IN THIS ISSUE

IN EVERY ISSUE

Informed Compensation Discussions

Do you feel a little lost in the world of compensation? You hear words coming out of someone's mouth and you think you know what they are talking about but you're not sure.   Foundational to each discussion is understanding the terms related to the topic. While each organization might have different processes to gather information and procedures for applying the information, the terms describing compensation and related practices should be used with purpose. Below you will find a list of the most common compensation terms and processes with their customary meaning. Compensation doesn't have to be a "black box". Start off your next discussion a little more comfortable than you are now. Enjoy!

Annual Incentive Plan - An Annual Incentive Plan is the most common of all short-term incentive plan practices and includes a performance (merit) period of one year or less. It should complement the business strategy and be part of the overall strategy of the Total Rewards program. It is a non-discretionary award.

Benchmark Jobs - Benchmark jobs are commonly found in salary surveys and used to make pay comparisons, either internally or externally, for an organization. When selecting benchmark jobs, they should:

- Be important to your organization's internal hierarchy,

- Represent all major job families, departments and levels, and

- Serve as an internal anchor for non-benchmark jobs.

A good goal is to match 70% of your internal jobs to the external marketplace. The more jobs that are matched, the closer the salary structure is to the external marketplace. Realistically between 50%-70% of your jobs will be found in the marketplace.

Bonus - A bonus is paid to recognize the achievements of an individual, team, department, operating unit, or a company. Payments may recognize a performance period (monthly, quarterly, semi-annual, annual) and are typically made in cash, but occasionally will be paid in equity or another form of award. A bonus may be discretionary or nondiscretionary and will have a lot to do with the laws of the state in which work is done.

Compa-Ratio - Compa-Ratio is a comparison of employee pay to the salary range midpoint.

Compensable Factors/Characteristics - Compensable factors/characteristics are used to

evaluate jobs and develop a job worth hierarchy to provide fairness and equity throughout an organization. The Federal Equal Pay Act of 1963 defines the compensable factors/characteristics, and there are several states with their own set of factors/characteristics.

Compensation Benchmarking - Compensation benchmarking is best defined as the process of applying external market data to make fair and competitive compensation decisions. It may even influence the compensation strategy, policies, and practices.

Cost of Labor - The cost of labor includes all compensation, benefits, and payroll taxes paid by employers to employees and can be compared from location to location.

Cost of Living - The cost of living is tied to wages and represents the amount of money needed to maintain a certain standard of living as measured through housing, food, healthcare, and taxes and can be compared from location to location. Use cost of living data cautiously for compensation purposes as it can be much higher than the cost of labor in a location.

Grandfathering - Upon implementation of a new or revised compensation plan, grandfathering will protect the current compensation opportunity of existing employees when performing the same role in the organization and will support in minimizing employee relations issues to contribute to a successful program implementation.

Gross Up - A payment, such as a one-time award, may be grossed up so that an employee will receive the full amount even after taxes. In this instance, the company will bear that cost of the tax gross up.

Hours of Work (the math) - Assuming a regular, full-time equivalent at 40 hours per week, there are 173.33 work hours per month and 2,080 work hours per year.

Internal Equity - Internal equity is an important objective of the overall compensation program and can be accomplished when jobs are valued fairly and objectively both within a company and to the appropriate external marketplace. Employee compensation should be delivered based on fair and objective criteria (such as performance, merit, seniority, education, experience, and training) within the competitive marketplace to ensure the attainment of internal equity. Pay audits will support in the identification of internal equity issues. Several states have specific laws outlining criteria and process for internal equity.

Long-Term Incentive Plan - A long-term incentive plan is typically used to reward and recognize ongoing organizational achievements (typically ranging 2-5 years). Awards may be payable in cash or equity to the eligible management team (typically at the executive level).

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Lump-Sum Merit - A one-time payment to recognize pay for performance, a lump-sum merit will not be folded into an employee's pay. It is commonly used to recognize employees paid at the top of their salary range or as a cost savings strategy.

Market Pricing - Market pricing is a job evaluation methodology that creates a job worth hierarchy based on the "applicable market rate" for benchmark jobs in the external marketplace relevant to the business.

Market Ratio (Market Index) - Market Ratio is a comparison of employee pay to the market rate.

Merit Increase - A pay increase designed to recognize pay for performance.

Pay Transparency - Pay transparency is an approach to communicating compensation openly with employees. It typically includes the following: compensation plan documents, merit increase guidelines, market data sources, job descriptions, and employee communication for individual pay changes, including salary grade and range. Less frequently, companies might communicate other employees' pay to all employees.

Salary Range - A salary range represents the minimum, midpoint, and maximum rates that a business is willing to pay employees performing a job. Typically, the midpoint or control point is set to provide market competitive, fair, and equitable salaries based on the competitive marketplace for a business.

Salary Range Maximum - The Salary Range Maximum is the point at which an organization would expect an employee to exceed in performance of essential responsibilities, be ready for promotion, or are highly experienced.

Salary Range Midpoint/Control Point – The Salary Range Midpoint/Control Point is the point at which an organization would expect an employee to meet essential responsibilities, be fully competent, experienced, and independent.

Salary Range Minimum – The Salary Range Minimum is the point at which an organization would expect an employee to need guidance and training to learn their essential responsibilities, grow towards proficiency, and be partially dependent on others for success.

Salary Range Midpoint Progression – The Salary Range Midpoint progression is the percent difference between midpoints.

Salary Range Spread - A salary range spread is the percent difference between the minimum and maximum.

Salary Structure Adjustment - A salary structure adjustment may be used in lieu of repricing an existing structure. In this case, a flat percentage (based on the market movement of salary structure adjustment projections) is typically applied to the midpoints of the existing salary structure to adjust them to the upcoming year. Salary structure adjustments are approximately 1% below the market movement of base salaries.

If you would like to learn more about the fundamentals of compensation, we encourage you to check out our upcoming workshops from one of our compensation gurus coming in May and June. To learn more, click here.

The above definitions and additional resources can be found at Salary Expert powered by ERI.

They also have a whitepaper that you can find here.

Does The Compliance Hamster Wheel Ever End?

The short answers is NO! We all have a lot on our plates these days. Meetings, hiring and retention, coaching people, operational needs, strategic planning, employee engagement and the list goes on. What is a business and manager to do in order to stay on top of all the laws and rules? Stay connected! How can this be accomplished with long weeks, interruptions, and constant changes?

First thing- take a deep breath! It is important to remember that the employee life cycle starts before the new employee's first day of employment and doesn't end until after they transition out of your organization. What does this mean for your organization? It means that every intention, decision, policy, and manner of doing business counts in the big picture.

When does this go "sideways"? Typically, when something goes wrong- bad hire, safety incident, poor performance, not providing benefit/leave entitlements, or someone feels they have been unfairly treated. These concerns start with policies and procedures aligned with laws, regulations, and policies.

How do you stay protected? The best resources an organization can have in place are the following: an updated employee handbook, updated policies and procedures, connections with local associations and resources that provide feedback in trainings, webinars, newsletters, or regular social communications. A diverse network is key; local, regional, state, and federal, along with international if your company is global. Think of all the different components of

your business: safety, work environment, people, administration/finance, marketing, operations- just to name a few. All of these key areas link within laws, rules, and regulations which are updated regularly and "somehow" pushed out for you to determine how it impacts your business. The end goal should be to stay compliant and minimize risks. Practical application can be sharing the "load" by assigning employees the responsibility to receive and share updates on a regular basis. Incorporate policy updates in staff meetings so everyone is on the same page and updates are shared timely.

HR Answers has a program on May 23rd "*HR Compliance: What You Don't Know Can Hurt You*". This is a great program to learn about the landmines that could be hiding, the risks that may be lurking and the opportunity to ask questions on how to address them, be prepared, be proactive and a set of steps if you are not in compliance yet. Click here to learn more.

What Is Employee Appreciation Day?

Back in 1995, a board called 'Recognition Professionals International' decided it was pretty important to recognize ALL of your employees. They thought if organizations took more time to intentionally and genuinely appreciate their employees, they would see improvement in workplace relationships, loyalty, and employee satisfaction (which leads to incredible retention)! And guess what? They were right! Hence, Employee Appreciation Day was born.

Employee Appreciation Day can be one of the best days of the year. An entire day dedicated to celebrating your employees and all the hard work they do - helping people be happier at work and making sure your employees feel recognized and appreciated for what they do.

Below are employee appreciation ideas for office workers, your remote employees, deskless workers, and then there are even a few free ideas that won't break the bank. All designed to make sure your team feels special. Please keep in mind not all the ideas are appropriate for all audiences. Think about what will resonate the best with your team.

Intentional employee appreciation leads to better workplace relationships, increased loyalty, and unparalleled employee satisfaction.

Ideas for Office Workers

Invest in Their Growth - Give everyone some company time and budget for personal development. Maybe it's a course, a conference, or a hack-a-thon. Let them choose!

Guest Speaker - Find an awesome guest speaker, someone entertaining that creates a buzz and inspiration throughout the office.

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A Concert - If you cannot hire Maroon 5, Pink, Madonna, Backstreet Boys because they are unavailable or you don't have the budget, find a local band for a lunch or after-hours concert.

Picnic and Games at the Park - YES, consider the weather. You would be surprised how much bonding can happen over lunch and games at your local park. If you haven't heard of 9 Square in the Air, then start there. It's easy, moves quickly, and you'll have some great laughs.

Lunch on the Company - If you're feeling uncreative but want to show a little appreciation, just bring lunch in for the office. It's a classic...and, let's face it, probably the least you can do on Employee Appreciation Day.

Hourly Snacks - Want to keep the energy going all day? Bring in a new type of healthy snack at the beginning of every hour. Send out a big announcement that the new snacks are there, and watch people gather multiple times throughout the day. This can also be part of your wellness program.

Go Bowling, Roller Skating, Bike Riding – Creating team names...you could have team shirts made, too.

Car Washes by Leadership - Get the executives to wear some grubby clothes and start washing the cars of staff members.

Family Party - Your team has a life outside of work. Why not invite the significant other and kids for a get-together. Combine this with Picnic and Games at the Park and you've got a winning combo.

In-Office Masseuse Visit - Even a 15-minute massage can make a massive difference in how you feel. An easy way to show employees you care.

Go On an Adventure - Live near the mountains? Or a beautiful trail? Or a historical part of the city? Go on an adventure. Get out of the office, see something new as a team, and have an adventure together.

Cornhole Championship - Randomize teams, get a few cornhole boards, and have an awesome prize for the winning team.

Cooking Class - Have you ever made homemade pasta? Hire someone to guide you and make a delicious meal together.

Cupcake Decoration Competition - All you need is a giant conference room, paper bowls with sprinkles and candy, a bunch of frosting, and a little competitive spirit. Don't like cupcakes? Then have some other kind of 'bake-off".

Food Truck Round-Up - Some of the ideas above can be difficult if you've got a large team or organization. Hire a few food trucks, have them circle up in the parking lot, and let people choose where they eat.

Minute-to-Win-It Games - Pick 8 minute-to-win-it games, do one every hour (on the 10's!), and just celebrate throughout the entire day.

Desk Toys - Buy a bunch of awesome desk toys so people have something new to play with.

Scavenger Hunt - Everyone gets involved. Lots of people win stuff. Rebrand it and call it an Employee Appreciation Hunt.

Seats at a Game - Go buy a ton of cheap seats at sporting event game happening near Employee Appreciation Day.

Karaoke Party – You don't have to know how to sing or the words to the song.

Ideas for Remote Workers

Send a DIY Spa Kit - The idea is pretty self-explanatory...however google "DIY Spa Kit" for ideas.

Curated Care Packages - Empower your managers and let them put together a curated care package based on the needs/wants of their individual team members.

Virtual Escape Room - Wouldn't it be fun to be trapped in a virtual escape room? The clock is ticking and teamwork is the only way out...that and amazing puzzle-solving skills.

Virtual Game Night - Try Charades, Jack Box Games, Code Names.

Create Personalized Videos - Push the record button and personalize a "thank you" video for each of your team members. They'll be grateful for the time you took to recognize them for their own efforts and successes.

Virtual Awards Show – You pick the categories (have fun or be serious; you decide).

Name a Star After Them - Did you know you can name a star after someone for low dollars?

Virtual Talent Show - We know you've got a pretty talented team - in and out of the office! What better way to get to know your coworkers on a different level than seeing them perform magic tricks, show off their painting skills, or saying the alphabet backwards and more!

Lunch on the Company – Give then an electronic gift card for DoorDash or a restaurant of their choice.

Lip-Sync Battle - Host a virtual lip-sync battle for your team members. If you need some inspiration then check out this treasure with Emma Stone and Jimmy Fallon.

Photo Scavenger Hunt - Want to help your employees get up from their desk and send them on an adventure? Put together a list of things they need to find and take pictures of in their local area (or just within their home). Maybe it's a neon sign, a pink flower, or a person wearing polka dots. Want to sweeten the pot? Add a prize for the first 3 people to find everything on the list.

Family Game Night Box - Put 3-4 games in a box and have them sent out to your team members so they can enjoy a game with their family. Perhaps a puzzle, something classic (Monopoly, BattleShip, Checkers), and something crazy like Twister or Pie Face. Something for "everyone".

Jeopardy Night - "Employee Appreciation for 500, Alex!" Celebrate Employee Appreciation Day with a good old game of Jeopardy. Create teams and blitz through questions about the organization, employees, and other fun facts.

Send a Cute Little Houseplant - Freshen up that basement office air with a little houseplant or succulent. This could be real or faux.

Virtual Paint Night - Send a canvas, some brushes, and paint - then turn on an instructional YouTube video or hire someone to walk you through it. Painting is therapeutic and not that expensive.

Pet Care Package - People love their pets! Why not show you care about them by showing you care about their pet. A collar, some treats, and toys will go a long way for your team members working at home.

Virtual Pet Show - Give your employees a chance to show off their furry friends and bond with their coworkers.

Virtual Murder Mystery Dinner - It was Colonel Mustard, in the Parlor, with the Candlestick! Or… it was Luke from Finance, in the Executive Suite with the wrench!

Virtual Casino Night - Bring the thrill of Las Vegas to your living room with a Virtual Casino Experience.

Offer Gym Memberships - Show your employees that you support them and their health and wellness goals - caring about more than just their work performance.

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Ideas for Deskless Workers

Many of the previous items mentioned will work for our deskless employees. In addition:

Pick-Your-Own Custom Swag - What if everyone got a budget and got to pick their own item, and then you put the logo on it? Kind of a fun twist!

Classic Tournament - Think about bringing in a ping pong table, or air hockey or and host a tournament during lunch–everyone loves to show a little competitive spirit.

Appreciation Notes from Coworkers – Make a variety of "well-wishing, appreciation cards" available to employees to give to co-workers.

Trick Out the Break Room - Decorate, bring some treats, play some music–it's not the break room, it's the party room!

Provide a Homemade Breakfast - Breakfast is the most important meal of the day, and what a fun twist when management makes it!

Send Something to Their Spouse - This shows you recognize them as a person, and as a human that has a life outside of work. What a fun little surprise for their person too!

Soda Bar - Everyone loves a little extra fizz to get them through the day. Bring in an organization that will mix those specialty sodas all day long.

Haircuts in the Office - A fun perk for anyone who wants to make sure they are always looking fresh.

Indoor Petting Zoo - This one could probably be outdoors too, but what a fun way to switch up the day–consider inviting families too!

Personal Appreciation Books from Leadership - Hearing a thank you from peers is needed, but hearing a personalized thank you from the leadership team can carry a lot of weight.

Free Employee Appreciation Ideas

Personal Project Time - Let team members get creative. Who knows what project your employees have been dying to have some extra time to work on.

Half-Day Off - You could combine this one with a lot of the ideas on the list. Do something fun with the organization, and then let each employee choose how they want to spend their free time.

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Personalized Thank-You Notes - Never underestimate the power of a thank you note!

Extended Lunch Break - Honestly an extra 30 minutes or an hour in the middle of the day can go a long way.

Movie Screening - Bring everyone into work in the conference room while playing a movie. We would suggest some popcorn and snacks too.

Show Your Love on Social Media - Tell the world how great your team members are. Put some thought into it, create a cool graphic, and tag them if you can.

Mid-Day Meditation - There are tons of resources for free on the internet that could lead the team through some great meditation (or even yoga). Or who knows, maybe you have a few people on the team who are experts that could help lead.

Bring-Your-Pet-to-Work Day - Don't forget about our furry friends at home... And now at the office for a special day.

Show-and-Tell - How often do we get to bring some of our favorite things to show off to our coworkers?

Let Them Choose the Music - Let everyone add a song to the playlist, play music all day.

Office Dance Party - Three words: DANCE, DANCE, DANCE!

Company Potluck - Give everyone a chance to show off their favorite dish and enjoy eating some delicious food together.

Kahoot Competition - Everyone loves a little competition. Create a kahoot quiz about anything: your company, logos, pop culture, you name it– and let everyone join in.

Casual Day - Let everyone skip the business attire, plan a few fun things, and keep it casual.

Employee Kickball Game - Divide up into two teams, get outside and play ball!

Volunteer Together - Find a local cause and give back! A giving heart is a happy heart.

Office Hall of Fame - Highlight a few office inside jokes, or create profiles for highlighted employees and pin them to a wall to celebrate.

Emotional Wellness - Types Of Rest

Have you complained recently to someone else that you did not get a good night sleep? Do you feel yourself dragging or feeling less than your normal self? It seems to be a regular conversation regardless of where you are or who you talk to.

Most of us have heard plenty lately about self-care and with reason! So, what do you need to do to reboot yourself? Dr. Saundra Dalton-Smith, MD is a physician and researcher. She wrote the book, *Sacred Rest: Recover Your Life, Renew Your Energy, Restore Your Sanity*.

While Dr. Dalton-Smith's 7 types of rest may not appear to be earth shattering when you read the list, we believe you'll find at least one of them will resonate with you and because it is what we ALL need. The seven types of rest are:

1. **Physical Rest –** there is both a passive option, such as sleeping, napping, etc., or an active option, which involves stretching or a massage. She notes that signs of a deficit of physical rest include aches, pains, swelling in legs and feet, back spasms.

2. **Mental Rest –** this involves calming an overwhelmed and overworked mind. The doctor points out a deficit is likely if you can't sleep because your mind is racing at night, or you can't remember more than a couple of things.

3. **Social Rest –** This is the time spent with "life-giving" people versus the people who need things from us: reports, data, a phone call, etc. Those folks, while well intentioned and doing their job, drain your energy. Then there are family members who need things from us: a meal, money, a ride, etc. While we need (and want) to engage with people who need things from us, social rest is about focusing on relationship and spending time with people who do not need anything from you but rather give to you - fill your emotional cup.

4. **Spiritual Rest –** Dr. Dalton-Smith is very clear this can mean different things to different people – specifically one's own belief system. It is more about feeling a sense of belonging. She identifies a deficit when someone doesn't feel they are doing good, or their work doesn't have purpose. She also notes lack of an inclusive and supportive environment contributes to a spiritual deficit, i.e., a toxic work environment will rob you of spiritual rest.

5. **Sensory Rest –** This refers to getting a break from the ringing phones, the notifications, screen time, Zoom calls, etc. According to Statista, 22% of us spend 3-4 hours a day, while

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46% spend between 5-6 hours daily on our phones. A shocking 11% spend more than 7 hours a day. Our brains need a break from our screens.

6. **Emotional Rest –** this is not about emptying our minds, but rather spending time with people where we can be our authentic selves. "Many of us carry quite a bit of emotional labor privately, in that we don't share with people what we're feeling." This can be due to wanting to maintain privacy, not feeling comfortable, etc. Regardless of the reason, we need to have time on a daily basis where we can just be ourselves, let down our guard.

7. **Creative Rest –** This refers to the time where we let ourselves enjoy the beauty around us (be present, be in the moment). This may involve taking a walk, watching a sunset, listening to music, dancing. Dr. Dalton-Smith points to a deficit when you struggle to brainstorm or solve problems. She further argues, many of us have a deficit because there was so much problem-solving due to COVID.

Dr. Dalton-Smith argues that people often have a hard time accepting the deficits because they have things they need around them (a job, a car, a home, etc.), but that does not mean you are not in need of rest. If you are feeling burned out, you need rest, and not just a solid 8-hours of sleep. Her recommendation is to begin where you have the biggest deficit and if you need assistance in figuring out where your biggest deficit lies – she has a quiz for that (please note, it may take up to 24 hours to receive your results). She provides a score for each area and the severity of the deficit.

There is good news. The renewal process is something you can start as soon as today! It begins with being intentional, thinking about how you spend your time, and reflecting on what brings you peace and joy. Small steps can have a big impact, not only on your personal well-being, but it will likely spread into your work life and family life. Where are your deficits?

OSHA To Cite Violations As "Instance-By-Instance"

Effective March 26, 2023 OSHA will cite certain types of violations as "instance-by-instance citations." Updated guidance issued January 26, 2023 outlined scenarios in which these types of citations may be issued:

- The employer has received a willful, repeat, or failure to abate violation within the past five years where that classification is current.

- The employer has failed to report a fatality, inpatient hospitalization, amputation, or loss of an eye pursuant to the requirements of 29 CFR 1904.39.

- The proposed citations are related to a fatality/catastrophe.

- The proposed recordkeeping citations are related to injury or illness(es) that occurred as a result of a serious hazard.

Instance-by-instance citations may be applied when the text of the relevant standard allows (such as, but not limited to, per machine, location, entry, or employee), and when the instances of violation cannot be abated by a single method of abatement.

The guidance is limited to high-gravity serious violations in general industry, agriculture, maritime, and construction industries, specific to:

- Falls,

- Trenching,

- Machine guarding,

- Respiratory protection,

- Permit required confined space,

- Lockout tagout, and

- Other-than-serious violations specific to recordkeeping.

The instance-by-instance citation policy currently applies only to egregious willful violations.

In a second action, OSHA reminded its regional administrators and area directors of the current policy allowing them to issue citations per violation, instead of grouping them.

SDAO SPECIAL DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION OF OREGON

Each year, the Special Districts Association of Oregon (SDAO) Awards Program honors member districts for accomplishments which allow them to provide better service to the public and gives recognition to individuals who have greatly contributed to the success of their special district. **CONGRATULATIONS** to the two Oregon special districts and the five individuals who were recognized on Saturday, February 11th at the 2023 SDAO Annual Conference which was held at Sunriver Resort in Sunriver, Oregon.

Outstanding Special District Program Award

Special districts are recognized for innovative projects and programs, outstanding safety, public information, public involvement in a district decision-making process, and outstanding achievement.

- **5 or Fewer Employees:** White River Health District
- **26 or More Employees:** Deschutes Public Library

Outstanding Special District Service Award

This category recognizes an individual board member, manager, staff member, or volunteer who has contributed substantially to the improvement and successful operation of his or her district.

- **Board Member:** John Dunn, Roseburg Urban Sanitary Authority
- **Manager:** Bev Bridgewater, West Extension Irrigation District
- **Employee:** Rob Cummings, Clackamas River Water
- **Volunteer:** Sunriver Public Safety Building Task Force, Sunriver Service District

hr links

In mid-February we celebrated Radom Acts of Kindness Day. "No matter how educated, talented, rich or cool you believe you are, how you treat people ultimately tells all. Integrity is everything." We bet you have heard this statement before. If you want to improve the world start with yourself! Be the change you want to see in the world! Do at least ONE random act of kindness every day.

Here is a short video of a motivational speech by Fearless Soul which we think you need to hear. How You Treat People is Who You Are!

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Q: What are your thoughts on hair color? How does an organization handle an employee with a trendy new hair color? If an organization is against a specific hair color or any hair color do we have to explain why? We are trying to decide if we go outside the box or stay comfortably in the "normal" box.

We recently updated our dress code policy. We eliminated everything having to do with hair color. Our team decided that hair color did not impact performance. We are a finance organization where 95% of our team members are customer-facing. To date we haven't received any negative feedback.

Our organization is striving to be an inclusive organization and work to reflect our customer and community members, understanding it enhances approachability and helps our employees bring the best reflection of themselves to the workplace.

A: First we would like to compliment you on your inclusive approach. It is extremely important to create an inclusive and accepting environment where everyone feels a sense of connection and belonging. We like the fact that you have a dress code policy. You get to decide what is included within that policy. We always recommend the focus be on dressing for the customer you serve. It sounds like that conversation has been had.

Hair in general is often an expression of oneself. The key for many employers is not color or style and it is about safety and cleanliness So, setting the expectations around grooming may be the best type of policy. Organizations can quickly fall into a discriminatory instance if deciding which hair colors or styles are acceptable without fully understanding race-based hair textures and styles. The Crown Act was written to protect against this type of discrimination. For additional information about the Crown Act visit here.

In recent years, gamification has taken the country and world by storm. **The global gamification market is currently valued at $11.94 billion ($2.72 billion in North America).** More and more successful businesses are incorporating gaming elements into employee training and work experiences to improve productivity and engagement on the job. After extensive research, our data analysis team concluded:

- **90% of employees** say gamification makes them more productive at work.

- On average, employees experience a **60% engagement increase** with a gamified work experience.

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- Companies that use gamification are **seven times more profitable** than those that do not use gamified elements at work—whether with employees or consumers.

- **72% of people** say gamification motivates them to do tasks and work harder on the job.

- **67% of students** agree that gamified learning is both more engaging and motivating than traditional classes.

- The global game-based products and services market is **expected to grow at a compound annual growth rate of 12.9%** between now and 2025.

Source: Zippa. 25 GAMIFICATION STATISTICS (2023): FACTS + TRENDS YOU NEED TO KNOW

♦ ♦ ♦

Some U.S. organizations are stepping up to hire refugees and reaping the benefits of higher retention rates. According to the Tent Partnership for Refugees Fiscal Policy Institute (made up of 300 large multinational organizations) who recently surveyed a group of employers shared 19 of the 26 they surveyed (73% reported) had a lower turnover rate for refugees than other employees. This was true across industry sectors and geographic locations. Of these employers only 12% said they had high turnover and 15% said their numbers were the same. About - The Tent Partnership for Refugees
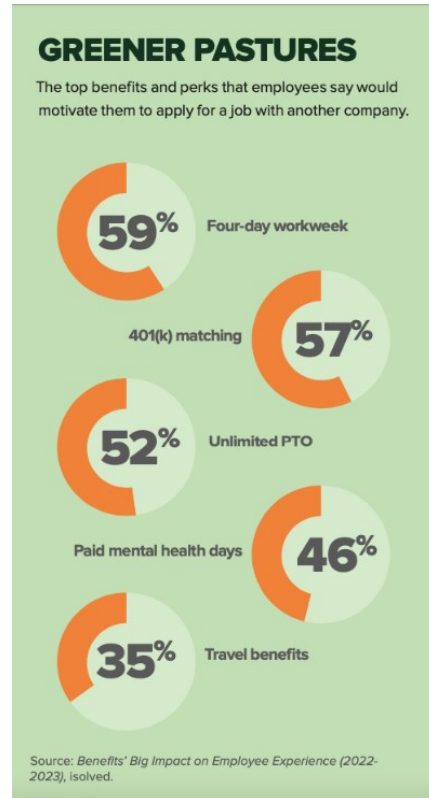
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Must-have benefits, new programs, and strategies adopted by employers during the pandemic provided a glimpse of what's possible. To remain competitive, employers know they must provide employees with health care and retirement plans. The opportunity to stand out as an employer comes from being creative and offering other targeted benefits. According to the 20th Annual U.S. Employee Benefit Trends Study by MetLife here is a look at the impact over the last two years and a glimpse of where employers may want to be having discussions with their benefit providers.

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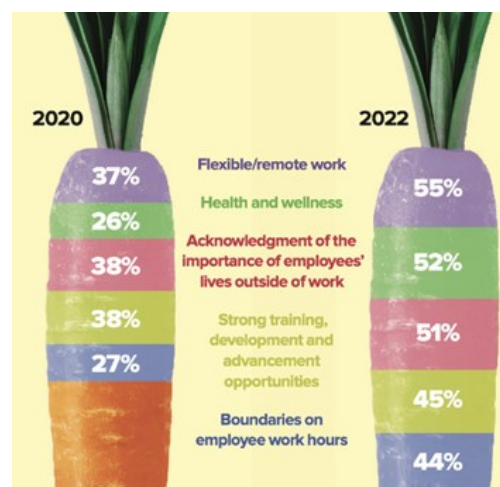
Continuing on in the benefits arena according to the iSolved 2022-23 Benefits' Big Impact on Employee Experience Survey the top benefits and perks that employees say would motivate them to apply for a job with another organization included:

GREENER PASTURES

The top benefits and perks that employees say would motivate them to apply for a job with another company.

59% Four-day workweek

401(k) matching 57%

52% Unlimited PTO

Paid mental health days 46%

35% Travel benefits

Source: *Benefits' Big Impact on Employee Experience (2022-2023)*, iSolved.

"It is the possibility of having a dream come true that make life interesting."

~Paulo Coelho

"Man never made any material as resilient as the human spirit."

~Bern Williams

"A mediocre idea that generates enthusiasm will go further that a great idea that inspires no one."

~Mary Kay Ash

"If your actions create a legacy that inspires others to dream more, learn more, do more, and become more, then, you are an excellent leader."

~Dolly Parton

"Instead of looking at the past, I put myself ahead 20 years and try to look at what I need to do now order to get there then."

~Diana Ross

HRAnswers

calendar of events

2023 Mar

01 HR Lunch Bunch: Mental Health in Your Workplace

02 Professional Practices: HR Records Management

03 Supervisory Short: Ice Breakers

07 Professional Practices: Employee Leaves - Protected, Discretionary, Paid or Unpaid

08 Coaching Essentials: People, Purpose, and Passion

15 Employees Crave Better Feedback

16 HR for the Non-HR Person (4-part series)

17 So You Think You Want to be a Supervisor

23 Succession Planning: Retirements/Turnover - Are You Ready?

2023 Apr

05 Anxiety at Work

07 Supervisory Short: Neurodiversity in the Workplace

12 Advanced Supervision Series

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19 Foundations of Leadership

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27 Professional Practices: Performance Management

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calendar of events

2023 May

	05	Supervisory Short: Overcoming Negativity
SHRM RECERTIFICATION PROVIDER	**09**	HR Systems Selection & Implementation Success
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SHRM RECERTIFICATION PROVIDER	**18**	Professional Practices: Compensation Fundamentals 1: Market Analysis and Salary Surveys
SHRM RECERTIFICATION PROVIDER	**23**	Professional Practices: HR Compliance - What You Don't Know Can Hurt You

Upcoming Topics:

- HR: Party of One
- Supervisory Short: Delegation
- Improving Communication Skills
- HR Lunch Bunch: Recruiting Solutions for 2023
- Professional Practices: Conducting and Effective Internal Investigation
- Professional Practices: Coaching Employees
- Onboarding - Jump Start the New Employee Experience
- So You Think You Want to Become a Supervisor?
- Professional Practices: Compensation Fundamentals 2: Philosophy, Structure, and Policy
- Creating a Culture of Gratitude

HRAnswers

Have you heard the phrase "cognitive rigidity?" I came across it in one of my internet surfing times. The Journal of Neuroscience defines it this way, "Cognitive rigidity is a characteristic of people who are captive to their own behavioral patterns. They are those who don't accept new perspectives. In fact, these people don't tolerate change at all. This is probably because **they don't understand that mental flexibility is essential for a healthy life**. For example, it's common to think that you can only solve certain things your way." In practical terms, it is the phrase for someone who has been advised or learns something, turns it into an absolute, and then doesn't accept any information that is contrary to what they have "learned." And more importantly, they will attempt to change other people's beliefs. They are likely to proselytize others because of the difference in their beliefs or stand in defense of change.

Think about organizational change and the conflict this is for someone with cognitive rigidity. Think about the personal struggle when there is the first divorce in a family that doesn't believe in that. Think about our politics and the divisiveness that comes from cognitive rigidity. Think about the employee who knows how to perform work well, is proud of this ability, and then is asked to accept new technology or processes that challenge and upend their knowledge or ingrained belief system.

There are just some things we believe and think we are right about. These are solid and give us our internal moral or principled structure. We cling to these as we try to navigate and make our daily decisions in a complex environment. But we also need to have the mental flexibility to consider new information and other perspectives. This is critical to our personal evolution. If we are locked into beliefs, it doesn't allow us to progress, learn new ways, and mature in our thinking.

This is something that can be taught from an early age. Consider the story we tell our cherubs (my word for little ones). We spin the tale of Santa Claus and his trip around the world delivering presents to everyone. Then some years later we tell them that it is was a myth meant to convey the spirit of a giving Christmas, not a reality. Think about how we can frame their acceptance of this new information, and deal with the fact that we initially misled them. We can praise the mental flexibility they demonstrate as they process the truth of the Santa Claus story. We can continue to assist them in understanding that beliefs can and should shift when new information or discoveries occur.

That doesn't mean that we teach them to accept every new notion or "fact" blindly. The new idea must have a foundation and facts that support it. To avoid cognitive rigidity, we must be open to

new ideas and information. I used to **know** how many planets there were in our solar system. But new information and changes in categorization has altered my knowledge and I have accepted that information.

A closed mind is not open to technological advances or new concepts. A closed mind leads only to stagnation. If we are closed-minded, we can fall behind in our employer's advances and/or our society's development. A person with cognitive rigidity cannot grow and becomes limited in the work they can do and the contribution they can make to civilization. We must seek balance between our beliefs that have been proven accurate for us and our willingness to adjust those points of view. Our ability to seek information, develop new ideas, and amend our beliefs when confronted with different reasoning is essential to our personal and professional achievement.

Judy Clark, Principal and Founder

To see more of Judy's writing and read the history of HRA Answers, visit our website.

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