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Vital Business Solutions Newsletter

Tips to Implement Your 2012 HR Plan

By now, you have developed or updated your HR strategy for 2012 and budgeted for any additional human resources tools, materials, and funds that may be needed to implement your HR plans. In addition, you have assigned time and activities to meet your deadlines for the different HR strategy phases. If you have not completed your 2012 HR plan yet, now is the time to get things in place and running smoothly before quarter one ends.

To implement your strategy effectively, you should consider the following:

- Pre-plan your implementation steps.
- List objectives and set priorities.
- Assign an "owner" to each strategy.
- Communicate! Schedule and participate in update meetings.
- Monitor progress closely.
- Engage and encourage your team.
- Consider all available resources.
- Gather accurate information that impacts all elements of your plan.
- Ensure the business' overall operational plan remains the same; if there have been changes, you might need to change your plan or prioritize accordingly.
- Recognize and celebrate each milestone accomplished.
- Test before company-wide roll out.
- Conduct a "lessons learned" activity with all team members after the process. To help with future implementations, you should record which steps could be improved, eliminated, or duplicated.

Don't forget to lead, engage others, track, report, and follow through to meet your goals. It is "great" to develop a strategy, but the HR Plan must be a daily working document in order to meet your business' vision. Implement in 2012!

Is Your Company at Risk with Social Media?

Do You Need a Social Media Policy? Social media has become the quickest way to demonstrate the opportunities and risks of technology. Within the business sphere, social media sites including LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, You Tube, Flickr, and blogs have become increasingly popular in promoting a company's brand and sharing information with clients and prospective clients.

How popular is social media with your employees? What are your employees saying on social media about you, your company, and their day at work? How much are they exposing you to the risks of a bad reputation, the loss of both existing and potential clients, loss of patent and copyright opportunities, and increased costs and time to defend your company against government agencies and other companies? How often do they expose co-workers' private information? How much time do they spend at work

updating their personal social media content?

Before developing a social media policy, each business owner must evaluate how they currently use social media or plan to use it, then determine what type of policy is needed. If your business needs a social media policy, what should be included in the policy?

Topics that can be addressed in a social media policy include:

- How the company must be represented to the public.
- The ownership of the social media account and the data. For example, if an employee creates a Facebook account with his/her personal email address to promote the company's services, then leaves the company, can the business owner access the account to update or close the account?
- The definition of company property in social media use. If an employee accesses social media sites from a company-issued cell phone or laptop, who is responsible for the data shared?
- The release of confidential or proprietary information, or information not yet released by the company.
- Training requirements and ground rules for employees identified to manage social media accounts and participate in online discussions.
- The privacy rights of all clients and employees.
- An overview of how social media use will be monitored.
- Clear outline of the consequences of not complying with the policy.

Your employees may already exercise caution and common sense when communicating online, but this must not be assumed. Establishing a formal policy will protect you, your business, your employees, and your clients. In addition, put monitoring tools, such as daily news and RSS feeds in place to monitor your online image. Finally, enforce the policy.

Dates to Remember

January 31 - Deadline to distribute W-2s to employees and 1099s to independent contractors. Make sure you have current addresses for your terminated employees.

February 1-April 30- OSHA 300A posting period.

April 30 - the new date that private-sector employers will be required to post a notice advising employees of their rights under the National Labor Relations Act. The poster will be free.

2012 is a leap year. Will this affect your payroll cycle? Connect with your Bookkeeper or payroll service now to find out.

Resources

Verifying Social Security Numbers Online

The Social Security Administration offers the online option to verify new and existing employees' social security numbers. For information on why you should verify online and the steps, please visit the [Social Security Number Verification Service \(SSNVS\)](#) page.

2012 W-4 and other Forms

Visit the [Vital Business Solutions Resource](#) page for updated new-hire related forms.

State of Maryland Employer Withholding Guide Guide 2012

Commonwealth of Virginia Withholding Guide (Rev. 8/2011)

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