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Table of Contents

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!! 2

THINGS EMPLOYEES WANT FROM THEIR MANAGERS
(AND THINGS THEY DON'T) 2

NEW IRS MILEAGE RATE/IDEAS TO MANAGE REIMBURSEMENT 3

HR BY THE NUMBERS 4

Q & A 4

DON'T CONFUSE COACHING WITH FEEDBACK 5

HEALTHY BITE 5

CLIENT ACCOLADES 6

THOUGHTS TO THINK ABOUT 6

FOR YOUR CALENDAR 8

ON MY SOAPBOX 10



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HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!

Here we are in a month named after the Roman god Janus, an appropriate personification of the start of the New Year. This particular Roman god had two faces so that he could look ahead toward the future and back at the past at the same time. As we say “good-bye” to an old year and look forward to a new one, we all try to be a little like Janus. Here is wishing each of you a successful New Year – taking stock of past accomplishments and looking forward to what the future can hold for you and your organization!!

TIPS FOR A POSITIVE NEW YEAR

1. Stay Positive. You can listen to the cynics and doubters and believe that success is impossible or you can trust that with faith and an optimistic attitude all things are possible.
2. Take a daily “Thank You Walk.” It will create a fertile mind ready for success.
3. Eat more foods that grow on trees and plants and less foods manufactured in plants.
4. Talk to yourself instead of listen to yourself. Instead of listening to your complaints, fears and doubts, talk to yourself and feed your mind with words of truth and encouragement.
5. Post a sign that says “No Energy Vampires Allowed.” Gandhi said, “I will not let anyone walk through my mind with their dirty feet.”
6. Be a great team member. When you help your team improve, you improve.
7. Don’t chase success. Decide to make a difference and build meaningful relationships and success will find you.
8. Get more sleep. You can’t replace sleep with a double latte.
9. Don’t waste your precious energy on gossip, energy vampires, issues of the past, negative thoughts or things you cannot control.
10. You don’t have to be great to serve but you have to serve to be great.
11. Live your purpose. Remember why you do what you do. We don’t get burned out because of what we do. We get burned out because we forget why we are doing it.
12. There’s no such thing as an overnight success. Anything worthwhile takes time to build.
13. Trust that everything happens for a reason and expect good things to come out of challenging experiences.
14. Implement the “No Complaining Rule”. If you are complaining, you’re not leading.
15. Live with love, passion and purpose and happiness will find you.
16. Focus on “Get to” vs. “Have to.” Each day focus on what you get to do, not what you have to do. Life is a gift not an obligation.
17. The next time you “fail” remember that it’s not meant to define you. It’s meant to refine you.
18. Smile and laugh more. They are natural anti-depressants.
19. Enjoy the ride. You only have one ride through life so make the most of it and enjoy it.

[Download these tips as a Printable PDF Here >](#)

THINGS EMPLOYEES WANT FROM THEIR MANAGERS (AND THINGS THEY DON’T)

Different employees want different things from their managers. Some are looking for an *inspiring leader*, *problem solver*, *compassionate mentor*, a hands-on boss who stops by and checks in with a “How are things going?” and others don’t care to see their boss unless it is review time.

Unless you’re a mind reader, it’s impossible to know exactly what your staff wants from you, well unless of course, you ask them what they expect...oh, but that is too easy, right?

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A survey of 500 U.S. employees—published in the book *What People Want*, by Terry Bacon—reveals what matters most to workers. Here are the top items:

1. **Honesty** - 90% say they want honesty and integrity from their manager. Lies and secrets are the biggest killers to credibility.
2. **Fairness** - 89% want their manager to be fair and to hold all employees accountable to the same standards.
3. **Trust** - More than 86% want to trust—and be trusted by—their manager.
4. **Respect** - 84% want to respect—and be respected by—their manager.
5. **Dependability** - 81% say they want to be able to count on their manager when needed.
6. **Collaboration** - 77% want to be a part of their manager's team and be asked to contribute ideas and solutions. Involving employees will get them taking ownership and be more engaged. When we shut employees out that will shut them up and ultimately send them out the door.
7. **Genuineness** - 76% want their manager to be a genuine person. Employees spend more of their waking hours at work with their co-workers and boss; they don't need a crummy place to be or hang out with phonies.
8. **Appreciation** - 74% want their manager to appreciate them for who they are and what they do. Praise and recognition can go along way and often don't cost a dime. Be sure to say "Thank you!" or "Great job!" and "I appreciate you!"
9. **Responsiveness** - 74% want their manager to really listen, understand and respond. They want their boss to be present with them.

While it's important to know what your employees need, it is just as vital to understand what they are not looking for. Among the survey's findings:

1. **Friendship** - Only 3% want their manager to be a friend. It is hard enough to have the difficult conversations with an employee, let alone a friend. Keep it professional.
2. **Conversation** - Only 14% want to have interesting conversations with their manager. For some, perhaps it is appropriate to keep the conversations work-related.
3. **TLC** - 24% say they want their manager to "care for them." That doesn't mean you have to be cold and detached. While these may be the survey results, it is important that managers know their employees well enough to express an interest in the fact that they do have lives outside of work.
4. **Emotional support** - 25% want emotional support from their manager. Employees typically look for that among co-workers rather than a boss. A manager can and should demonstrate empathy. Caution is needed so that a manager does not become an employee's "therapist".
5. **Cheerfulness** - Only 28% want a cheerful or happy manager. Perhaps that is true and yet, you set the stage and are the role model in your department. It matters how you show up every day.

No one is born knowing how to be an effective supervisor. Very few other jobs can prepare you for this challenging assignment and how to navigate all that will be thrown at you. What is needed is the "people" skills side of the role.

Bottom line: These traits are important to understand, but they don't apply to every employee. That's why it's best for managers to understand what each individual employee needs and then try to fulfill that. In the end, more satisfied employees stick around longer, are more loyal, do better work and make a manager's job much easier.

If you or others would like to learn how to be more effective as Supervisor or Manager we at HR Answers have upcoming classes you might want to explore. Visit our website for options, dates, and times. [HR Answers, Inc Workshops](#)

[NEW IRS MILEAGE RATE/IDEAS TO MANAGE REIMBURSEMENT](#)

Now that the 2017 IRS business mileage rate is out (53.5 cents), perhaps it is also time for the organization to strategically evaluate your business vehicle reimbursement policies to ensure they are appropriately reimbursing business drivers while keeping expenses to a minimum.

Now is also a good time for businesses to evaluate their existing business vehicle programs and look for ways to strategically retool them. Here are three ideas employers could consider as they approach business vehicle programs in the coming year:

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- o **Implement mileage tracking tools:** According to Runzheimer's [2016 Workforce Mobility Report](#), roughly half of businesses rely on manual methods of tracking miles, and as a result, the process can quickly become cumbersome and inaccurate, and lead to the accrual of avoidable support costs. By harnessing mileage tracking tools, employers can automate a burdensome process and achieve greater accuracy as a result. Through refining the accuracy of mileage tracking, businesses that implement these tools can drive down their total mileage while remaining adherent to the IRS rate.
- o **Manage business driver risk:** When an individual is driving for business regardless of the reimbursement program, ensure he or she has valid insurance. This should be on the top of your checklist. Currently, 46% of employers are not managing business drivers' insurance. These employers are at risk and potentially significant financial burdens if an uninsured employee gets into an accident. By prioritizing risk management strategy, organizations can prevent these potentially costly situations.
- o **Manage all of your programs holistically:** Every organization is unique and every company manages to the unique needs of their employees. Organizations may need to implement more than one business vehicle program. However, to maximize savings and efficiencies, businesses need to devise a unified business vehicle program approach. In fact, the Runzheimer report found that 64% of businesses report having multiple types of programs.

By adopting a careful and strategic approach to managing reimbursement, organizations can prepare for the IRS' modified mileage rate while at the same time positioning themselves for employee satisfaction and business cost savings in the New Year.

HR BY THE NUMBERS

ADA claims are now over 30% of all EEOC charges and at their highest level ever. 2015 EEOC ADA enforcement netted almost \$130 million.

The December 2016 [Bureau of Labor Statistics reports](#) employer costs for benefits average 31.4% of total employee compensation. This percentage does not include mandatory benefits such as Social Security, unemployment, etc.

According to World Economic Forum:

- Robots could replace an estimated 5 million jobs around the world in the next 4 years.
- 7 million jobs will be lost, but 2 million gained as a result of technological change.
- 15 major developed and emerging economies such as robotics, genetics, artificial intelligence, nanotechnology, 3D printing and biotechnology will be most affected.
- These 15 economies represent 1.9 billion workers, or 65% of the world's total workforce.

Q & A

Q: We have an employee that just came back from military leave. He did not present orders to HR or payroll and turned in a timecard with "5 days Military Leave" written across the week he was gone. Payroll paid him for that week and deducted 40 hours of leave. The employee came back stating that he wanted to be on unpaid leave and didn't want any of his paid leave used. Does he have the right to do this? It states in our personnel policy that any unpaid leave must first be approved by the department head.

A: Under the [Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act \(USERRA\) of 1994](#), an employer may not require the employee to use accrued vacation, annual, or similar leave during a military service. The law covers all public and private employers. With regard to required notice of the employee's military leave, under USERRA, employers have the right to receive advance notice of service, unless military necessity or other conditions make it impossible for the employee to provide notice. The employee, or an appropriate officer of the uniformed service in which his or her service is to be performed, must notify the employer that the employee is to perform military service.

The notice to the employer may be either verbal or written. The notice may be informal and does not need to follow any particular format. Note: An employee who provides notice of military leave is not asking for the employer's permission to leave his or her employment, they are only advising the employer of the time away. If the employee is qualified under USERRA, he or she is legally entitled to take such leave and to be reemployed at the end of his or her term of service. However, the employer is permitted to bring its concerns over the timing, frequency, or duration of an employee's service to the attention of the appropriate military authority.

DON'T CONFUSE COACHING WITH FEEDBACK

Coaching means many things to many people. We often see and hear a certain technique in practice that is referred to as “coaching” among managers, when really all that is happening in these instances is that counseling or feedback is being supplied.

For example, on several occasions a will manager say, “Let me give you some coaching around ABC,” and he proceeds to explain to an employee why the employee failed to accomplish a task.

The manager then explains the way ABC needs to be done and sometimes will provide an example of how ABC has been accomplished in the past.

More times than not, the recipient of this so-called “coaching” walk away disillusioned by what he thinks was a coaching experience. As a result, coaching can get a bad rap and be misunderstood.

So what does a real coaching conversation look like? It looks and sounds more like: “So, how do you think your presentation on ABC went?”

The employee is given time to reflect, respond and be an active participant in the conversation. The employee is really starting the conversation and a coach is listening.

The manager continues to ask thoughtful questions of the employee and gives him/her ample time to respond, again listening. Questions may include:

- What do you think went well and/or not so well?
- What would you have done differently? Or, would you do anything differently next time?
- How can you prepare better for next time?
- What steps will you take between now and then to do so?
- How would you like to be held accountable for your actions?
- What can I do to support you?

Do you notice the difference? This is a much better coaching conversation!

The employee is empowered to act, and with the support of his/her manager, gains clarity regarding the situation and comes up with an action plan to resolve it.

The employee gains confidence knowing that there's a viable solution that can be carried out, and s/he feels acknowledged and supported by his manager.

Some managers believe it's faster to get something done by telling employees what to do rather than having them work out solutions themselves. This approach is not sustainable and does not build a strong working partnership going forward.

HEALTHY BITE

The new year often brings up goals for a healthier life style. Most of us know what we “are supposed to do” but for some reason we make poor choices or allow things to get in our way of having health habits and taking step toward overall wellness. Here are several friendly reminders of what you can do each day to bring overall wellness back in to your daily life.

Keep a positive attitude
Control your stress
Stay active
Stop Smoking – now
Challenge your mind
Forgive and forget
Slow down on sugar
Brush and Floss often

Get 7-8 hours of sleep
Breath deep
Walk briskly
Manage anger wisely
Drink extra water each day
Sit up straight
Don't drink and drive
Walk 10,000 steps a day

Budget time and money
Talk slowly, think quickly
Give people more than they expect
Think positively
Get a massage
Love your fruits and veggies
Create a gratitude journal – make a daily note

THOUGHTS TO THINK ABOUT

One machine can do the work of fifty ordinary men. No machine can do the work of one extraordinary man.

~Author Elbert Hubbard

The purpose of goals is to focus our attention. The mind will not reach toward achievement until it has clear objectives. The magic begins when we set goals. It is then that the switch is turned on, the current begins to flow, and the power to accomplish becomes a reality.

~Anonymous

Work joyfully and peacefully, knowing that right thoughts and right efforts will inevitably bring about right results.

~James Allen

There is an infinite difference between a little wrong and just right, between fairly good and the best, between mediocrity and superiority.

~Orison Sweet Marden

Success...seems to be connected with action. Successful men keep moving. They make mistakes, but they don't quit.

~Conrad Hilton

Opportunity...The people who get on in this world are the people who get up and look for the circumstances they want, and, if they can't find them, make them.

~George Bernard Shaw

Choose the way of life. Choose the way of love. Choose the way of caring...Chose the way of goodness. It's up to you. It's your choice.

~Leo Buscaglia

CLIENT ACCOLADES

According to the *Business Journal's* "2017 Power Book" and *Oregon Business Magazine* Jan. 2017: many of our clients and friends have been recognized as movers and shakers in their professional services and many have received awards for a variety of items, from Best Company to Work for to the Best Green Workplaces. Our sincerest congratulations! Well Done! We are so very proud to be associated with them!!

These great organizations include:

211info
Advantis
AKT CPAs & Business Consultants
AKT Wealth Advisors
Barran Liebman
Brown & Brown Northwest
Bullard Law
Bullivant Houser Bailey
Clackamas Community College
Clark College
Cosgrave Vergeer Kester
Dunn Carney Allen Higgins & Tongue
Elliott, Powell, Baden & Baker
Ferguson Wellman Capital Management and West Bearing Investments
George Fox University
Gerding Edlen
Hart Wagner
JLL
Jordan Ramis
Kaiswer Foundation Health Plan of the NW
Klamath Community College
Klarquist Sparkman
KPD Insurance

advantage

Lane Community College
LaPorte and Associates
Lewis & Clark College
Linfield College
Macadam Forbes
Malarkey Roofing Products
Mary's Woods at Marylhurst
McGee Wealth Management
Moda Health
Network for Oregon Affordable Housing
OCHIN
Oregon Coast Community College
Pacific Continental Bank
Pacific University
Perkins & Co
Portland Community College
Propel Insurance
REACH Community Development
Reed College
Saalfeld Griggs
Schwabe, Williamson & Wyatt
Stoel Rives
The Partners Group
The Rebuilding Center
USI
Willamette Dental
Willamette University

FOR YOUR CALENDAR

Open up your Daytimers, Outlook, and all those Smartphones. The following is a look at upcoming events and workshops, special days, and other diverse and fun activities you will want to be aware of and schedule. **To register for our workshops, go to [HR Answers Events](#) or email your registration form to info@hranswers.com or you can fax it to (503) 352-5582.**

JANUARY

Birth Defects, Financial Wellness, Get Organized, International Creativity, National Hot Tea, and Thyroid Awareness Month

Jan. 20-24 Clean Out Your Inbox Week [7th International Clean Out Your Inbox Week](#),

Jan. 21 National Hugging Day

Jan. 22 Celebration of Life Day

Jan. 23 National Pie Day

Jan. 24 National Compliment Day
National Peanut Butter Day

Jan. 25 HR Lunch Bunch – CCBI – Salem
Topic: The New Presidency and HR
12pm-1pm

Jan. 28 Fun at Work Day

Jan. 31 HRA Workshop 3-Part Series – HRA Office – Tigard
– Feb 28 HR Professionals Series - Compensation and Classification - Part 1 –
8:00 am - 12:00 pm

Flyers for our workshops can be found on our [events page](#) under each workshop.

Coming Up:

FEBRUARY

Feb. 1 HR Lunch Bunch – HRA Office - Tigard
Topic: HRIS
12pm-1pm

Feb. 2 HRA Workshop – HRA Office – Tigard
HR To Watch in 2017
8:30 am - 10:30 am

Feb. 7 HRA Workshop 3-Part Series – HRA Office – Tigard
HR Professionals Series - Compensation and Classification - Part 2
8:30 am - 12:00 pm

Feb. 9 HRA Workshop – HRA Office – Tigard
Reasonable Belief/Suspicion Training for Supervisors –
8:30 am - 11 am

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.

FOR YOUR CALENDAR

Open up your Daytimers, Outlook, and all those Smartphones. The following is a look at upcoming events and workshops, special days, and other diverse and fun activities you will want to be aware of and schedule. **To register for our workshops, go to [HR Answers Events](#) or email your registration form to info@hranswers.com or you can fax it to (503) 352-5582.**

- Feb. 14 HRA Workshop 3-Part Series – HRA Office – Tigard
HR Professionals Series - Compensation and Classification - Part 3
8:30 am - 12:00 pm -
- Feb 21 Effective Development and Use of Job Descriptions – HRA Office – Tigard
8:30 am - 12:00 pm
- Feb. 22 HR Lunch Bunch – CCBI – Salem
Topic: HRIS
12pm-1pm
- Feb. 23 HRA Workshop – HRA Office – Tigard
Creating an Ethical Culture
8:30 am - 12:00 pm
- Feb. 28 Advantage Plan Members Special Evening Event – HR Office – Tigard

Planning Ahead

- Mar. 1 Oregon State Council and Stoel Rives 15th Annual Employment Law Conference
Oregon Convention Center - 777 NE Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Portland
[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

[7th International Clean Out Your Inbox Week](#), which is taking place from January 20–24. Dedicated to tackling email overload and striving for a manageable, clutter-free inbox, Clean Out Your Inbox Week is a great opportunity to start the new year with a fresh email slate. Here are the topics that Clean Out Your Inbox Week will cover:

- Day 1 (Mon Jan 20): Why keep your inbox clean
- Day 2 (Tues Jan 21): When to clean out your inbox
- Day 3 (Wed Jan 22): How to clean out your inbox
- Day 4 (Thurs Jan 23): Smart email etiquette
- Day 5 (Fri Jan 24): Pulling it together and moving forward

To get the tips, strategies, and resources on the above topics, check out the [Clean Out Your Inbox Week Facebook page](#). You can also join the discussion by using the [#cleaningbox](#) hashtag on Twitter.

- Mar. 7 Supervisory Success - *A Series for New Supervisors*
Ideal for those new to supervision, newly promoted or those who are being “groomed” for supervisory and leadership roles.

As a Supervisor, you are the one in charge, but you know all too well that your job description does not even begin to cover the many roles you actually fill on daily basis. *Hire employees... Communicate with a variety of people... Coach employees... Motivate others... Deal with employee challenges... Write performance reviews... Set Goals... Help the organization be fiscally sound.. and so much more!!*

This **highly interactive series** will cover the employment life-cycle and offer suggestion on the soft skills, too. Each week new topics will be addressed.

(Tuesdays) March 7, 14, 28; April 4, 11, 18, 25, & May 2 From 8:30am - 12:30pm each session.

[View more details and register on our website here!](#)

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ON MY SOAPBOX

With each new year, I want to feel invigorated, anticipatory, and refreshed. Unfortunately, I don't have those feelings this year. The divisiveness is troubling. I told someone a few days ago that the sense I have is scarily reminiscent of a decade long ago when we felt the fear of nuclear war. (I know many of you will have no way to relate specifically to that given my advancing years, but the sense of impending danger is much the same.)

I have mentioned in previous Soapboxes, that I try to resist the impulse to comment on politics. The very fact that I have said it now three times, I think, would be a clue to how much I am struggling with what is occurring in the country. I think that we are in a period when all of us should be thinking about how we address the concerns and issues confronting us.

The messages that were shared during the MLK holiday time were ones of care, respect, inclusion, and building bridges across our divides. These are the ideas that need to be fostered. To paraphrase Michelle Obama, "...when others go low, we should go high." It is time for our better angels to be called upon. I don't think I am a fearful person, but my anxiety is ramped up because of the rhetoric and the callous disregard that seems to abound. In simple terms, it is hard not to be apprehensive about the outcomes if, as a country, we continue to tear down instead of buildup.

Usually my wish list stops after Christmas, but this year the items have changed and the wish list continues. I wish for more listening and less tweeting. I wish for calm discussions instead of everyone talking over the top of each other on newscasts in an effort for viewers to hear their important thoughts. I wish for less high emotion and more focus on facts. I wish for more respect for one another and less derogatory comments. I wish for adults, who are willing or unwilling role models for our children, to have learned the lessons of playing nice in the sandbox. Again, in simple terms, if the goal is to bring change to America, I don't see how that will occur if every thought or action causes negativity and hostility.

While what we are experiencing now is very interesting, it isn't very healthy nor productive. We are better than this. We have conquered a financial recession that was a terrible hardship on us all. Surely, we can choose to work together to turn around this antagonism and stop dealing with everything on a personal basis. We need to recognize that each of us has a contribution to make to our future and dare I say responsibility to do so.

When I am engaged in a client conflict resolution activity, I insist that the parties identify a quality or capability in the other person that they admire and wish they had more of. By focusing on the positives, it is easier to see the issues as something that can be resolved and relationship as something that can be rescued. Shouting someone's inadequacies from on high has never been a good relationship building technique.

I am distressed, and I know I am not alone. Regardless of the election process that was going on for 18 months, it is now time for us to take ourselves and our issues seriously and begin to identify how they can be addressed for all of us. I don't know what changes will come, but wringing our hands, yelling at others, and disparaging everyone with a different view will not help us transition out of our current situation. We must heed the words of reconciliation that MLK and Ghandi gave us. Perhaps another paraphrase is in order. Borrowing from Robert Kennedy who said something like, "If not us, then who; and if not now, then when?" It is time for us to move past the slings and arrows, step up to the challenges that face us, and find a new approach. It is clear that the current one is not working.

- Judy Clark, President



ANSWERS, Inc.

"Whatever the Question"

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO VISIT OUR WEBSITE:

WWW.HRANSWERS.COM