

The Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce
HR & Professional Development Committee

PRACTICAL HR SOLUTIONS FOR THE NEW WORKPLACE REALTY

Components of a Practical Strategy

- 1) Have a plan for employees
- 2) Have a plan for managers
- 3) Communicate those plans to everyone clearly and succinctly
- 4) Be prepared to alter or modify plans
- 5) Be prepared to enforce plans and company's policies, even in the new reality of teleworking

HR Managers: Employee Plan

‡ Anticipate that not everything will go smoothly in transitioning to a telework environment but create a structure early

- need to be prepared to assist employees who are dealing with stress, uncertainty, and illness; set aside time for counseling on a weekly basis

- need to provide counseling to employees who are struggling with shift, security issues, technology; set aside time for instructional tutorials

- need to recognize that not every employee can or is able to work remotely; potentially consider furloughs or other measures, including shifting responsibilities or having employees go to part-time

HR Managers: Employee Plan con't

- + Anticipate the need to step in to cover gap created by lack of ability of managers to manage a remote workforce
- + Remember still have to enforce employer's policies and employment laws

HR Managers: Manager Plan

+Remind managers that to be effective they have to set deadlines and work expectations, but also be flexible

(Remote work is needs to be both more structured and more fluid)

+Remind managers that they need to be patient and avoid frustrations

+Remind managers that initially they cannot expect the same productivity

+Remind managers that they need to be proactive in establishing communication channels with their reports

+Establish periodic “office hours” that employees can sign-up for

HR Responsibility for Communications

- +Establish procedure for communicating company expectations of employees and managers
- +Establish procedure for obtaining feedback from employees and managers
- + Create opportunities for team building and social interaction (virtual birthday celebrations, care packages, employee recognition programs, chat groups)
- +Recognize that emails are not always effective method and may not convey everything
- +Arrange for periodic check-ins by team members to maintain company culture and combat “disconnectedness”
- +Establish periodic “office hours” that employees can sign-up for

Modify or Alter the Plan

- Recognize that not every program or strategy will be right for your organization
- Recognize that the longer this situation continues there will be a need to adjust or add to the plans originally put in place
- Recognize that the company may need to call upon consultants it has not previously employed like counselors, mental health professionals, business coaches
- Listen to feedback

Enforce the Plan and Policies

- In addressing employment challenges created by COVID-19, HR managers must remember and be prepared to enforce:

- a) Company policies that have not been modified as a result of teleworking (anti-harassment policies, accountability policies, etc);

- b) Employment laws and requirements created by those laws (FLSA, ADA, HIPAA, OSHA, workers' compensation, etc)

HR concerns and responsibilities are likely to intensify and therefore establishing rules of engagement amongst co-workers and enforcement of those rules takes on greater immediacy.

Resources

- COVID-19 and the Fair Labor Standards Act (<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/flsa/pandemic>)
- COVID-19 and the Family Medical Leave Act Questions and Answers (<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fmla/pandemic>)
- “A Guide to Managing Your (Newly) Remote Workers”, Larson, Vromna and Makarius, Harvard Business Review (March 18, 2020)

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On behalf of the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce
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Thank You!



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