

# PERSONNEL NOTEBOOK

**For Your Most Important Resource—The Human Resource**

*Prepared By:*

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### **POLICIES PRACTICES AND PERSONAL OPINIONS**

#### **PART II THE OPINIONS**

In part I of Policies, Practices and Opinions of HR professionals, we reported on those policies and practices used by companies for such things as “Leave Policies” and “Drug Testing”.

In our (HRA) consulting and “Hot Line” services, the single most requested assistance is for employment policies, primarily for “Employee Handbooks”.

Of course it would be better if these surveys were just companies in your industry, in your area and about the same size as your company. Much of that information, of course, can be gained by acquiring The Wage and Benefit Survey directly from ALCA.

But when you consider that many of the employees you hire do come from, and later are lost to, other industries, then knowing how companies in general, deal with current issues can be a valuable and important guide.

Did you experience any surprises in the survey reports in part I?

I did! For example:

- 42% of respondents said that they track hours on exempt (salaried) employees just as they do on non-exempt (hourly) employees. However according to the Federal Labor Standards Act (FLSA), tracking hours on exempt employees is likely to invalidate their exempt status.
- Some companies allow 20 or more days of unscheduled absence before they take any corrective action.
- Some consider 1 day of absence, without calling in, to be a resignation.
- Some require a doctor’s statement for 1 day of absence.
- 52% of respondents said that they have hired someone who was previously retired.
- 51% of respondents said that their worst problem with supervisors bad documentation was for employees misconduct and discipline.

- 15% of respondents said that they allow their employees to give their unused sick leave to another employee.

A few new results on Policies and Practices:

**Do you use personality type testing in your company?**

No	58%
Yes	48%

**Do you offer health benefits to domestic partners?**

No	62%
Yes	36%

**When does your organization do performance evaluations?**

Throughout the year	59%
End of year	17%
Middle of year	13%
Beginning of year	11%

**Will you have to ask employees to pay a greater percentage of health care expenses in 2004 as compared to 2003?**

Yes	53%
No	26%
Will decide later in year	21%

Now let's move on to the personal opinions and beliefs of HR professionals. Most of it is employment related, some of it is soul-searching.

As in part I, we will not show the "Don't Know" or the "No opinion" responses in the percentages.

**III Opinions and Observations from HR Professionals.**

**What are your worst problems with supervisors doing performance evaluations?**

Too lenient	69%
Being late	60%
No information (just checked boxes)	40%
Focused on last few months only	38%
Too harsh	3%

**Did you expect your turnover to:**

Stay the same	41%
Decrease	32%
Increase	28%

**What motivates your employees? (ranked)**

1. Being appreciated
2. Interesting assignments
3. Belief that the work is important
4. Desire to maintain their reputation
5. Prove capabilities to others
6. Prove capabilities to self
7. Enjoyable and friendly atmosphere
8. Opportunity for promotion
9. Expect significant financial reward
10. Pleasing their supervisor

Interestingly, this survey question was also asked of the employees. (this question only) Here is what the employees said

**As an employee, what motivates you? (ranked)**

1. Desire to maintain their reputation
2. Being appreciated
3. Belief that the work is important
4. Interesting assignments
5. Enjoyable and friendly atmosphere
6. Prove capabilities to self
7. Prove capabilities to others
8. Opportunity for promotion
9. Expect significant financial reward

10. Pleasing their supervisor.

**How often do you think your employees lie about the reason for missing work?**

Seldom	60%
At least once a week	30%
Every day	6%
Never	<1%

**Has an employee ever lied to you about a relative dying so he could get bereavement Leave?**

No	54%
I think so but not certain	33%
Yes, caught him dead to rights	10%

**Should companies continue to reward employees for longevity, such as for staying with the company for 10 years?**

Yes	74%
No	18%
Depends	8%

**Can on-line or distance learning be as effective as classroom instruction?**

Yes	48%
No	28%
Depends	24%

**Are you more likely to consider hiring an out-of-work candidate than you were 5 years ago?**

Yes	81%
No	6%

**Do you ever tell unsuccessful job applicants why they weren't hired?**

Rarely	34%
Never	26%
Sometimes	22%
Only internal applicants	8%
Usually yes	7%

**Best way to improve your hiring process?**

Reduce company bureaucracy	39%
More trained HR staff	30%
Use more on-the-spot rapid hiring	7%
Sign-on bonus / relocation \$ increase	7%
Focus on recruiting veterans	6%
More emphasis on top students	5%
Write better ads	5%

**Do you support affirmative action?**

No	67%
Yes	34%

**Do you think a private business should take into account a candidate's race when hiring, by hiring a minority applicant over a non-minority?**

No	79%
Yes	21%

**Do you support the proposed overtime rule changes?**

Yes	45%
No	41%

**If you could make changes to one work-related rule or regulation, which would it be?**

Family leave laws	33%
Workers Compensation	17%
Overtime rules	16%
ADA	11%
None, all OK	7%
OSHA	4%
I-9 and immigration	3%
Minimum wage	2%

**How would you classify the majority of HR work you do?**

Administrative	49%
Employee relations	30%

Projects	16%
Strategic	4%

**How often, on average, do you find yourself responding to unexpected crises at work?**

A few times each week	36%
A few times per day	19%
A few times per month	19%
Once a day	16%
Once a week	9%
Once a month	1%

**Would you shop at a grocery store while employees were outside striking over a dispute about health care costs?**

Yes	60%
No	27%
Depends	13%

**What's the single most important quality you'd look for in a human resource professional?**

Knowledge of how workforce management affects business results, such as the impact employee recognition or increased training have on company profits 40%

Ability to work with people 39%

Awareness of what it takes to - stay out of legal trouble 6%

Knowledge of business and finance 6%

Knowledge of your industry 5%

Understanding of workforce - Technology 2%

Patience 2%

**If you had it to do over again, would you choose the HR profession?**

Yes 54%

No 31%

**What is your number-one business related priority for 2004?**

Assure company hits business goals 24%

Improve the performance-management process 19%

Get a new job for myself 14%

Training for specific people 9%

Seek new solutions to health care-costs 8%

Improve technology 7%

Avoid further downsizing 4%

Get a promotion 4%

Hire a specific number of people 3%

Make major changes to-compensation program 2%

To paraphrase TV weatherman Al Roker "That's what's going on across the country, now take a look at what's going on in your neck of the woods."

*Bill Cook*

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