



“Practical simplicity”

Newsletter

Summer 2010

Pet&r

Personnel, Equality, Training and Recruitment

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World Cup Action Plan

For some of us the ball is the wrong shape and the REAL world cup is over a year away. However, here are some key points to think about to prevent employers from scoring an own goal or leaving employees as sick as a parrot.

Are you going to muddle on and just hope that this major sporting event won't intrude and cause absence, arguments, or affect productivity? Best not – the disruption caused by such an event world-wide is huge.

Are you going to get tough? If you do want people to keep on working as normal, then you need to be consistent, clear, and remind them now of the rules and penalties for breaking them. How will you investigate possible breaches and might you make bad assumptions.

Or are you going to opt for practical simplicity and deal with the problem by considering these key questions:

Is your e-mail and internet policy up to scratch or will people abuse the system by sending personal e-mails or going online for non-work related purposes. Will you encourage them to break it by asking for the scores?

Whether or not you decide to bring the game into the workplace with viewing rooms and television in the office, what is your policy on

people who drink, take drugs, or attend work under the influence?

How relaxed or suspicious will you be about absence? Imagine what might crop up, and then work through how you will deal with it.

Don't forget about bullying, harassment: when emotions run high, or a more casual manner is adopted, the potential for someone to cause offence increases. At the last world cup a claim for racial harassment was upheld based upon colleagues' assumptions and jibes about which football team someone might support.

Policies may need revising, suspending, or temporarily amending. If you want our help in future proofing and reality testing your policies, please contact Lynne. For more ideas, go to:-

www.cipd.co.uk/subjects/hrpract/absence/world_cup_absence_management

Experience Pays

When Lynne came out of university aged 21 she was told she was over qualified, inexperienced and too old for the job she wanted. Now at 48 she is experienced, well qualified but again considered by some too old.

Despite age discrimination legislation and a call for an increase in the retirement age to alleviate the pressure on state pensions and services, older people are often still the first to be made redundant or forced into early retirement.

There is a misconception that older workers are less productive and likely to have more time off than younger ones but analysis shows that younger people are more likely to be absent more frequently than their older counterparts.

It is true that older people can't do some jobs they used to, especially if it involves heavy manual elements, but this is no excuse to cut them from the workforce, you simply need to be more creative and move people around to make best use of all their abilities.

Recognise the energy and creativity of youth, their willingness to challenge the status quo and their understanding of new concepts and technology but don't forget that age can be a great asset to an organisation as well. It generally brings with it experience and knowledge which younger workers haven't gained yet.

In these times of increased pressure to cut budgets, increase productivity and become sustainable as a business, it is time to focus on ability not age.

Older people are particularly valued in the service industries as research has shown that they instil more confidence in customers and are thought of as more reliable. Interpersonal skills are generally more honed so place them in more personal interface positions.

People generally learn from their mistakes so older people have developed abilities and judgement which can be invaluable to others. Experience counts and it should be shared. Train them to train others or act as coaches or mentors.

Be more flexible in your approach to the benefits, older workers don't necessarily want the same as younger workers, they still have ambitions, ask them what they would value.

Finally, look at older workers as a resource not a burden, you won't regret it.

Partners: Peter R. Hammond, BSc (Hons), DipPM, Chartered FCIPD, FITOL and Lynne E Hammond MA
Tel: 01642 576405 (Answerphone), 07850 678324 (Peter Mobile) 07762 940769 (Lynne Mobile)

Fax: 01642 337562 E-mail: peter@petandr.co.uk
6 Fen Moor Close, Hemlington, Middlesbrough, TS8 9RQ

Web-site: www.petandr.co.uk
Vat Registration Number 847 4167 04



Feedback Counts

Everyone likes to be told they've done a good job, equally to ensure we do our jobs properly we also need to know when we have done wrong. However, this feedback isn't always forthcoming, or when it is, it isn't done properly.

Successful feedback can help teams and individuals grow and reduce underperformance.

Here are a few tips on how to give feedback.

- take responsibility to offer feedback if it is within your remit, if it isn't don't do it unless asked
- always be constructive, even when being negative, see the positives in the negatives
- feedback needs to be relevant and appropriate, specific and based on fact, 'good job' isn't enough
- it should be timely, there is no point giving feedback 2 weeks after the event, people won't see the connection
- make it a regular occurrence but it needs to be real, not just for the sake of it.
- make sure the feedback isn't in isolation, it ideally it should be accompanied with a development plan
- giving feedback is a skill which requires honing so ask for feedback on your feedback
- share good practice with others inside and outside the organisation, spread the word about the benefits of giving feedback.

Pet&r can provide training in giving feedback to help your organisation perform better. For further information contact Lynne.

Environmental Success

Pet&r has recently gained a Bronze Green Business Award from the Tees Valley Green Business Network.

The Network is led by a range of local organisations who's aim is to help businesses find information needed to take advantage of the commercial benefits of making environmental improvements.

Those involved in the Network include BusinessLink, NECC, Environment Agency, The Carbon Trust, One North East and Teesside University and they hold meetings and events on a variety of topics to help businesses become more environmentally responsible.

To encourage businesses to become more sustainable and receive recognition for their efforts they have developed the Green Business Awards. There are 3 awards, Bronze, Silver and Gold, each requiring increasing commitment and level of activity such as carbon footprinting, waste, energy and water minimisation and green purchasing.

The Network provides advice and guidance to businesses going for awards, including policy development, help you calculate your carbon footprint and free environmental reviews to meet the relevant award criteria. Successful businesses are promoted on the Network's dedicated website www.greenteesvalley.org.

Gaining the award is a further demonstration of **Pet&r's** commitment to sustainable development together with our Environmental and CSR Policies. We are also in the process of developing environmental courses for small businesses which we will be highlighting in a future edition of the newsletter. We are now busy working towards the Silver Award.

For more information on our environmental based services please contact Lynne.

Forthcoming Open Courses

Facilitation Skills – 2 days 15th & 16th June 2010

- Meaningful and sustainable change can only be achieved through the involvement of people at all levels of the organisation. However, getting things done can be hard to achieve without the skills to encourage and lead others through the process. This 2 day workshop looks at effective communication, body language, how to influence, information flow and how to handle conflict.

Presenting Yourself

Tuesday 14th September 2010

- Presenting to others is one of the most challenging yet important tasks facing professionals and managers. First impressions are more important than ever, and the ability to get your message over effectively and convincingly is essential in order to win, secure, and sustain business relationships, new business, or that vital next career move. Working with a small group we will be the "critical friend in the audience". The course includes a DVD of participants presentations to take away and analyse at leisure.

Courses and Services

HR Consultancy, Research, Advice & Guidance; Recruitment and Selection Testing; Policy & Strategy Development; Management Coaching & Mentoring; IIP Support & Corporate Action Planning.

Leadership, Management, & Supervisory Development; Customer Care & Interpersonal Skills; Equality & Diversity Training; Conflict Resolution, Harassment & Bullying.

Work Team Health Checks and Repair Clinics, Team Toughness, Recruitment Training, Mental Toughness Assessment Interviewing and Selection Testing.

Public Consultation, Social Research, & Event Management. Sustainable Development and Sustainable Lifestyle Training, Volunteer Development, Retained Advisory Service.

ILM and NCFE Accredited courses

For a practical, focused and cost effective approach to a wide range of HR issues leading to real and sustainable change in workplace culture.

If you would like to know more about our work, please visit the web-site or contact Lynne at lynne@petandr.co.uk.