

To:

The HR Specialist

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From: Business Management Daily

Subject: Practical HR strategies to boost your career

In The News ...

Vax mandates are now a 50–50 proposition. OSHA's federal vaccine-or-test mandate may be dead, but 44% of all private-sector employers have already instituted their own COVID vaccine requirement for employees, and another still 6% say they still plan to do so, according to a new Mercer survey. Forty-two percent of companies said they won't consider a mandate.

More resignations = more final pay inquiries from employees. With quitting at an all-time high, it's important to realize that you don't have much wiggle room when it comes to handing out that final paycheck. Federal law doesn't set limits, but most states do, sometimes by the next business day. Find an updated chart of state laws at www.theHRSpecialist.com/finalpaycheck. (Note: For the 18 states not listed, workers must receive their pay by the next regular payday.)

Remote work leads to spike in tech ailments. As more people work from home, all that increased screen time and makeshift office furniture is leading to an increase in technology-related injuries. According to a Harmony Healthcare study, since the pandemic started there's been a sharp spike in online searches for eye strain (78% increase), back pain (142%) and other tech ailments (40%).

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New pressure to disclose salaries to applicants

Salary discussions have always been a cat-and-mouse game with applicants. But for two different reasons, more employers these days are stating the offered salary (or salary range) at the very outset of the hiring process.

Reason #1: More legislated transparency. In some states and cities, starting salary disclosure is now required by law as a means to correct pay inequality. Ten jurisdictions (and counting) force employers to provide wage information to applicants or current staff, either upon request or at a certain part in the hiring process (*see box*).

Latest example: Starting in April, New York City employers must post salary ranges for all job openings, promotions and transfers.

Also, at least 14 states ban employers from even asking applicants about their past salary history.

States and cities with wage disclosure laws

California
Colorado
Connecticut
Maryland
Nevada



Rhode Island
Washington
New York City
Cincinnati
Toledo, OH

Source: Littler Mendelson. Find details on each of these laws at www.tinyurl.com/PayDisclosure.

The reason: Basing a new salary on a previous salary could perpetuate past gender or race discrimination.

Finally, 20 states make it illegal to punish workers for discussing their pay. That's a big change from the days when employers could confidently tell staff to keep their pay secret.

Reason #2: Solve hiring woes. The white-hot labor market is leading more employers to reveal salary lev-

Continued on page 2

New law calls for rewrite of arbitration pacts

If you ask employees to sign agreements requiring arbitration of work-related disputes or claims, call a meeting with your attorney.

With strong bipartisan support, Congress just passed a #MeToo-inspired bill that prohibits employers from

Employees now have the choice of going to arbitration or to court to resolve sexual harassment claims—you can't force them into arbitration.

requiring arbitration of sexual harassment claims. President Biden said he will sign the bill.

The new law gives workers the choice of going to arbitration or to court to resolve sexual harassment

claims. The new law took effect immediately.

Employee advocates have long argued that mandatory arbitration of harassment claims allows employers to protect harassers, keeping their misdeeds secret and preventing victims from publicly discussing their claims.

Critical issue: This law also invalidates existing agreements that require arbitration of sexual harassment

Continued on page 2

Disclose salaries

(Cont. from page 1)

els on their own. It can shave time off the hiring process by sorting candidates according to their salary expectations. And it starts the relationship on a note of honesty and transparency.

Advice: Before revising job ads and job descriptions to include salary ranges, make sure your current employees are being fairly and equitably compensated within that stated range. Otherwise, this could give disgruntled current employees fodder for a pay discrimination lawsuit.

Also, check the ads for your local competition. If you plan to pay less, then touting your rates won't be much help. But if you pay higher, you quickly have a buyer's advantage in a seller's market.

Arbitration pacts

(Cont. from page 1)

claims, no matter when they were signed. So you will have to amend your current arbitration agreements to comply with the new law. Here is what you should do:

Identify all mandatory arbitration agreements that you have with employees.

Meet with your attorney to review the language in these pacts. Check to see if they specifically require arbitration of sexual harassment claims.

Look for existing language that may protect you. According to Littler Mendelson attorney Jay Inman, you probably do not need to amend arbitration agreements if they included language stating that they exclude "disputes that cannot be arbitrated or subjected to pre-dispute arbitration agreement under controlling federal statute."

Consider adding language to agreements specifically stating that they do not require arbitration of sexual harassment claims. Have your attorney draft language that complies with the law.

Employers survive predicted surge of COVID lawsuits by heeding local guidance

Since March 2020, employees have filed more than 5,100 lawsuits against employers alleging labor and employment violations related to COVID, according to an ongoing tally by the Littler law firm.

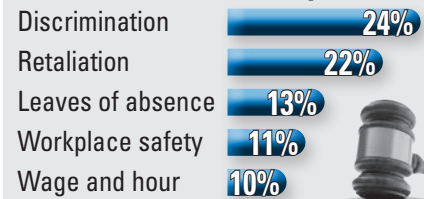
One increasing question: Are employers liable (beyond workers' comp) when employees become infected and bring COVID home to sicken or kill a family member? A California appeals court ruled recently that a candy company must face a lawsuit in such a case because the company had poor COVID safety controls in its factory.

In most COVID lawsuits, however, judges have rejected exposure-at-work claims, offering relief to sick staff only through the workers' comp system.

What can employers take away from employees' lack of success in the courtroom? Heeding government guidance on testing, masking, cleaning and social distancing is a winning litigation strategy.

Employers that quickly took their workers' health risks seriously generally didn't get sued. For them, the biggest risk has been an increase in workers' comp claims. These measures can minimize your liability:

COVID lawsuits: Top cases



Source: Littler's COVID Tracker, March 2020–Feb. 2022

Keep following workplace safety guidance from OSHA and the CDC, even as the pandemic eases. Remember, OSHA's General Duty Clause still requires you to provide a workplace "free from recognized hazards," including COVID.

Be prepared to loosen and tighten safety rules depending on local COVID conditions and recommendations from state and local authorities. Example: When COVID case counts rise, be ready to transition to remote work if possible, enforce masking and enhance sanitation.

Encourage vaccination. If you have a vaccine mandate, monitor employees' status, including boosters. If you don't, create a policy that limits workplace exposure should employees or customers test positive or display symptoms.

Suspended during investigation: To pay or not?

When employees are accused of serious misconduct, you probably don't want them in the workplace while you conduct an investigation. But a quick-trigger firing (or suspension without pay) could spark a lawsuit for retaliation or discrimination.

For that reason, if you're going to suspend an employee, it's typically best to do so *with* pay while you investigate. You're not imposing discipline yet, so the employee should not be penalized until you decide their fate.

Exceptions could apply, so check with your attorney when in doubt.

Recent case: Arthur, who is black, was hired as executive director of a legal services firm. Soon after, sev-

eral subordinates complained to the board that Arthur's behavior created a hostile work environment. The board launched an investigation and suspended Arthur with pay pending the outcome. He soon resigned and sued, alleging racial bias.

The court tossed out his lawsuit. It said that being placed on paid suspension wasn't an adverse employment action. Being suspended with pay also meant Arthur could not claim constructive discharge when he resigned.

The court wrote that a "paid suspension can be a useful tool for an employer to hit 'pause' and investigate when an employee has been accused." (*Davis v. Legal Services*, 11th Cir.)





I-9 document bias: Lessons from the Gap case

When it comes to completing I-9 forms, HR professionals often focus too much on being “form enforcers” without realizing they could face discrimination charges for demanding new hires produce specific documents.

That’s why it’s important to remember it’s unlawful to require more or different documents than are legally acceptable for employment verification.

Recent case: The U.S. Department of Justice investigated the Gap clothing company after receiving employee complaints. DOJ says the company’s HR and hiring managers requested that certain noncitizens provide specific documents to confirm they were legal

to work in the United States, instead of allowing the new hire to choose any valid documentation of their choice.

Plus, the DOJ says, Gap discriminated against certain lawful permanent residents and naturalized citizens by unnecessarily re verifying their permission to work, even though it wasn’t required by law.

Gap settled the case by paying \$73,000 in penalties, providing back wages to affected workers and training staff on proper I-9 processes.

Online resource Download our free 35-page guidebook, *Verifying Employment Eligibility*, at www.theHRSpecialist.com/I-9report.

Document ADA requests to prove your good faith

After being fired for taking unapproved leave, a university employee filed an ADA lawsuit. But the court tossed out her case, noting that the employee never completed medical certification forms to renew her intermittent leave, as HR had requested. (*Watson v. Drexel*, 3rd Cir.)

The lesson: If an employee doesn’t participate in the interactive process, she won’t be able to successfully sue over a denied accommodation. That’s why it’s vital to document every interaction related to requests for medical leaves.

NFL case may trigger more race-bias hiring lawsuits

Race discrimination jumped onto the front page last month with news that former Miami Dolphins football coach Brian Flores sued three NFL teams for racial bias in hiring. The high-profile case may cause employees and applicants to look closer at *your* hiring practices.

Advice: Look at the bottom-line results of your hiring. The EEOC says hiring practices can be unlawful if they “exclude persons of a certain racial group or color significantly more than others.” For a Q&A on federal law regarding race in hiring, go to www.tinyurl.com/racehiring.

Wardrobe malfunction: Ban on religious attire costs \$45k

Greyhound hired a bus driver, but it refused to let her wear her Muslim headscarf and loose-fitting overgarment (an abaya), even though she had completed her state commercial driver training wearing both items. She was forced to quit and then she sued. Greyhound settled the claim for \$45,000 and agreed to train all its managers on religious bias.

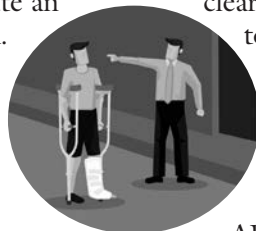
The lesson: Federal law says you must reasonably accommodate employees’ sincerely held religious practices. You can only bar religious dress and grooming practices based on workplace safety, security or health concerns.

Got a ‘100% healed policy’? It’s 100% wrong

When employees return to work after an illness or injury, don’t require them to prove they are fully healed before you allow them to come back. That could constitute an automatic violation of the ADA. Such 100%-healed policies have been consistent losers in court.

At issue: Employees who aren’t fully healed may still be disabled, meaning they’d be entitled to reasonable accommodations to perform their jobs, such as light-duty work or additional leave.

Recent case: A Minnesota payroll company had such a policy for staff returning from medical leave. Following knee surgery, a worker was cleared by her doctor to return to work on crutches. The company fired her, citing her reliance on an “ambulatory aide.”



The EEOC sued, saying the policy violates the ADA. The company wisely cut a \$95,000 settlement check. (*EEOC v. Employer Solutions*, DC MN)

Train execs on FLSA exemption categories

Plaintiffs’ lawyers love to file lawsuits claiming an employee was wrongly classified as an exempt “manager” under the Fair Labor Standards Act. That’s because one such error among a group of similar employees can trigger a huge class-action payout. Avoid this fate by training everyone with authority to set job duties, schedules and salaries on how to properly classify workers as exempt or nonexempt.

Recent case: The U.S. Department of Labor found that a group of Dairy Queen stores in Texas misclassified 31

workers as exempt managers. They should have been hourly, nonexempt staff eligible for overtime. The court granted them \$358k in back overtime pay. (*Walsh v. Dairy Queen*, WD TX)

Remember, the FLSA says that to be an exempt manager, employees must earn at least \$684 per week and their primary duty must be managing the enterprise or department. Plus, they must regularly direct at least two workers and have the authority to hire or fire (or have “particular weight” given to those recommendations).



Make sure your injury/illness stats are posted

A reminder: Many employers with at least 10 employees—except those in certain low-risk industries—are required to post a summary of their 2021 work-related injuries and illnesses (OSHA Form 300A) from Feb. 1 to April 30. Also, make the info available to staff who don't report to a fixed work location. Certain companies must also submit a digital Form 300A to OSHA by March 2. For details, go to www.osha.gov/recordkeeping.

Biden issues plan to buoy union organizing

Backing up his pledge to be the “most pro-union president ever,” President Biden last month unveiled a series of steps the federal government plans to increase union participation, which has fallen to a near-historic low of just 10.3% of workers in 2021 (and just 6.1% of private-sector workers). Federal contractors will feel the most impact. Learn more at www.tinyurl.com/unions2022.

DOL, NLRB team up on wage enforcement

In an effort to crack down on employer pay violations, the U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division and the National Labor Relations Board have

formally agreed to collaborate on an array of wage-related investigation and enforcement activities. A joint statement said the partnership will “allow for better enforcement against unlawful pay practices, misclassification of workers as independent contractors and retaliation against workers who exercise their legal rights.”

Coming: New rules to prevent heat illnesses

Look for first-time regulations from OSHA later this year that aim to protect workers from heat injuries and illnesses. The rules will likely require employers to provide regular rest breaks, access to water and access to shade or a cooled area. The final rule may also set standards for indoor air temperature. Read about OSHA proposed heat rule at www.tinyurl.com/OSHA-proposed-heat-rule.

Penalties for FLSA and FMLA raised for 2022

The Department of Labor announced new inflation-adjusted penalties for this year. The Fair Labor Standards Act penalty for repeated or willful failures to pay overtime or minimum wages increases to \$2,203 per offense. The penalty for willfully failing to post FMLA notices is now \$189 per offense. Under ERISA law, failing to file a Form 5500 will now spark a \$2,400-per-day fine and failing to provide workers with a Summary of Health Benefits Coverage is \$1,264 per failure.

HR Q&A

How can our company successfully navigate the personal pronoun issue?

Q. We are a small nonprofit. Are we required by law to include employees' preferred pronouns in our organization's email signature template? Must we require employees to refer to their colleagues by their preferred pronouns? It becomes stressful when an employee identifies as non-binary and consistently reminds everyone to use “they/them” pronouns.

— *Phyllis, Texas*

A. At least three jurisdictions (California, Oregon, and the District of Columbia) have adopted laws recognizing non-binary individuals and allowing these people to identify as neither male nor female. These laws say employers must honor their employees' choice of pronouns and names to be used at work. Current estimates suggest that only 0.5% of Americans identify as non-binary, but that is still more than two million people.

Legally, you're not obligated to include someone's preferred pronouns in your email signature. But allowing employees to choose to do so is certainly a best practice. It can be difficult at first to use a non-binary term to refer to someone, particularly if that change is recent. But it becomes easier with time.

Your employees are within their rights to ask their

co-workers to address them by these preferred pronouns. Your organization can help by insisting that co-workers treat one another with respect when communicating with one another.

When can we toss reimbursement paperwork?

Q. Our employees who work from home have a portion of their cellphone and internet bills reimbursed (\$20 per month for phone and \$30 for internet). Must they submit their bills to payroll every month or can they skip it if their total reimbursement is less than \$75 a month?

A. In both cases, employees should submit their bills to you. For cellphones, you can reimburse employees' substantiated expenses if you have a substantial non-compensatory reason for requiring employees to use their own phones for business. It's sufficient if they're working at home and you're calling them on their cell. For internet access, in addition to their monthly bills, employees must give you a daily account of the percent of their business and personal use. Only employees' business use is reimbursable tax-free.

Do you have a question? If so, you can email it to The HR Specialist at HRSEditor@BusinessManagementDaily.com.

How COVID reshaped employees' perspectives

We are different people now than we were before March 2020 when the pandemic began, according to a survey of 1,700 Americans by the Gartner business advisory firm.

Gartner analysts say the pandemic has been an inadvertent social experiment, creating the space for people to ask big questions and test alternative ways to live.



Among the survey findings:

Fewer people tie their identities to their work or career. This is evident in the record numbers of people who have been quitting their jobs over the past year. Sixty-four percent of people surveyed said they are actively trying to keep their work self and personal self separate.

The pandemic has altered people's sense of time. Seventy-seven percent of those polled reported experiencing some distortion in their perception of the pace of time, led by Gen Z (91%) and millennials (88%). One side effect of that distortion: 66% reported having difficulty making long-term plans or life changes at some point during the pandemic.

The result has been a retreat of sorts. With "before times" normalcy off the table, Americans have settled for—and settled into—a home-centered approach to living. Apparently, we like it that way. Respondents said they expect their home-centricity will extend well after coronavirus has passed, with 58% of survey respondents saying the pandemic will have a lasting impact on how they think about and manage their home, up 12% from late 2020.

Paying for vax time: Let FLSA guide your policy

OSHA's vaccinate-or-test mandate required companies to pay employees for time off to receive COVID vaccinations. But the Supreme Court tossed out the OSHA rule, so many employers are confused about whether they must pay employees for time spent getting shots and being tested.

Best bet: Follow the rules established by the federal Fair Labor Standards Act:

Time spent during the workday: Nonexempt employees whose employers require them to seek medical attention related to their employment during a regularly scheduled shift must be paid for their time. Thus, if you require hourly staff to undergo temperature checks, rapid testing or receive vaccinations on site, you must pay for that time.

Time spent before or after work: If you require hourly workers to get vaccinated, boosted or tested outside regular working hours, the time may still have to be paid if the requirement is integral to their jobs.

For example, requiring vaccination for a nurse in a setting subject to the vaccine mandate for health-care employers would be integral to the job. Thus, the time should be paid.

The pay requirement is less clear for staff who work in nonmedical, remote or isolated settings. Still, the safest approach is to pay for the time.

It remains uncertain whether the FLSA requires employers to pay employees for time spent recovering from vaccinations or boosters. However, the FMLA may apply if symptoms are severe enough to constitute a serious health condition.

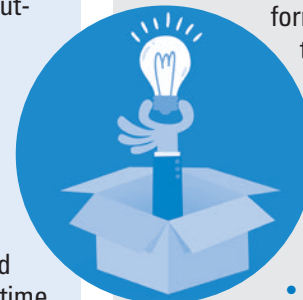
Check your state law Some states, cities and municipalities have their own rules on time off to vaccinate, boost or test. Track the law where you operate at www.tinyurl.com/StateVax.

Prevent ghosting: Send new hires a welcome kit

In this hot labor market, you can't let your guard down after candidates say "yes." Use this preboarding phase to help new hires feel engaged and "in the know" even before Day 1.

One good tactic: Send a welcome package in the mail that includes substantive information but also something fun. Some ideas:

- Job description and a company mission statement
- Org chart with titles, brief job descriptions of co-workers
- Schedule of paydays and when new hires can expect a first paycheck
- Calendar of upcoming events including holidays, company events, etc.
- List of training opportunities available to new hires
- Description of available benefits and eligibility information
- Forms, such as the I-9, W-4, direct deposit, insurance, emergency contact, 401(k) and beneficiary forms to complete prior to the first day
 - A gift, such as a shirt or coffee mug with your company logo
 - Maps of the parking lot and building
 - Some gift cards and menus to local restaurants and coffee shops
- A note from their company mentor, who can answer questions that new employees hesitate to ask managers. Studies show that new hires with mentors get up to speed faster than newbies without such assistance.



Online resource It's wise for managers to have a one-on-one meeting with new hires within the first 60 days to see if it meets their expectations and to head off potential problems before it's too late. For tips on hosting this meeting and 15 sample questions to ask, go to www.theHRSpecialist.com/15questions.

To: _____
 From: _____

Date: March 2022
 Re: Fear of Returning to the Office

Post-pandemic Returning to work: Help staff who suffer from FORTO

Fear of returning to the office is causing high anxiety for many employees who have comfortably teleworked for the past two years.

A full 40% of currently remote employees say they'd prefer to work at home indefinitely, according to a Harris poll. But with COVID infection numbers dropping this spring and many states ending their mask mandates, more companies are opening their doors to employees—even if on a hybrid basis.

This reboarding process can be stressful, triggering what psychologists call “reentry anxiety.”

Some employees imagine the worst when they come back into the office. Boring meetings ... office gossip ... updated technology ... mask debates ... having to wear office attire ... using public restrooms again ... even that colleague who microwaves smelly fish.

“They are saying, ‘I just haven’t done this in two years.’ They can’t imagine what it’s going to be like, which is really fear of change,” says Dr. Charmain Jackman, a Harvard-trained psychologist.

For that reason, managers need to think about their communication with employees leading up to the return—and to rethink the workplace itself.

Organizational psychologist and HR exec Jane Piper, author of *Focus in the Age of Distraction*, says, “The office has to be a place people want to come back to not only in the social sense but in the physical sense as well ... [Managers] need to think in a new way.”

On the flip side, you may find that fear is a driving force in the reason that some employees DO want to return to the office. Fear of losing their momentum or face time with the boss is a reason some workers cite for wanting to return. According to a CNBC poll, more than half of workers predict that colleagues who work in person will have better career opportunities in the future than those who remain remote.

Easing the transition: 4 tips

So what do you need to do to remove the stigma and encourage employees to return to the office environment? Some tips:

1 Communicate more often with employees. Uncertainty is the cause of most anxiety, and educating your employees with compassion

is crucial. Be proactive with emails and group calls letting people know exactly what they can expect when they return.

In your daily interactions with employees, help workers focus on the positive aspects of returning to the office: reconnecting with friends, a sense

of community, the benefits of teamwork and brainstorming in person, charity initiatives, the March Madness pool, shared holidays, pizza lunches, Halloween contests. Zoom just can’t provide these same things.

2 Encourage employees to use wellness benefits. Point out what’s available and realize that some introverted employees may need more support. Show your staff you take wellness seriously by featuring these messages prominently. Many companies have used the pandemic to start new internal eletters and online groups that focus on work/life balance, physical fitness, self-care and other issues that directly address employee wellness.

3 Make sure your department practices are aligned with company policies and state/local regulations related to masks and other pandemic-related issues. Mentioning this can help put your employees’ minds at ease.

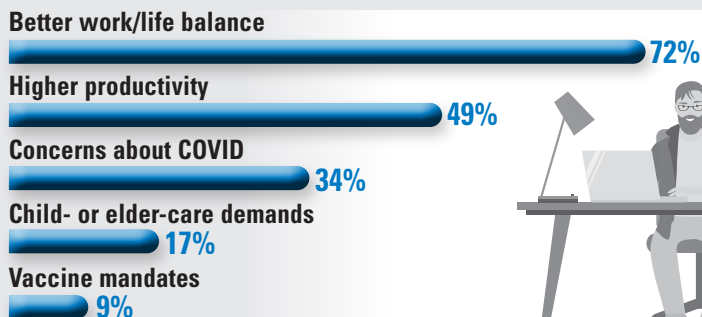
4 Offer flexibility when possible. Employees are looking around at their friends and neighbors who have a new measure of flexibility. And they may be looking at such options at other jobs.

Offer time flexibility and work-location flexibility when possible. But make sure you offer it equitably to all employees, or else you could trigger a discrimination complaint.

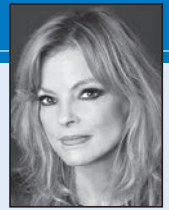


Why do employees prefer to work at home?

For most people over the past two years, remote work preference has been more about convenience and productivity than about catching COVID.



Source: Conference Board survey



How to be an empathetic leader without being a pushover

In these difficult times, now is not the time for business leaders to rule with an iron fist. It certainly would not be an effective way to invigorate your team to come back to work, and more importantly, to perform at their best.

Ideally, it is a time for leaders to show empathy, relatability and understanding, mixed with a measure of authority. Here are helpful points to achieve that balance:

Be likeable as a leader ...

Most people want to be liked. And a team liking their leader leads to higher levels of productivity and commitment. It's a win-win for you, your team and your business. How can you accomplish this?

Honesty is key. If you want honesty, be ready to offer it first, even when it's not comfortable. If you show the opposite, don't be surprised if you have to deal with dishonest team members. You get what you give.

Listen first before speaking. Listening is a skill to be practiced often. Stop whatever you are

doing and focus with the intention of truly listening to employees. Show openness and be receptive.



A team liking their leader leads to higher levels of productivity and commitment ... but being liked doesn't mean being a doormat.

Get in the trenches. Be willing to join to do whatever needs to get done. Be the pinch hitter who is needed just in case.

Delegate and trust. Teach your team and show them how to handle responsibilities you wish to pass on to them.

Fairness gets you everything. Never play favorites. Know your employees well enough to know what motivates them and also what discourages them. Know how to handle both ends of the spectrum.

... But don't be a doormat Being liked doesn't mean being your team's doormat. How can you avoid being a pushover?

Don't carry the lion's share of the work. Sharing is caring, but there's a limit. Don't be

taken advantage of. You should not finish what they started. A deadline is a deadline no matter what.

Mistakes are not yours to correct. If you spot mistakes, have the employee correct them. If you do it yourself, your team member's learning curve is tampered. Show them and tell them, but they need to do the work. Otherwise, mistakes will continue.

Make time for feedback. People learn and grow from feedback. If you say nothing, then most likely nothing will change. A meeting will address both issues.

The elephant in the room: conflict. If there is a situation that needs attention, deal with it swiftly. Don't let it fester, which allows additional employees the opportunity to get involved.

Your ultimate goal isn't to be liked. Your goal is to be respected as a leader. Earn your team's respect, and the rest will follow.

Angela Civitella is founder of Intinde (www.intinde.com) and a certified business leadership coach.

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Free COVID tests causing headaches for employers

Group health plans must now cover the cost of over-the-counter COVID test kits. But employers need to be aware of possible pitfalls. For example, employees can't put in for reimbursement to their FSA or HSA plans if they get them free or are reimbursed through the plan. So they shouldn't use their FSA or HSA debit card for these tests at the pharmacy.

For more details on advice related to the intersection of COVID tests and your benefits plan, go to www.theHRSpecialist.com/freetests.

Growing retention tool: Internal job fairs

While job fairs are typically used as an outside recruitment tool, the current job market is leading more companies to host job fairs for their current employees as a way to keep them from jumping ship.

Example: Gravie, a Minnesota-based health benefits company, hosted an internal job fair, giving workers a low-pressure way to explore other opportunities within the company that they may be interested or excel in.

Less than 1 in 10 'committed' to their employer

The pandemic has put a strain on all relationships, including the employer-employee kind. In a new TopResume survey of 500 American workers, only 7% say they're in a "committed relationship" with their employers, meaning they love their jobs and aren't looking elsewhere.

A full 72% describe it as an "open relationship," as they're employed but open to other opportunities. Another 13% say "it's complicated," meaning they don't love their jobs but are conflicted about breaking up.

Upcoming webinars for HR

March 2:	California HR Law 2022 Update
March 3:	Workplace Detox: How to (Legally) Deal with Toxic Employees
March 4:	The First 90 Days: Successful Onboarding Strategies
March 10:	Stay Interviews: How One Conversation Can Cut Turnover in Half
March 11:	Avoid COVID Liability in 2022: An HR Workshop
March 23:	Revise Your Job Descriptions for 2022
March 24:	Payroll Update 2022
March 25:	Coaching Skills for Managers and Supervisors
March 30:	Motivation-Based Interviewing

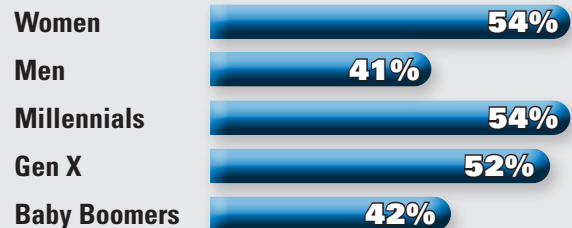
To register or learn more, go to www.theHRSpecialist.com/events

The pandemic's toll on mental health

As the pandemic eases, some of your employees will recognize the pandemic's true impact on their mental health as they return to more "normal" activities, including returning to the workplace. A new study by



The Conference Board shows that certain people were affected more than others. Here is the percentage of each group who self-reported that their mental health declined in the past two years:



The good & bad of remote hiring: Top perks, obstacles

As the workforce goes remote, so has hiring. And that's caused all kinds of new challenges for employers. The top three obstacles of hiring remote talent (in order), according to a Robert Half consultants survey of 2,300 hiring managers: Assessing candidates' skills through virtual interviews, developing compensation packages for candidates outside the company's city/state, and scheduling interviews across time zones.

Still, employers do recognize the positives of remote hiring. They cite these as the top benefits (in order): more applications from skilled candidates, greater compensation flexibility and a quicker hiring process.

Be alert for tax season identity theft scams

The IRS is warning of a scheme that resurfaces around tax time each year. It works this way: HR or payroll gets an email that appears to be from a top company official (maybe the CEO) that requests a list of employees and their personal information, including Social Security numbers. It's really a "phishing" scam aiming to steal employee data.

Alert your other HR and payroll staff. And follow up on such emails with a phone call to confirm.

10 tired terms to drop from your job ads

According to a survey by Preply.com, 20% of job-seekers have decided not to apply for a job because the jargon in the advertisement turned them off. The terms most likely to raise red flags among applicants: Rockstar, wear many hats, thick skin, work hard-play hard, schedule TBD, urgently hiring, ninja, hit the ground running, fast-paced environment and overachiever.

Is there anything more dangerous than crossing the IRS?

Payroll Compliance Handbook

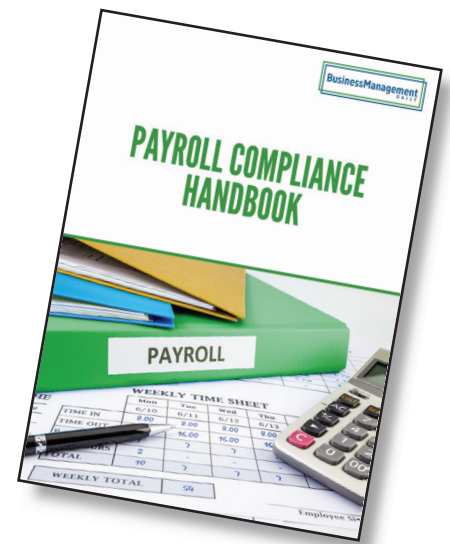
Once upon a time, payroll used to be easy: the employee's gross pay minus federal, state and local taxes. Then along came health premium and 401(k) deductions. Still simple, but...

Today, payroll managers deal with direct deposit, health spending accounts, vehicle allowances, phone expenses, earned income credits, garnishments and more. Payroll is now a confusing and time-consuming task prone to error.

Don't let a simple mistake unleash the full and frightening power of the IRS and wipe out your business... and you personally.

With our newly updated *Payroll Compliance Handbook*, you'll quickly and easily find answers to all of your nagging payroll questions. This handy reference is written in plain English - no legal gobbledygook here - so you can quickly understand what you need to do to stay in compliance, improve efficiencies and avoid costly payroll errors.

Each chapter focuses on a specific aspect of payroll management and compliance... and every issue of payroll compliance you need to know is addressed.



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- Handling the IRS without stress
- Everything you need to know about W-4 forms
- And dozens more critical topics!

Over, please

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- **Must you pay an employee for attending a training program?** The answer may be no if these four conditions are met
- **How can you avoid the most common FLSA violation?** Simply follow our chart or be at risk for a hefty fine
- **A woman has less experience and education than a man in a similar role. Can you pay her less?** Plus, how to establish an equal pay merit system that works
- **Fringe benefits: taxable or non-taxable?** How to reward fringe benefits to employees without crossing swords with the IRS
- **W-2s, W-3s, 1099s and more: What errors will land you in the IRS hot seat?** We'll tell you how to avoid them
- **What's the law in your state?** Check out the appendixes for the requirements in your state.

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