

Employees

Your employees are your most valuable asset, and in the majority of cases, represent your greatest costs. Therefore, your investment in your employees is critical and should start before you hire them and continue throughout their employment. Here are some vital considerations.

Job Analysis - Do you know the job functions and necessary skills for each person you hire? A Job Specification identifies the abilities, skills and qualifications needed to perform the job successfully. A Job Description defines the job in terms of specific tasks, responsibilities and objectives.

Recruitment - Do you have an effective recruitment process in place? This consists of advertising, screening, interviewing, testing, reference checking, and assessing for suitability. Alternatively, job candidates can be sourced through a Recruitment Agency or an Executive Search Firm.

Selection - When selecting employees there are several important considerations. Can the candidate do the job - that is, do they have the skills and abilities that match the job description and the job specification? Will the candidate do the job - are they enthusiastic and have the right attitude? Will the candidate fit in with the workplace culture and the other employees in your business?

It's important to remember, that the employment of high quality staff is likely to generate high performance standards, high performance standards may foster a good public image, a good public image assists in the recruitment of high quality staff, therefore completing the cycle.

Employment Agreement - Many problems can be avoided by having an employment agreement. Once you have selected a suitable job candidate it's a good idea to address in a written agreement (a letter of agreement is often adequate), the salary, benefits, conditions and any special arrangements that relate

to the job and which were discussed in the final interview. It is also a good idea to refer to and attach a copy of the job description to the agreement. Both the successful candidate and the employer should sign and date the bottom of the agreement and each should receive a copy.

Induction or Orientation - An induction program is designed to introduce your new employees to your business. Like the employment agreement, many problems can be avoided by doing this. Induction should cover a familiarisation of the policies and procedures of your business, signing of any documentation for taxation, employment agreements and superannuation, an introduction to other employees and a familiarisation on the responsibilities and duties of the job. A useful publication called "Employee Induction Booklet For Small Business" is available from the Vocational Education, Training and Employment Commission (telephone Mark Williams on (07) 3247 4901 or facsimile (07) 3237 9775).

Performance Appraisal - Do you have a performance assessment process in place? Performance appraisal is concerned with determining how well employees are doing in their jobs. Some innovative businesses have a 360 degree assessment where staff also appraise their managers. The information generated by performance appraisals can be used for linking rewards to performance, identifying training needs, when recruiting internally and promoting staff.

Training and Development - These activities assist employees to learn how to perform their jobs, improve their performance, and prepare them for more senior positions within the business. Training and development can substantially enhance employees' knowledge, skills and competitiveness.



Career Planning and Development - These activities benefit both the employee and the employer. For employees, the benefits are identifying career goals, possible future job opportunities and personal improvement requirements. For the business, the benefits are that qualified, capable and experienced employees are available to take on more skilled and responsible roles when required.

Employee Recognition and Rewards - There are many ways in which to recognise good performance. The reason for rewarding your employees is to reinforce good behaviours. Remember though that not everyone is motivated by the same rewards and some reward systems may have a negative effect rather than a positive one.

Motivation - Do you know how to lead, motivate and get the most from your employees?

Effective leaders empower their employees by sharing power, decision-making and responsibility with them. They provide instruction, guidance, advice, and encouragement. Empowered employees feel a sense of commitment to a business's objectives and goals when they identify with those objectives, and experience some emotional attachment to them.

Empowering employees often results in increased commitment and higher levels of productivity from them. This in turn leads to job satisfaction which leads to further increases in productivity. However, it should be remembered that job satisfaction also requires mentally challenging work, equitable rewards, supportive working conditions and supportive managers and colleagues.

People Skills - Most important, do you have the necessary people skills for managing employees? You will need to be an effective listener, give performance feedback, delegate authority, create effective teams and have good interpersonal skills.

Legal Obligations - Do you know the legal obligations regarding your employees? These will include Worker's Compensation (WorkCover), (PAYG withholding taxes), Superannuation, Awards, Workplace Health and Safety, Anti-Discrimination Legislation and Employees Terminations.

Further Information, Advice and Assistance

For general information, advice and assistance about employment matters, contact:

- your local State Development Office
- Australian Taxation Office - Group (PAYE) Tax and Superannuation 132 861
- Work Cover Queensland - Work Cover (Worker's Compensation) 1300 362 128
- Department of Employment, Training and Industrial Relations (DETIR)
- Awards, Workplace Health and Safety, Anti-Discrimination Legislation and Employees Hiring/Terminations.

Wageline 1300 369 945

- Information about awards, pay rates and employee entitlements, employee hiring/terminations, anti-discrimination legislation and unfair dismissals

Workplace Health and Safety 1300 369 915

Employment Task Force 1300 369 925

Training Services 1300 369 935

www.detir.qld.gov.au

www.detir.qld.gov.au/ir/wageline/wageline.htm

- Anti-Discrimination Commission 1300 130 670
- Department of Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business (07) 3223 1250
(Web Site: www.dewrsb.gov.au)

For specific advice and assistance about employment matters, contact:

- your solicitor
- a competent Human Resources Consultant

Publications

There are a number of useful publications available from both your local State Development Centre bookstore and from the agencies listed above.