

HR Software Solutions

**The four Human Resource documents
every manager can't live without**



Human Resource policies and procedures are important, for anyone who is involved with these issues, to understand. In fact, it is absolutely vital that all participants in performing day-to-day Human Resource functions be familiar with the proper forms, legalities, and processes that must be seen to on a regular basis. Whether you are a seasoned Human Resource professional, a manager, or an owner of a small business, understanding the intricacies involved in organizing the Human Resource functions is absolutely essential to running an efficient and legally compliant company. The best place to begin such a discussion is with the topic of employee handbooks.

Employee Handbooks

It is essential for all companies, regardless of their size or industry, to establish firmly grounded policies regarding the general operating functions of their company. Employee Handbooks are an essential tool to help guide employees through their company's myriad rules and regulations.

Employee Handbooks should begin with a table of contents that allows employees to quickly find the specific information that they are looking for. In designing these handbooks, you want to strive for including thorough and complete information that is easily understood. Employee Handbooks should then provide an overview of a company's history, and elaborate by explaining what the company owner(s) would like to achieve through their daily operations. This is frequently produced in the form of a mission statement.

Employee Handbooks should include a company mission statement, as well as an organizational chart, that specifically details the chain of command throughout the company. Thoroughly explaining the chain of command helps employees to understand exactly who is in charge of each department, and where they can seek assistance if it becomes needed. In addition, creating a company mission statement tends to give employees a stronger sense of responsibility in regards to not only their work, but to the company that they work for, as well.

Employee Handbooks should go into great depth regarding a company's standards and expectations in regards to employee behavior, as well as a company's expectations regarding employment policies. By doing this, companies can avoid potential employer/employee conflicts in the future.

Clearly stating a company's stance on compliance should also be covered within this section. All managers and Human Resource professionals should make it a primary goal to meticulously track all employee data to ensure that they are in compliance with all governmental regulations. By letting your employees know that your company cares, and takes extra strides to follow governmental guidelines, instills more confidence within them.

For example, letting your employees know that you are in clear compliance with the Equal Opportunity Employment Act and anti-discrimination laws may foster a

greater sense of confidence in your employees; letting them know that they are working for a responsible, law-abiding employer.

There are many other positive reasons to provide all company personnel with Employee Handbooks, including the following:

- They save management time and energy that might otherwise be spent on clarifying expectations
- They provide a framework for consistency and fairness
- They encourage compliance with the law throughout an entire organization
- They are a tool for accountability and communication
- A well-crafted Employee Handbook creates a positive image of an organization, and can also serve as a recruitment tool
- They promote an organization's overall philosophy

Office Policies

Most Employee Handbooks include office policies regarding employment policies, employment status and records, employee benefits, payroll, workplace guidelines, and e-policies. Office Policies should cover information regarding paid and unpaid time off, as well as how vacation, sick, and personal time are earned. It is most helpful to clearly spell out the precise guidelines by which employees may accrue and use all time off from work. In addition to thoroughly covering attendance policies, employers should also cover their company policies regarding breaks, codes of conduct, safety, and privacy issues.

Safety and privacy issues have become a particularly important concern for many employers. This is believed to be primarily because of the prevalence of technology, such as cell phones, the Internet, iPods, and the like. Many employers have concerns about their employees potentially abusing the use of such personal equipment while on the job. Stating your company's specific rules and regulations about such matters in an Office Policy is the best way to address these issues.

If your company is going to engage in the activity of monitoring your employees' telephone calls, Internet usage, and email messages, this should be clearly spelled out in an Office Policy. Without making such statements in writing, and providing them to all employees upon their initial date of hire, companies open themselves up to potential liability.

It is always best to be clear about these types of policies from the beginning of an individual's employment to avoid potential problems in the future. For instance, an explanation of employment policies might include discussion of such issues as recruitment and the announcement of new positions, confidentiality of company information, and adherence to government guidelines about immigration and discrimination issues. In addition, companies may also want to define their company's employee selection process. By clearly defining your company's stance

on maintaining and upholding your legal integrity in all aspects of your business, you will gain further respect from your employees.

Employment status and records information may describe how your company goes about processing performance reviews, as well as the criteria for salary increases that are based on merit. Providing this information to your employees may inspire them to work harder, and instill within them a sense of genuine importance and pride with respect to their individual jobs.

Information regarding employee benefits should thoroughly explain insurance and worker's compensation policies and plans; vacation, sick, and holiday time off; as well as other situations where unpaid time off may be an issue. Payroll, timekeeping, overtime, as well as travel reimbursement expenses should also be addressed in this section. All employees want to know precise details about the benefits that are available to them, and it is in every company's best interests to openly discuss this information with employees.

Other workplace guidelines that are important to address include the ramifications of tardiness, absenteeism, privacy violations, dress code, and workplace violence. The more information that you are willing to share with your employees, the more likely you are to have an open and trusting, as well as more productive, environment throughout your business.

Job Descriptions

Job Descriptions should be used from the very beginning of an individual's employment for a variety of important reasons. Two of the most important uses for Job Descriptions is that they aid in recruitment efforts and they establish job expectations, which can be used as an aid during performance reviews.

All Job Descriptions should be listed in clear, concise language that cannot be misconstrued. There are some very important items that should be included in Job Descriptions, such as basic function and scope of responsibility, principal responsibilities, educational requirements, and of course, a specific job title for each position within the company. Once the overall criteria of a Job Description have been established, it is much easier to utilize this tool for evaluations during performance reviews.

It is also important to include training, skills, knowledge, and experience in Job Description formats. This allows potential applicants to know upfront whether or not they possess the necessary skills for a position.

Of course, to have the most thorough Job Descriptions on hand, it is also necessary to have an explanation of the organizational structure, as well as each position's working conditions. Working conditions might include such important information as expected amount of working hours per week, and whether or not any travel might

be involved with the job. If any particular physical requirements go along with certain jobs, it would be prudent to list them within the Job Description.

Another excellent reason to have thorough, concise Job Descriptions prepared at all times is so your company is readily prepared to post job openings, and to use them as a basis for interview questions. If Job Descriptions include enough information that is considered to be valuable by potential employees, it can ease the entire recruiting process for your company.

Thoroughly prepared Job Descriptions, like Employee Handbooks, can be a marvelous recruitment tool.

HR Forms and Procedures

There are numerous procedures that fall under the Human Resources umbrella – far too many to list in a brief report. When considering the Human Resource responsibilities that businesses must deal with on a daily basis, it is important to be well prepared.

Equal Employment Opportunity compliance, adherence to non-discriminatory practices within a company, as well as ensuring that there is a zero tolerance policy for any type or form of sexual harassment are just a few of the items that must be dealt with at any business. Some other issues that are commonly dealt with by companies include harassment procedures, drug and alcohol policy and release forms, confidentiality and nondisclosure forms, accident reports, and emergency plans. In addition, companies frequently have the need for exit interview guides and COBRA forms when employees leave the company.

Every company should be aware of the latest rules and regulations regarding all forms of legal compliance. Having ready-made forms at hand can be an efficient method by which you can ensure that your company reacts accordingly and consistently in every situation. Having such forms can also lessen the burden on managers and HR professionals of having to spend a tremendous amount of time in researching ways to deal with HR situations each time they occur.

In addition to the legal issues, HR professionals must also deal with the more mundane tasks of general, everyday personnel paperwork. Keeping track of the wide variety of information and forms can be a huge hassle, requiring not only a very efficient filing system, but also a lot of space. Personnel paperwork, however, is one of the single most important components of maintaining an efficient Human Resources system.

When considering the various types of personnel forms that the average company must have on hand for each employee, it can become a bit overwhelming. It is particularly overwhelming when you think about the fact that it can cost companies thousands of dollars in fines and lawsuits.

Conclusion

[HR Document Maker](#) human resource software is easy and efficient to use, allowing you to quickly edit and customize a variety of HR documents, including more than 130 office policy examples, 75 job description samples, and 50 HR forms and checklists. The software also includes six different employee handbook templates, and provides you with a complete library of IRS forms, as well as United States Department of Labor posters.

The HR documents are stored as Microsoft® Word templates, which is a familiar format to many and can be quickly edited. HR Document Maker users publish the templates with their company contact information and logo. Published documents can be edited, printed or e-mailed directly from Word. Published documents are organized and stored within HR Document Maker for quick and easy reference. HR Document Maker can be purchased online at www.abs-usa.com or by contacting ABS at 1-800-874-8801 (1-701-235-5226). HR Document Maker costs \$195 for a single-user license. Additional licenses can be purchased for \$100 each.

HR Document Maker is part of the Staff Files® line of human resource management software produced by Atlas Business Solutions, Inc. (ABS). Staff Files allows managers and human resource professionals to easily store, retrieve and safeguard employee information with a quick-tab navigation system. It tracks wages, benefits, performance evaluations, time-off accruals and much more for each employee.

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