

July 2018

A monthly digest of news and information of interest to HR professionals.

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Upcoming Seminar Learning Classes...



NEW! FMLA Basics

When: June 26, 2018 from 9:00 am - Noon

Where: At The EA

Presenters: Renisa Dörner and Jennifer McHugh from Spengler Nathanson, P.L.L.

This introductory level seminar will explore the Family and Medical Leave Act (applicable to employers with 50+ employees) including the intent and provisions of the law, the requirements necessary for your FMLA policy, how to administer FMLA especially with respect to unique scenarios, the proper handling of FMLA by front-line supervisors, avoiding the legal pitfalls and how other employment laws may influence how you approach FMLA and employee leave requests.

This seminar is appropriate for those who are new to working with FMLA. It will be especially useful for those who will be responsible for implementing or assisting in implementing the FMLA in their workplace.

To learn more or to register, visit: <https://theea.org/event-registration/?ee=404>



Safety for the Non-Safety Professional

When: June 27, 2018 from 9:00 am - 4:30 pm

(Lunch Included)

Where: At The EA

Presenters: Julie Reynolds and Tammi Donaldson from Bureau of Workers' Compensation

In this course you will learn general OSHA and workers' compensation responsibilities and requirements; the principles for developing and maintaining an effective safety and health program in your workplace, including leadership commitment, employee involvement and hazard recognition; compliance requirements or major program areas, with additional resources listed for each area; and resources to further knowledge and navigate safety and workers' compensation questions and concerns.

Individuals whose job responsibilities require them to handle safety, loss control, OSHA compliance or workers' compensation who are new to the safety field should attend.

To learn more or to register, visit: <https://theea.org/event-registration/?ee=363>

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Why We Should Stop ‘Recognizing’ Employees and Start Appreciating Them

By: Paul White, *Appreciation at Work*



As I have traveled across the country working with businesses and organizations, I've had the privilege to interact with HR professionals and corporate trainers. Initially, I was surprised to hear reports from both professionals and front-line workers that the vast majority of employee recognition programs aren't working. These activities generally are not having a positive impact on employees or workplace morale. In many cases, recognition programs actually are backfiring and creating *negative* reactions among team members. In fact, the three most common reactions I receive from employees when they talk about "employee recognition" are apathy, sarcasm, and cynicism. Why? As I examined the issue more closely, the reasons become clear. The root of the problem is that recognition is very different from *authentic* appreciation. And, many times, poorly conceived and implemented recognition programs actually create an overall perception of inauthenticity.

Here are some of the key issues:

Recognition is largely about behavior. "Catch them doing what you want and recognize it", the recognition books say. The sole focus is on the employee's behavior and the manager's behavior (observe and reinforce).

The primary emphasis of recognition is improving performance. The goal is for employees to do more (or better quality) work. As a result, the focus is on what is good for the company and/or the manager (they look good when their team performs well).

The relational direction of recognition is top - down. Recognition comes from the administration, managers and supervisors. It is occasionally communicated peer-to-peer, but rarely from worker to supervisor or manager.

Recognition is really an organizational function. And, as a result, recognition at its foundation feels impersonal, contrived, and is rarely experienced as a genuine expression of appreciation for the team member as a person.

Here's what authentic appreciation looks like:

Appreciation focuses on performance *plus* the character qualities of the team member and their intrinsic value as a person. As a result, team members can be valued and receive appreciation even when they don't perform well. (Anyone else made a mistake lately?)

Appreciation has dual objectives: to improve performance but also to support and encourage the person. Team members often need a word or action of encouragement, especially when they aren't performing at their best because of other issues going on in their lives.

The goal of appreciation is what is good for the company and what is good for the person. If a colleague communicates authentic appreciation, it is based in a foundational concern for the individual (focusing on what is best for them - not just improving their productivity - which may mean helping them find a position that is a better match for them than their current role.)

Appreciation requires more than behavior, it requires "heart attitude." This is really the difficult part of appreciation - it has to be genuine and from the heart. You can't fake it.

Appreciation can be communicated in any direction. One of the exciting lessons I've learned is that colleagues want to know how to encourage and support one another. Appreciation can be expressed from anyone to anyone else in the organization.

Appreciation is based in a person-to-person relationship. We don't believe that an organization (an entity) can truly *appreciate* an employee or team member - that is why so many employees react to recognition programs - they don't feel "real".

But pay attention to your *culture*. Is it solely focused on production and performance, or are employees valued, not only for *what they do*, but for *who they are*? As always, the best place (and person) to start with is you. Lift your sights a bit, and don't solely look at what people *do*, but also *who they are* (cheerful, kind, patient, funny) and call attention to those characteristics as well as the work they do.