



# advantage

## Table of Contents

ATTENTION CALIFORNIA EMPLOYERS.....	2
WHO’S ON FIRST? IT MAY BE VOLUNTARY AFTER ALL .....	2
KEYS TO EFFECTIVE COACHING.....	3
HR BY THE NUMBERS.....	4
CULTURE FIT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS .....	6
THOUGHTS TO THINK ABOUT .....	6
CLIENT ACCOLADES .....	8
I-9 ALERT!!.....	8
Q & A.....	9
FOR YOUR CALENDAR.....	10
ON MY SOAPBOX.....	11



# advantage

## ATTENTION CALIFORNIA EMPLOYERS

The Governor signed the AB 1676 on Friday, September 30, 2016. Therefore no employer in California can inquire as to what salary was previously earned when interviewing a candidate. And the previous earnings cannot be used as a reason for disparate pay for men and women in the same positions.

### [EEOC issues final guidance on retaliation and related issues](#)

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) issued its final *Enforcement Guidance on Retaliation and Related Issues*, to replace its 1998 Compliance Manual section on retaliation. The guidance also addresses the separate “interference” provision under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which prohibits coercion, threats, or other acts that interfere with the exercise of ADA rights. The Commission has also issued two short resource documents to accompany the new guidance: a question-and-answer publication that summarizes the guidance document, and a short Small Business Fact Sheet that condenses the major points in the guidance.

The guidance addresses retaliation under each of the statutes enforced by EEOC, including Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA), Title V of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Equal Pay Act (EPA), and Title II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA).

Topics explained in the new guidance include:

- The scope of employee activity protected by the law.
- Legal analysis to be used to determine if evidence supports a claim of retaliation.
- Remedies available for retaliation.
- Rules against interference with the exercise of rights under the ADA.
- Detailed examples of employer actions that may constitute retaliation.

According to the EEOC, since it published the 1998 Compliance Manual section on retaliation:

- Charges of retaliation surpassed race discrimination in 2009 as the most frequently alleged basis of discrimination, accounting for 44.5 percent of all charges received by EEOC in FY 2015.
- Seven decisions have been issued by the U.S. Supreme Court addressing retaliation under EEOC-enforced laws, and the filing of EEO claims that include a retaliation allegation has continued to grow.

## WHO’S ON FIRST? IT MAY BE VOLUNTARY AFTER ALL

Someone once said, “Anyone who isn’t confused here doesn’t really understand what’s going on.” We are wondering whether or not the same could be said of those possessing federal fair employment obligations, especially those in the financial sector. It is our understanding that some banks and other financial institutions are struggling in determining whether they are covered federal contractors by the US Department of Labor’s Office of Federal Contractor Compliance Programs (OFCCP) or by a group of agencies under Dodd-Frank, aptly named, “The Agencies.”

Specifically, financial institutions would like to know whether or not they have to develop written Affirmative Action Programs (AAP) according to the OFCCP or incorporate the Standards issued under Dodd-Frank or both. The road to Dodd-Frank could eventually lead to the OFCCP when considering that The Agencies could refer a violating contractor to the OFCCP for further investigation. More interesting is the fact that incorporating the Dodd-Frank standards are voluntary, though the standards will be used to assess the financial institution’s success in ensuring fair inclusion of minorities and women in the workforce.

In short, there appears to be at least two main avenues for financial institutions to find themselves under the jurisdiction of the OFCCP. The first avenue, is a well-trodden path. Historically, the OFCCP references the following two requirements under 41 CFR 60-1.42(a)(1) when asserting coverage of financial institutions:

- (iii) Serves as a depository of Government funds in *any amount*
- (iv) Is a financial institution which is an issuing and paying agent for U.S. savings bonds and savings notes in *any amount*

Additionally, financial institutions will no doubt find the following FAQ snagged from the OFCCP website valuable in determining its jurisdiction over your financial institution:

*Is a financial institution that is covered by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) or the National Credit Union Association (NCUA) with deposit insurance subject to the Affirmative Action Programs (AAP) requirements under Executive Order 11246, as amended; the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974 (VEVRAA), as amended, 38 U.S.C. 4212; and Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 503), as amended? The short answer is "yes". A full explanation can be found by clicking [here](#).*

Please click [here](#) for a poster issued by the OFCCP displaying the financial and employment thresholds for jurisdiction, to include when a federal contractor must develop a written Affirmative Action Programs under either the Executive Order or two laws enforced by the OFCCP mentioned in the above FAQ.

A relatively recent avenue for OFCCP jurisdiction was established upon the passage of the [Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act](#), signed on July 21, 2010. Mickey Silberman, an attorney at Jackson Lewis P.C., wrote an informative [article](#) laying out how financial institutions, namely banks, who accepted funds under the act simultaneously obligated themselves to additional fair employment requirements. He goes on to explain how organizations could eventually find themselves investigated by the OFCCP if they fail to live up to their obligations.

[Section 342](#) of Dodd-Frank mandates that the nine (9) governing agencies responsible for enforcing this requirement develop standards collectively and form an Office of Minority and Women Inclusion (OMWI) within each of the agencies. The agencies fulfilled this requirement by releasing an interagency policy statement possessing a number of standards. The policy statement and standards do not create new legal obligations; use of the standards by a regulated entity is voluntary; and the policy statement is void of a requirement to submit a report or data to any of the agencies. The final interagency policy statement and its accompanying standards were published June 10, 2015 and can be viewed [here](#). They allow for the uniform assessments of a covered organization's commitment to Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) and equal employment opportunity as well as supplier diversity. The standards currently possess the following areas of assessment:

- Organizational Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion
- Workforce Profile and Employment Practices
- Procurement and Business Practices—Supplier Diversity
- Practices to Promote Transparency of Organizational Diversity and Inclusion

The interagency policy encourages entities that are currently required to develop AAPs by the OFCCP to use the analysis found in the AAPs to meet these new requirements. So it appears that The Agencies at least recognize and support the OFCCP's approach to Affirmative Action, EEO and D&I despite releasing additional standards of their own.

In closing, financial institutions, to include investment firms, asset management firms, banks, brokers, and investment consultants have to perform their due diligence in determining whether or not the obligations under both OFCCP's regulations as well as the standards under Dodd-Frank apply to them individually. As with any legal matter, these organizations want to consult their in-house or outside counsel in determining their obligations under these two rules.

## KEYS TO EFFECTIVE COACHING

One of the most critical supervisory or managerial roles is coaching employees. Whether it is teaching them some process or procedure they don't know, addressing an issue that has surfaced, or dealing with a repetitive behavior that is compromising their success, the supervisor as coach can have a profound impact on the employee personally and professionally. The sad truth is that coaching is not a native skill possessed by all of us. It must be learned and practiced to be effective.

---

Editor: Deborah Jeffries, PHR, CPC. Advantage is published monthly and is designed to provide information on regulations, HR practices and management ideas and concerns. The intended audience is managers, supervisors, business owners, human resource and employee relations professionals. If you have questions about the content, an opinion about the information, questions about your subscription, or if you need additional Advantage binders, please give us a call at (503) 885-9815 or e-mail [djeffries@hranswers.com](mailto:djeffries@hranswers.com).

One of the first, and most necessary, steps is to think about what acting as a coach requires. Some of the research suggests that the following five items (which just happen to spell out the word “coach”) are a great place to start.

*C = Commitment to the desired results*

*O = Observation and feedback*

*A = Assessment*

*C = Challenge*

*H = Holding her/him accountable, so they achieve their desired results (see related article on Accountability)*

It is also essential from the first coaching contact and throughout the relationship with any employee that you listen for successes. They are the best building blocks to help the employee accomplish whatever is necessary. Everyone has had some occasion when they have tried or persisted with something that has worked out, been successful. Remind the employee that they have achieved in the past, and give them confidence of achieving in the future.

Ask the employee about areas of their life, including those other than work, so you can build a better picture of patterns of thinking, beliefs, and success stories, as well as a sense of areas where they seem to have recurring challenges or difficulties.

- “What is of greatest concern to you regarding your success at work?”
- “What about this is most challenging to you... what have you had difficulty with?”
- “What do you think/feel your performance needs are?”
- “What ways have you tried to improve or correct this?”
- “What assistance or information do you think would be most helpful?”
- “What is boring or tedious?”

It is important to remember that the supervisor/coach has a perspective too. Sometimes we have done that job, and can’t understand why it is a struggle for someone else. Other times, our styles might be quite different, so there can be an issue with communication or thought processes. Whether that different perspective or view might be helpful, it is often beneficial to share that perspective. Judgment needs to be used to ensure that there is real benefit in the sharing, and that it doesn’t emanate from simply a desire to be “right” or impose an answer. Often, it is feedback that can help an employee begin to perceive his or her own real strengths, or see a different perspective. Sometimes, employees are simply blind to how others view them, as it relates to both strengths and challenges.

Another really critical understanding when embarking on coaching is to remember that coaching is not therapy. We aren’t licensed to go there, and it can have a tremendously adverse effect on the working relationship if we start talking about childhood experiences, or their relationships with their parents. We are talking about a work situation that needs to have a different result. The emphasis of coaching is on having the employee take action, rather than understanding “why.” Some important concepts that typically govern the coaching activity are:

- It’s not what happens inside the coaching session that matters; it’s what the employee does outside the conversation that should be considered.
- Coaching can’t be about the supervisor’s ego. We have to keep it out of the way during the process.
- Really listening to the employee will provide the greatest insight and ideas about how to help them make the necessary adjustments. This is not the time to show them all the clever things we know or could tell them. Coaching by listening, not telling, is often the most effective.

Watching an employee make needed changes, develop greater insight about their own behavior, or learn a new skill can be one of the most satisfying aspects of supervision. It requires care, attention, and patience, but the pay-off is great, for both parties.

## HR BY THE NUMBERS

The facts are simple: mental illnesses are medical conditions too often surrounded by stigma and stereotypes that prevent people from getting the help they need. Mental illnesses are common: 1 in 25 adults live with a serious mental health illness. 43.8% adults experience mental illness in a given year. Mental illnesses develop early in life: approximately half of all lifetime cases of mental illness begin by the age of 14. 70% of children in juvenile systems have a mental health condition, as well as 24% of adult state prisoners. Most importantly, mental illnesses are increasingly treatable: unfortunately, long delays – sometimes decades – often occur between when symptoms first appear and when people get help. Early identification and intervention is vital.

\* \* \* \*

In November 2015 Aon Hewitt conducted a survey to understand plan sponsors' current thinking and future expectations with respect to U.S. retiree health care strategies. The survey focused specifically on plan sponsors that offer health care benefits to retirees and their families, and on the sponsors' final 2016 and expected ongoing strategies related to the retiree health care aspects of federal health care reform.

The survey collected responses from 229 private and public plan sponsors representing approximately 3 million retirees. The survey showed 66% of respondents either already have made retiree strategy changes as a result of reform or expect to do so in the near future. Of these plan sponsors, 42% have already completed their strategy analysis and taken action, 20% intend to review their strategy within the next one or two years, and the remaining 38% are in the process of evaluating specific changes. The rest of the respondents either are still considering whether to evaluate their current strategy (18%) or are not planning to review their current strategy at this time (16%).

\* \* \* \*

For the first time in history, Millennials make up a narrow majority of the workforce. By 2025, they'll be the dominant generational force in the office. Attracting and retaining Millennial workers require a different approach than the staid methods of previous generations. "Perks" are important to Millennial workers. In fact, as a recent Glassdoor® study revealed, 19% of workers value perks like healthy snacks over a pay raise. For them, money is more of a threshold than a scorecard, and overall quality of life is paramount. Millennials are also a snacking generation. They prefer to consume everything—from media to nutrition—in bite-sized portions. Sampling and discovery are important to them. In fact, Millennials snack three to four times per day—that's twice as much as their parents and three times as much as their grandparents.

\* \* \* \*

The probability of a woman developing breast cancer is approximately one in eight, making it the most common non-skin cancer among women. Odds are, someone in your organization is dealing with the personal and financial costs of breast cancer for themselves or a family member. While the personal costs are, of course, incalculable, the business costs of cancer are not. Overall, cancer related expenditures cost businesses approximately \$264 billion a year, or 12% of an employer's total medical expenses, and \$17.2 billion is spent on breast cancer in the U.S. each year.

*Breast Cancer Awareness: Addressing Related Costs in Business* looks at the effect of breast cancer on business and the role early detection plays in reducing those costs. [Get your FREE white paper here: Breast Cancer Awareness: Addressing Related Costs in Business.](#)

\* \* \* \*

In 2015, there were 26,968 charges of disability discrimination filed through the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)—making up 30% of all charges of discrimination. The number of disability-based discrimination charges has increased by over 12,000 since 2005. Just this year, the Lowe's home improvement store chain settled an \$8.6 million nationwide disability discrimination lawsuit filed by the EEOC over the firing of thousands of workers with disabilities.

At the same time, individuals with disabilities are underrepresented in the workforce. In 2015, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 17.5% of individuals with disabilities were employed. Comparatively, 65% of people without a disability were employed. In other words, a higher percentage of individuals with disabilities were unemployed in 2015, compared to individuals without disabilities. In related news, The Ruderman Family Foundation released a report in March 2016, stating that "disability is the missing word in media coverage of police violence. Disabled individuals make up a third to half of all people killed by law enforcement officers."

The report focused on three years of media coverage of police violence against people with disabilities. After reviewing eight selected cases, the report found that in the media coverage:

- The individuals' disabilities were unmentioned or were listed as attributes without context.
- Impairments were used to evoke pity or sympathy for the victim.
- Medical conditions or mental illnesses were used to blame victims for their deaths.

Now our workplaces are usually less threatening and less time-centered than a police officers. These findings might point employers to supplying employees and Supervisors with training when working and communicating well with employees.

Expect to see more articles on disabilities in the workplace. As we struggle to find ways to make places of employment appropriate for all types of employees.

\* \* \* \*

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) announced that median employee tenure (the length of time a worker has been with his or her current employer) was 4.2 years in January 2016, down from 4.6 years in January 2014. It's the first dip recorded by the biennial survey since 2000.

The quits rate (an indicator of job seeker confidence) rose from 1.7% in January 2014 to 2.1% in July 2016.

## THOUGHTS TO THINK ABOUT

- “Diligence is the mother of good fortune, and idleness, its opposite, never led to good intention’s goal.” -  
- *Miguel de Cervantes*
- “Too many cooks may spoil the broth, but it only takes one to burn it.”  
- *Julia Child*
- “Old age is no place for sissies.”  
- *Bette Davis*
- “A fool is a man who never tried an experiment in his life.”  
- *Erasmus Darwin*
- “Talent develops in quiet places, character in the full current of human life.”  
- *Johann Wolfgang von Goethe*
- “If you do not think about the future, you cannot have one.”  
- *John Galsworthy*
- “Sometimes it’s worse to win a fight than to lose.”  
- *Billie Holiday*
- “If peace... only had the music and pageantry of war, there’d be no more wars.”  
- *Sophie Kerr*

## CULTURE FIT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Employers use culture fit interview questions to assess corporate culture compatibility of new hires. What is Cultural Fit? The term “fit” in hiring processes refers to two aspects: *job fit* and *organization fit*. So think of it as an applicant “being in alignment” with the organization.

Job fit is a “micro” aspect of an applicant’s qualities being suitable with a job. It refers to the degree to which competencies, interests and responsibilities are relevant to the job. It is a fit when an applicant can *perform well* and is *satisfied* with their role(s).

Organizational fit is a “macro” aspect of the applicants personal characteristic compatibility to the organization’s values, behaviors, beliefs and norms. **Culture fit** is one of the organization attributes that is often used to measure individual congruence to the words and behaviors of every employee in the organization.

Applicants/Employees are considered a cultural fit to the employer if they can, in addition to perform well, *contribute faster to* and *stay longer* in the organization.

The employer’s organization values, however, are almost the same over time. Its core values don’t even change since it was founded — it’s the *company’s DNA*. In short, cultural fit can’t be developed.

Studies have shown that the single greatest contributor to performance failure and job dissatisfaction has to do with a *lack of fit* with organizational culture. If one does not align well with the boss’s core beliefs and values, it will be very difficult to develop an *effective working relationship*.

These are sample interview questions that will help you assess whether your prospective employee is a good match with your workplace culture and environment for employees.

- Describe the work environment or culture in which you are most productive and happy.
- What are the characteristics exhibited by the best boss you have ever had - or wished that you have had?
- In your experience, how does an organization encourage use of your discretionary energy and effort, that willingness each employee has, to go the extra mile, push harder, spend more time, and do whatever is necessary to get the job done?
- Describe the management style that will bring forth your best work and efforts.
- Describe what you believe are the most effective roles that a good manager plays in his or her relationship with reporting to staff members.

# advantage

- What are the positive aspects of your current job and work environment, or the last position you held before coming to this interview?
- What is the single most important factor that must be present in your work environment for you to be successfully and happily employed? Now that you have answered that question, what were two others that you debated about before giving the response that you chose?
- What is your preferred work style? Do you prefer working alone or as part of a team? What percentage of your time would you allocate to each, given the choice?
- How would your coworkers describe your work style and contributions in your former job?
- What are the three to five expectations that you have of senior leaders in an organization where you will work successfully?
- Tell us about an occasion when you believe that you delighted a customer, either an internal or an external customer.
- Provide an example of a time when you went out of your way and jumped through hoops to delight a customer.
- Tell us about a decision that you made that was made based primarily on customer needs and input.
- When you work with a team, describe the role that you are most likely to play on the team.
- How would coworkers describe the role that you play on a team?

**Corporate Culture Job Interview Fit Assessments.** An effective method for culture fit assessment is *cultural questionnaires*. Some employers design the questionnaires to gather information about characteristics the applicant would find appealing in an ideal organization.

Other organizations are demonstrating several *realistic job previews* — which show how the company does business with its employees. They ask, from an observer point of view, to select one preview that fits your preference. The recruiters finally make assessments of your fit based on your *job previews' choices*.

Another practice is to link corporate culture fit components directly to a competency model. In competency models you'll find group of competencies that build a corporate culture — such as: innovation, customer service orientation and teamwork. With several core competencies hiring managers develop culture fit interview questions that can be used to conduct culture fit assessments.

## Corporate Culture Job Interview Questions

The following are questions asked by organizations and recruiters during culture fit interview.

- Tell me about the culture at your last employer?
- What is your ideal job?
- What do you think it takes to be successful in this organization?
- What do you really want out of life?
- What kind of environment do you work best in?
- Among many qualities you own, which qualities do you consider important?
- What do you think the most important qualities for this job are?

There are no right or wrong answers for culture fit interview questions. If an applicant knows their *personal characteristics* well, they answer each question with what values, behaviors, and norms that suit themselves.

## Do you have Commercial Mother Vehicle (CMV) truck drivers?

According to the Department of Transportation (DOT), a CMV is a vehicle that is used as part of a business and is involved in interstate commerce and fits any of these descriptions:

- \* A vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating/gross vehicle weight or gross combination weight rating/gross combination weight of 26,001 or more lbs, or
- \* designed to carry 16 or more passengers (including the driver), or
- \* of any size that is used to transport hazardous materials which require the vehicle to be placarded

As a business with CMV drivers, you have a lot to keep track of. How is your compliance with regard to the following?

- ✓ You keep a complete driver qualification file and it is up to date for each driver (this is separate from all other personnel files and required by the FMCA. Please note that this file has very specific documents that need to be filed and updated regularly).
- ✓ You have a way to track drivers' hours of service (HOS) to ensure you are compliant with current regulations
- ✓ You have an accident register for DOT accidents as required by the FMCSA
- ✓ You have implemented a drug and alcohol testing programs for: Pre-Employment, Post-Accident, Random Drug & Alcohol, and Reasonable Suspicion as required by the FMCSA. Please note that these programs are separate from any other company-required testing.
- ✓ You have a vehicle maintenance file for each vehicle.
- ✓ Your driver and vehicle carries all the required documents, licenses, and certificates.
- ✓ You know what CSA is and how to check driver AND company safety scores.
- ✓ All supervisors and managers who directly supervise the driver have taken the required Supervisor Training regarding impairment (also known as reasonable suspicion).

HR Answers can assist your organization to ensure your compliance. Let us know how we can help.

## CLIENT ACCOLADES

Our congrats to **St. Mary's Academy** on their recent Open House, their website upgrade, and their new look and logo! St. Mary's Academy is Oregon oldest continuously-operating secondary school. The faculty and administration has been actively engrossed in these changes which relied on student and family input to ensure the best representation of the school. Way to go SMA, we are proud of the results of your efforts!!

We missed an accolade last month...but there is big news at **Gerding Edlen**. Their next big Portland project is going to change the skyline on the east side of the Willamette. A 17 story tower will rise from the previous location of Fishels. Because it will be at the cross streets of Burnside and MLK it is likely to be known as 5 MLK. It will be a mixed use building housing retail, offices, and apartments. The renderings are now available to view and the images look great! Congrats on the contribution to Portland housing and impressive edifices – we are proud to be associated with you!

**Ride Connection** has tallied up the numbers for last year. They gave 559,444 rides to individuals needing transportation assistance to get around town and to medical appointments. They trained 269 individuals so that they could independently get where they needed to go. They utilized 44,824 Volunteer hours. They drove 2.3 million miles (that equates to 821 roundtrips between the west and east coasts of the US. They recently had a big scare when there was a fire in the apartments above their office; but fortunately no damage and no injuries. Our hats are off and have been tossed high in the air for the amazing organization!! Their work gives new meaning to the phrase – way to go, Ride Connection!!

**Portland Habilitation Center** got some great press for their work on October 5, 2016 in an article in the *Hillsboro Tribune*. The story featured two of PHC's employees who work at the Hillsboro Civic Center, and it states that if there wasn't PHC, then maybe these two gentlemen wouldn't be able to work. Making employment possible for individuals with disabilities (disabilities range from cerebral palsy to Down's Syndrome to PTSD) is a terrific mission and it is clear that PHC is being successful in this endeavor. The organizations that contract with PHC are very pleased with the work of their employees and scarcely a day goes by without someone sending a note of appreciation. Congrats PHC, our community is better because of your efforts!!

## I-9 ALERT!!

We finally have some new information about the revised I-9 form. It will be made available to everyone on November 22, 2016. The ones that are currently being used that had an expiration date of March 2016 can continue to be used until January 21, 2017. We recommend that as soon as you get one of the new ones, that you use them instead of past forms. It is likely to keep you safer if you just shred the old ones as soon as the new ones come out. When we get advised that the new ones are available, we will send out a link to the new forms for our clients and friends to use.

Originally we were advised that the new I-9 would not have many changes, however now the information indicates that there are likely to be structural changes to the form so paying attention to the new instructions will be critical to ensure appropriate completion.

## Q & A

**Q:** We recently terminated an employee. We just received a letter from her asking us to provide a letter stating the reasons for her termination. Do I have to provide a letter?

**A:** Service Letters are required in 11 states: California, Delaware, Indiana, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, Texas and Washington.

**The timeline for responding to the request varies.** Within 10 working days, an employer in Washington must provide a signed statement that addresses the reason for termination and the effective date of the termination to any employee who is discharged.

A service letter may include some of the following information:

- Dates employed.
- Ending wages.
- Position title.
- Reason for leaving.

It is critical that the letter be factual and brief. (If you ever have a concern, please feel free to contact us to review your letter content.)

## FOR YOUR CALENDAR

Open up your Daytimers, Outlook, Palm Pilots, and all those Smart Phones. The following is a look at upcoming events, special days and other diverse and fun activities you will want to be aware of and get scheduled. **To register for our workshops, please call any of our offices, or send an e-mail to Anna Loughlin at [aloughlin@hranswers.com](mailto:aloughlin@hranswers.com), or fax it to (503) 352-5582.**

### **OCTOBER**

It is National AIDS Awareness, Breast Cancer Awareness, Disability Employment Awareness and Domestic Violence Awareness Month

- Oct. 12      HRA Workshop – Tigard  
Getting Organized  
8-12pm:**
- Oct. 13      Free Workshop – HRA Office – Tigard  
FLSA Rule Changes  
2:30am-4:30pm**
- Oct. 16      National Bosses Day
- Oct. 26      HR Lunch Bunch – Chemeketa Small Biz Center, Salem, OR  
Topic: Bullying  
12pm-1pm  
\*\* If you would like to receive our monthly lunch bunch fliers,  
please email us at [hraevents@hranswers.com](mailto:hraevents@hranswers.com) to be added to our email list.
- Oct. 31      Happy Halloween

### **Planning Ahead**

### **NOVEMBER**

- Nov. 2      HR Lunch Bunch – HRA Office – Tigard  
Topic: What CEO's want from HR  
12pm-1pm
- Nov. 10      Free Workshop – HRA Office – Tigard  
FLSA Rule Changes  
8:30am-10:30am**
- Nov. 24-25      Happy Thanksgiving. Office Closed.
- Nov. 30      HR Lunch Bunch – Chemeketa Small Biz Center, Salem, OR  
Topic: Onboarding  
12pm-1pm

### **DECEMBER**

- Dec. 7      HR Lunch Bunch – HRA Office – Tigard  
Topic: TBD  
12pm-1pm
- Dec. 23-26      Happy Holidays – Office Closed
- Dec. 28      HR Lunch Bunch Salem – Cancelled due to the holidays.

---

Information and advice offered through Advantage should not be construed as legal opinion. The material contained herein will not apply to all circumstances or to all organizations. Use it as a resource and reference. Should you feel legal advice is required, please consult with your corporate counsel.

## ON MY SOAPBOX

In this political cycle it is sometimes difficult to separate the wheat from the chaff. And, this cycle there seems to be so much chaff!! I heard a statement from CNN's Christine Amanpour this last weekend that resonated with me. She said journalists "...often talk about the need to be neutral, but I decided a long time ago, I couldn't be neutral, some things were simply right and wrong. But I could hold myself to being truthful. The stories I tell are no doubt slanted somewhat by my opinion of right and wrong, but I try to ensure that whenever I am reporting the news, that the information I share is fact-based." I thought that was one of the most succinct statements about news reporting that I had ever heard. The difficulty with relaying any information is what is the truth? Are we fully informed so that we can rest assured that we know the truth? Can we shift through the chaff to find the kernels of truth and wisdom to rely on?

This is a tough political cycle as far as the truth is concerned. In all the newscasts, the reporting of any political information is heavily sprinkled with of adjectives and adverbs. Whenever those are liberally used, it is an effort to persuade, not inform. Factual information does not come attached to an opinion. Facts (who, what, where, when, how) are solid pieces of information. But when we begin to talk about why something happened, we are likely leaving the realm of facts and moving into the territory of supposition. And once we go beyond that to ascribe motivations to individuals or to suggest the connection of one dot to one another without facts to support that, we are entering the world of fantasy. This doesn't just happen in politics, but it is always present during our election processes. It simply seems as though this year we are being inundated by it.

One other challenge this year is sorting through the dialogue so that we can identify the difference between misstating something and lying. For me, misstating something is unintentionally saying something that is not accurate. And lying is saying something that the speaker knows is not the truth. We have heard a lot this cycle about "lying," so much so that the word may have lost its impact. If we become hardened to this, it is only one tiny step to believing that we are regularly lied to and that no one in the political space can be trusted. What a monumentally sad situation that would be!!

I worry about us once the voting is done. Each election brings out different opinions and preferences, but never before have I seen them threaten to rip us apart. As a nation we are always divided at the time of voting for a new President. But this time it is different. We are so divided, so hurtful in our language, so hostile in our opinions. The division seems greater, more visceral, and more demeaning. There doesn't seem to be a limit to the degradation of those who disagree with us. There are threats of violence. The anger feels palpable. And what complicates this situation even more is that whoever is elected is not likely to generate excitement or an optimistic perspective for our nation.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if this election cycle's "October Surprise" was a return to civility and commitment to what make our country so special?? I wish I believed that could happen!!

- Judy Clark, President



ANSWERS, Inc.  
"Whatever the Question"

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO VISIT OUR WEBSITE:

[WWW.HRANSWERS.COM](http://WWW.HRANSWERS.COM)