this form if:

- you have 100 or more employees, or
- you have 50 or more employees and a federal contract or first-tier subcontract of \$50,000 or more.

If your organization has several entities that total 100 or more employees, you may still be required to file, depending upon how management and the entities are structured. (Check the site noted below, or call us to verify if you need to file.)

In the past, the EEO-1 filing process has been handled through a private organization, however the EEOC has now taken the responsibility back internally to save money. The preferred method of filing is now Web-based through www.eeoc.gov. The previous system of interactive diskettes is no longer available. The new electronic filing does have some advantages, though. No software is necessary, the on-line form is pre-filled in with information from the previous year, data is secure, and historical data should be available for the previous ten years.

ADDRESS DRUG ABUSE WITH EFFECTIVE PROGRAM

There's good and bad news about drug use among American workers, according to the annual Drug Testing Index released by Quest Diagnostics. While overall drug use has declined, and is the lowest in 14 years, amphetamine usage has increased significantly over the past five years.

The increase in amphetamine usage correlates to the increased production and trafficking of methamphetamine during this time period as documented by the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA). Amphetamines are stimulants that increase alertness, relieve fatigue, and make the user feel stronger and more decisive. They may also be used to counter the "down" feeling of tranquilizers or alcohol. Indications of possible misuse may include excessive activity, talkativeness, irritability, argumentativeness or nervousness.

What does this mean to you as an employer? The best way to prevent and deal with workplace substance abuse is a good substance abuse policy and program. Since users will typically apply to places that don't require testing, a policy of testing candidates prior to hire will discourage applicants who are users. Also, if an employee begins abusing during their employment, you can deal with a situation more effectively if you have a good program in place.

A good program begins with an effective policy. Components of an effective policy include:

- Prohibiting the use, manufacture, and sale of illegal substances.
- Prohibiting being under the influence on the job, during work hours.

- Addressing work related functions, such as meetings, conventions, etc.
- Allowing for reasonable suspicion testing.
- Including parameters of other testing requirements, such as random testing.
- Addressing the consequences of tampering with the testing process.
- Addressing any required components for transportation and/or safety-sensitive workers.
- Employee self-identification.
- LEGAL review.

Setting up testing with a reliable laboratory is a key element in an effective program.

Once the policy is in place, it is important to train your managers in identification and procedures. Be sure this includes dealing with performance and behavioral issues, ramifications of the Americans With Disabilities Act, and potential discrimination issues. Provide a detailed policy and procedures for managers to follow, as they may not deal with such issues regularly. This also helps to ensure that simple, but important, things such as not allowing an employee suspected of being under the influence to drive him/herself home or to the test lab are not overlooked.

Consistency in application will be important to ensure that the policy is applied non-discriminatorily and effectively. An Employee Assistance Program can be a low cost, but valuable component for referrals, evaluation, and manager support. If you do not have an EAP, check with your health insurance provider to see if they offer some assistance in this area.

As with many things, prevention is the best place to start, and being prepared when it happens is the best way to resolve such situations effectively and with the least risk.

Quest Diagnostics is a provider of employer drug testing services, and the annual Index summarizes the results of more than 7 million workplace drug tests performed by Quest.

ARE YOU GIVING REFERENCES?

It seems there are a great many businesses who seek to thoroughly check every reference a candidate provides, but refuse to return the favor when asked to do the same for their former employees. This is irony at its best in HR.

We fully support checking references. It is a disservice to prospective employers to withhold job performance information. A no-comment policy is a red flag for most employers. After all, if the person was a good employee, why isn't the previous employer willing to say so?

A no-comment policy creates negative results for both applicants and other employers. It hurts former employees who performed well and are seeking advancement based on solid performance. It also facilitates passing along poor performers to unsuspecting employers. The employees who win in this situation are the poor performers, and the disadvantaged individuals are the very ones who should *not* be punished based on an organization's policy.

However, there are some positive changes taking place in this area. One is the emergence of cases based on the concept of negligent referral. This is defined as a former employer's failure to reveal true information about a former employee that results in harm to an innocent third party. Another positive change has been limiting, by statute, the liability of employers who make truthful, good faith statements about former employees. More than 40 states have passed legislation that protects employers from being sued by former employees who aren't hired because of good faith, factual information provided.

One creative idea has been the emergence of associations of organizations that agree to share information about former employees with other members of the group. The idea is to get around no-comment policies for the benefit of all concerned. If you join the association, you agree to provide honest job performance information about former employees to other association members, and they, in turn, agree to do the same.

So far, this new model has been limited to firms in the same type of business. However, efforts are underway by some major players to create associations that will operate the same way, featuring diverse businesses. As this creative approach develops, it should hold many benefits for both employers and applicants, including facilitating the free flow of information between

employers, reducing the risk of litigation, helping good employees advance their careers, and helping identify poor performers. These associations could create win-win situations for all concerned.

We have another idea: create a policy where the employee, upon departure, decides how they want their reference information handled and how much information they want divulged. In this scenario, the organization has a form that it gives to the departing employee. The employee then has a choice between 1) giving permission to have any and all employment information shared, or 2) requesting only title, dates of employment, and salary history to be shared. The benefit to this process is that the employee decides instead of the employer. Then when questions are asked during the reference check, the employer simply has to say the former employee requested that only certain information be given out. This statement alone should be a red flag to the prospective employer. Also, in this scenario, the good performers win!

If you'd like a copy of this Reference Release form, we'd be happy to send one your way, for a small fee. Simply give any of our offices a call.

Q & A

Q: As employers, are we required to provide service letters to terminated employees?

A: Service letters are required in only 11 states: California, Delaware, Indiana, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, Texas, and Washington.

If you would like to make this part of your procedures, we have a couple of guidelines to recommend. If your business resides in one of the above-mentioned states, let us know and we'll give you the specifics for your state. Otherwise, consider the following:

- Be consistent in your practice.
- Provide the letter to a discharged employee on request, or to an employer wishing to employ an individual.
- The letter must include a truthful statement about the reason for leaving.
- Provide the letter within 10 workdays of an employee's departure.
- Include the following information:
 - ✓ Dates employed
 - ✓ Position title
 - ✓ Ending wages
 - ✓ Reason for separation

THOUGHTS TO THINK ABOUT

People go through four stages before any revolutionary development:

1. It's nonsense; don't waste my time.
2. It's interesting, but not important.
3. I always said it was a good idea.
4. I thought of it first.

The seven deadly sins:

1. Truth, if it becomes a weapon against individuals;
2. Beauty, if it becomes vanity;
3. Love, if it becomes possessive or obsessive;
4. Loyalty, if it becomes blind, and with careless trust;
5. Tolerance, if it becomes indifference;
6. Self-confidence, if it becomes arrogance; and,
7. Faith, if it becomes self-righteous.

EQUAL PAY ACT TURNS 40

The Equal Pay Act is actually older than the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Enacted on June 10, 1963, the Equal Pay Act prohibits employers from discriminating on the basis of sex in the payment of wages or benefits, where men and women perform work of similar skill, effort, and responsibility under similar working conditions.

The workplace has changed considerably in the past 40 years. However EEOC Chair Cari Dominguez says, "We continue to see cases of blatant pay discrimination between men and women doing equal work. We continue to see cases of wage discrimination against people of color, as well as individuals with disabilities. This should not be tolerated in the year 2003. The Commission is firmly committed to the task of ensuring that all individuals have the freedom to compete and advance in the workplace on a level playing field. Strong enforcement of the EPA, coupled with vigorous education and outreach, remains a key component of ensuring equality of opportunity in the workplace."

While the law was originally written to equalize women's pay with that of men, it applies regardless of the gender. Under the EPA, it is unlawful for an employer to reduce the wages of either sex to equalize pay. A violation also occurs where a labor union causes the employer to violate the law. Remedies can include back pay, punitive relief, and liquidated damages if shown to be willful.

Employers can base salary differences on merit, quality or quantity of work, length of service, and other non-discriminatory related factors. Be sure to review your pay policies and practices to ensure that pay decisions are based on business-related factors.

WHAT ARE YOU READING?

What do you read? Do you have a favorite book (or other resource) that you have found valuable to your profession? If so, we want to hear about it. Please email your favorite title, plus a sentence or two describing the resource and why you like it. We will include them in future newsletters in the hopes that others will find them useful as well. Email to: bstollberg@hranswers.com.

FOR YOUR CALENDAR

Open up your daytimers, computer calendars and palm pilots. The following is a look at upcoming events, special days and other diverse and fun activities you will want to be aware of and get scheduled. To register for our workshops, please call any of our offices, send an e-mail to Susan Jeffries at sjeffries@hranswers.com, or just register online at www.hrnorthwest.com under Consulting services.

AUGUST

National Inventor's, American Artist Appreciation, and Admit You're Happy Month

August 1-7 Simplify Your Life Week

August 3 National Kid's Day

August 6 National Fresh Breath Day

August 3-9 National Fraud Awareness Week

August 9 National Garage Sale Day

August 10 Spoil Your Dog Day

August 10-16 Thanks For All the Gifts Week

**August 14 HRA Workshop – Tualatin
Beyond Performance Appraisals
8:30 – 12 noon**

August 17-23 National Friendship Week

August 18 Bad Poetry Day

**August 21 HRA Workshop – Salem
Top 10 Policies for Every Organization
8:30 – 12 noon**

August 21 National Forgiveness Day

**August 26 HRA Workshop – Puget Sound
Developing a Strategic HR Plan
8:30 – 12 noon**

SEPTEMBER

**Sept. 18 HRA Workshop – Tualatin
Conducting HR Investigations
8:30 – 12 noon**

**Sept. 30 HRA Workshop – Puget Sound
Introduction to Workplace Safety Manuals
8:30 – 12 noon**

Information and advice offered through Advantage should not be construed as legal opinion. The material contained herein will not apply to all circumstances or to all organizations. Use it as a resource and reference. Should you feel legal advice is required, please consult with your corporate counsel.



ON MY SOAPBOX

I believe that people, whether they know it or not, create memories for others. I remember distinct occasions with my parents, my kids, my husband, and my best friends. These special recollections are often accompanied by high emotion. Some of them were moments of perfection – times when it was impossible to believe that anything could ever be better. Some of them were times of great pain or hurt, many of which resulted in significant learning.

The difficulty is that many of these memory-making times are not intentional, and that is unfortunate because it may mean that memory making is not understood. Think of it, you are watching TV with your kids. There is an opportunity to offer an astute observation about something important related to the topic or content of the show. The comment isn't made and the moment passes never to return again. You come home from work full of frustration about an event that occurred. You express your anger never seeing your child watch, listen and form an opinion about the way you handled that difficulty. You attend a concert or ballgame in which your child performs well. You offer a "great job" comment, but miss the chance to kneel down, look deeply into your child's eyes, and tell them how proud you are of them, how well they did, and how much you believe in the future he/she will have.

I listen to many around me and the family vacation I remember from my youth seems to have gone the way of the family sit-down dinner. There are so few of them, and when they do occur, they appear to contain far less "just spending time together" occasions. While I recognize computers, DVDs, CD players, and video games as integral parts of the recreation environment today, I lament the loss of the afternoon at the ballpark, the Sunday afternoon drive, the evening walk, and the front porch swing. I don't mean to sound old-fashioned (and as I write this I have to smile at the idea that I ever would describe myself as that), but the together time that used to be spent talking, sharing stories, and building both relationships and memories is evaporating. And we are the poorer for it!

So here is my proposal – think about your memories. Which ones are most important to you? Which ones give you a sense of yourself as a part of a family or group of people? Which ones might have been made intentionally by others versus which ones happened without someone wanting them to occur? Is there any knowledge or learning to be gained from this remembering? If so, then begin to think about the memories you want others to have of you, of times spent with you, or experiences that will build them capability and confidence. How can those memories be created? What events, excursions, conversations, etc. can be used to generate those memories? What planning does it take to ensure that the occasions occur and that the desired results are attained? How are you going to check to make sure that the intended memories are made, as opposed to others?

I have been thinking about this a lot lately for a variety of reasons, not the least of which is that I just spent a week alone with my grandson, Cason. It was a trip intended to make some memories for both of us. We cruised through the Inside Passage of Alaska. We had time available for us to each do our own activities, but there was time together for talking, sharing stories, and experiencing. We watched a glacier "calf," saw Humpback and Orca whales, ate sumptuous dinners in evening attire, and walked the deck while planning our day.

The memories I will take from that trip are many. I will treasure the image of a boy becoming a young man as he stood for his formal portrait dressed in a tuxedo; eyes bright with excitement as we saw whales of the port bow; his second place medal won at the rock climbing challenge; the watch purchased, lost, then found; and, the soft moments of shared affection. What are his memories? I don't know yet, but I intend to listen and learn what mattered most to him.

Memories teach us values. They are the stories we tell to future listeners. They are the tales of our childhood. They are what we draw upon during the tough times. They are what sustain us when those remembered are no longer present. They are part of the fabric of us. Given all that, it is important that we make positive memories, for others and ourselves.

- Judy Clark, President



"Whatever the Question"

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