



# advantage



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## ***Maintaining Holiday Balance And Avoiding 'Holidaze' Stress***

The holiday season is upon us, and for HR professionals and business owners, it often brings a unique set of challenges. Balancing work demands, employee well-being, and the desire to celebrate this festive time can sometimes lead to stress and burnout. It's crucial to find ways to maintain that delicate equilibrium and avoid succumbing to the 'holidaze.' Here are some strategies to consider:

### **1. Do it Your Way:**

The holidays should be a time of joy, not stress. Don't let the commercialized frenzy dictate how you celebrate. Choose what resonates with you and your team, not what the retail calendar dictates. The holidays are about your values and traditions, not the number of shopping days left.

### **2. Keep it Simple:**

Tradition is important, but it doesn't have to be overwhelming. Simplify your holiday plans, reduce the pressure, and focus on what truly matters. You don't have to attend every event or buy extravagant gifts. Sometimes, the most cherished moments come from simple acts of togetherness.



### **3. Be an Angel to Yourself:**

Don't forget to put yourself first. Self-care is not selfish; it's necessary. If you're not at your best, it's challenging to support your team effectively. Prioritize self-care and value your time. Learn to say no when needed to avoid family conflicts.

### **4. Sustain Your Exercise Regimen:**

Amid the hustle and bustle, don't neglect your physical health. Maintain your exercise routine, even if it's a short walk or a quick meditation. These moments of self-care can alleviate stress and help you better enjoy the holidays.

### **5. Find Intentional Moments:**

Create spaces of tranquility amid the chaos. Reflect on the deeper meaning of the season in a quiet corner adorned with holiday decor. Meditate, play soothing music, or simply flip through old greeting cards and photos for a moment of self-reflection.

### **6. Give Yourself "Holiday Cushions":**

Plan your days with extra time in between tasks to reduce stress. Learn to say no to overwhelming requests and take breaks when needed. The holidays are about enjoying, not rushing.

### 7. Get Ahead of Job Stress and Burnout:

Know your limits and don't push yourself to the brink. Avoid unrealistic deadlines and spread your work tasks over manageable timeframes. Start your day with a few peaceful moments and set boundaries to safeguard your personal time.

### 8. Balance Activity and Rest:

Remember that self-care is essential during the holidays. Combine physical activity with moments of restorative rest to maintain your well-being. A brisk walk followed by a short meditation can help manage stress and keep you in balance.

The 'holiday' doesn't have to overwhelm you or your team. By reevaluating your approach to the season and embracing a mindful, intentional perspective, you can ensure that the holidays remain a time of joy, connection, and celebration, both in your professional and personal life.

## Update For Qualified Retirement Plans

Special appreciation to Keith Mayfield with Plan It Financial for providing us with information on three significant items for qualified retirement plans:

**1. FOR NEW PLANS--Significant Tax Credits to set up a 401k, 403b or SIMPLE.** The government currently offers significant tax credits to offset some costs of setting up an organization retirement plan and offset costs of making employer contributions to the plan. [See this link](#) at the PlanIt401k.com blog for an example of a 50-person group who received \$16,500 in tax credits to offset the cost of a plan AND \$175,000 in tax credits to offset the cost of making \$250,000 in employer contributions.

**2. FOR CURRENT PLANS--Review current 401k plan.** Common improvements are to:

**a. Change to a 3(38) Investment Manager---**

ERISA puts financial and fiduciary liability on plan sponsors for ongoing investment selection and monitoring and requires them to do so at the level of a prudent investment specialist. ERISA allows this responsibility and liability to be shifted off the sponsor when they have their plan advisor accept the liability and responsibility as a section 3(38) Investment Manager. In Planit's opinion, most plan sponsors will adopt this change to meaningfully limit their work and financial liability.



**b. Employer Benefit:** Organizations put time, effort and perhaps up to 6% of their entire corporate payroll as an employer contribution into the retirement plans. Yet many plans do not have a focus on making this investment a true Employer Benefit that assists with Recruit, Reward, Retain. Keep the following question top of mind when evaluating each decision with your retirement plan... “How can we improve this benefit to positively impact the perception of our company/organization to current and prospective employees”. The more that question is asked, the better your plan serves your participants and the better your plan returns value to your company/organization.

**c. Review Plan Fees:** Anything that reduces plan growth is equivalent to a plan fee. Sponsors are used to basic fees such as investment/advisor/TPA cost reducing plan growth, but items such as lower than optimal participant rates, contribution rates and investment usage reduce plan growth much more than normally measured “fees”.

### 3. FOR SIMPLE CONVERSIONS--Convert SIMPLE plans to more beneficial 401k plans.

Following find three main reasons for the change:



Employer Benefit---The purpose of an employee benefits is to improve a company’s ability to recruit, reward and retain. The features of a 401k provide a meaningful improvement in how employees and prospective employees perceive working at their employer over a SIMPLE plan. Items such as higher contribution limits, better investment guidance, and the employee engagement with retirement planning education provided by an advisor are highly ranked by employees when evaluating retirement plan value.

Contribution Limits--Increased employee contribution limits especially for owners/highly compensated employees. While a SIMPLE plan contribution maximum of \$15,500/\$19,000 is often enough for rank-and-file employees, this limits owners/high saving employees’ ability to fund enough to meet their goals. The 401k limits of \$22,500/\$30,000 allows owners/high saving individuals a 50% increase in retirement planning limits.

- The ability to have Roth contribution in a 401k (not allowed in SIMPLE plans) further increases owners/highly compensated individuals’ deferral power by approximately another 30%.

Employer Contributions and Vesting Schedules--- SIMPLE plans require employer contributions, while employer contributions are optional with 401k plans. When making employer contributions, only the 401k allows vesting schedules which makes employees earn the right to keep those

contributions over up to 6 years of tenure using a vesting schedule. This is both an employee retention tool as well as a tool to reclaim employer matching contributions from those shorter-term employees who do not really impact the business. Reclaiming “unvested” contributions typically results in a 10%-25% lower annual expense of employer contributions (which are normally 3% to 6% of **total company payroll**).

- **Notice: Notice to close a SIMPLE must be given by November 2.** To close a SIMPLE, notice has to be given by November 2. Though rules in 2024 allow mid-year changes from a SIMPLE to a 401k, mid-year changes have restrictive rules that limit some important normal 401k options available in a calendar year switch.

If you would like to learn more and ask questions Keith will be joining HR Answers on December 6th for HR Lunch Bunch and a discussion on 401k’s. Visit our [website](#) for more information.

For additional questions please feel free to reach out to Keith Mayfield at [keith@planitfinancial.com](mailto:keith@planitfinancial.com) or at [www.planitfinancial.com](http://www.planitfinancial.com) or 888-654-4015 ext. 1.

## January First Employment Law Posters

On January 1, labor law posting updates will be required in a variety of states. In addition, covered employers should have the usual new federal “Know Your Rights” posting on the wall.

The best way to get ready for 2024 changes:

**Check your federal postings.** The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) released a new “Know Your Rights” poster in October. It’s giving covered employers a “reasonable amount of time” to display the poster, which replaces the “Equal Employment Opportunity is the Law” poster. While there is no hard and fast deadline for displaying the new poster, a great goal is to have it updated by January, when state posting changes are also taking effect. (The EEOC posting requirement applies to businesses with 15 or more employees, so small businesses are not required to post it.)

**Post conspicuously.** Every business has some labor law posting obligations, relating to minimum wage, safety, and other laws, and the required posters must be placed in conspicuous



**U.S. EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION**

### Know Your Rights: Workplace Discrimination is Illegal

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) enforces Federal laws that protect you from discrimination in employment. If you believe you've been discriminated against at work or in applying for a job, the EEOC may be able to help.

<p><b>Who is Protected?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees (current and former), including managers and temporary employees</li> <li>• Job applicants</li> <li>• Union members and applicants for membership in a union</li> </ul>	<p><b>What Organizations are Covered?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most private employers</li> <li>• State and local governments (as employers)</li> <li>• Educational institutions (as employers)</li> <li>• Unions</li> <li>• Staffing agencies</li> </ul>
<p><b>What Types of Employment Discrimination are Illegal?</b></p> <p>Under the EEOC's laws, an employer may not discriminate against you, regardless of your immigration status, on the bases of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Race</li> <li>• Color</li> <li>• Religion</li> <li>• National origin</li> <li>• Sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions, sexual orientation, or gender identity)</li> <li>• Age (40 and older)</li> <li>• disclosure of genetic tests, genetic services, or family medical history)</li> <li>• Retaliation for filing a charge, reasonably opposing discrimination, or participating in a discrimination lawsuit, investigation, or proceeding</li> <li>• Interference, coercion, or</li> </ul>	<p><b>What Employment Practices can be Challenged as Discriminatory?</b></p> <p>All aspects of employment, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discharge, firing, or lay-off</li> <li>• Harassment (including unwelcome verbal or physical conduct)</li> <li>• Hiring or promotion</li> <li>• Assignment</li> <li>• Pay (unequal wages or compensation)</li> <li>• Failure to provide reasonable accommodation</li> <li>• Obtaining or disclosing genetic information of employees</li> <li>• Requesting or disclosing medical information of employees</li> <li>• Conduct that might reasonably discourage someone from opposing discrimination, filing a charge, or participating in an investigation or proceeding</li> <li>• Conduct that coerces,</li> </ul>

locations where employees are likely to see them. This could be in a breakroom, by a time clock, or next to a common employee entrance. If you have several buildings or a large facility, make sure you have enough posters displayed. They may need to be placed in several areas, so all employees have the opportunity to see them on a regular basis.

**Be organized.** Make sure you know where all your posters are located, so you can be ready to update them when needed. If you're preparing for January changes, get a poster count so you know how many new posters to order or print.



**Be aware of state changes.** If your state has a January minimum wage update or new paid leave law taking effect, there's a good chance a new poster is required. Other significant regulatory updates may also require a posting change. States which have minimum wage changes for January 1, 2024 include Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, and Connecticut. Some states had minimum wage changes effective in June, July, and September 2023. We encourage you to check with your state to see if you are impacted with other state requirements.

**Be ready to post.** Many employees have vacation during the last week of the year, and some companies shut down for the entire week. Who will have the responsibility of putting the updated posters on the wall when that break is over? Make sure this to-do is on someone's calendar, so outdated information isn't displayed in the New Year.

Mandatory changes are required to be displayed. Employers are encouraged to post an updated poster even when an update is not mandatory, to avoid displaying outdated information.

**Key to remember:** Make sure you are ready for state and federal poster updates. Properly displaying updated posters can help employers avoid fines and employee litigation and can reassure auditors that attention is being paid to the compliance details.

## ***Emotional Wellness: Calm Mind, Calm Life***

In the United States, November marks the beginning of the holiday season. Especially the traditional Thanksgiving holiday. We are sure to see feeds, blogs, and magazines sprawled with reminders and ideas about the benefits of gratitude. However, as we look for what we are grateful for, do we look at events and circumstances of our lives as being good or bad? Pleasant and unpleasant? There may be a tendency to only be grateful for the "good" things that have

happened to us. Is this really the way to a calm and peaceful life?

Both ancient traditions and modern psychology seem to say that the path to a calm life is cultivating a calm mind. A calm mind is one that practices non-judgement. In [Jay Shetty's book, \*Think Like a Monk\*](#) he shares a traditional Tibetan story about a man who has all these seemingly terrible things happen to him. One event after another, his friend says to him “what bad luck!”. The man consistently replies, “good luck, bad luck, who knows?” Think of the last time something “bad” happened to you. How much energy did you use having negative thoughts and feelings about that thing? We can save ourselves a whole lot of mental and emotional turbulence if we could train our mind to be a little more aloof, and less emotionally attached to our circumstances.

Is it possible to train our minds to be this open and non-judgemental? In [Deepak Chopra's book \*The Seven Spiritual Laws of Success\*](#) he compares the turbulent mind to a raging ocean. He explains that you could topple the empire state building into a stormy ocean, and it would have little effect. Is your mind like a stormy ocean? Or is it like a still, cool pond? We can train our minds to be less reactive and stormy. Both Chopra and Shetty recommend meditation to train our minds in this way. The goal is to increase the “gap” between thoughts. If you are craving more mental clarity and emotional peace, I would highly recommend exploring these authors' books, and finding what works for you.



If ancient traditions and philosophy are not your thing, here's some modern psychology to try out instead. In Dr. [Susan David's book \*Emotional Agility\*](#), she talks about the benefits of becoming an “observer” of our thoughts and feelings. A tool she encourages her readers and her patients to use is to separate yourself from your thoughts and feelings. Instead of saying (or thinking) “I am mad”, you could say “I am noticing that I feel mad”. Creating this space between you and your emotional experience is useful. It allows you to be present and self-aware. With this space, we can be less reactive and more intentional and self-nurturing in our next actions.

Whether you want to try out meditation or just some simple reframes, these practices have been proven to decrease stress, anxiety, and depression (see cited studies in books mentioned above). We could all use a little less of those things, right? What will you do to increase your mental calm so you can cultivate a more peaceful life?

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## **Washington Employers: Minimum Wage**



Washington's minimum wage for workers 16 and older will increase from \$15.74 to \$16.28 per hour effective January 1, 2024 (a 3.4% increase). Employers should be mindful of local rules with minimum wages higher than the state minimum. For example, SeaTac's minimum wage for hospitality and transportation employees is increasing to \$19.71 per hour starting in 2024 (up from \$19.06 this year). Tukwila and Seattle also have higher minimum wages, and their minimum wage increases for 2024 are expected to be announced this fall.

Determining the applicable minimum wage and whether an employer is required to pay out accrued and unused sick leave is complex. Washington employers should reach out to their employment counsel to ensure that they remain in compliance with the applicable laws.



## client accolades

We want to take a moment to say **Three Cheers** to [Elizabeth Garvin](#) from [Certified Languages International](#). She was featured in the [SHRM HR Magazine Fall 2023 Member Spotlight](#). She used to be a department of one and now leads a team of four. When she started working at Certified Languages there were 10 employees and now there are over 260 in two states. She was asked about her work philosophy. And her response “Do what is right, even when it is hard. The correct decision is not always the most popular.” Elizabeth went on to share the best advice she had ever received. “A wise man taught me to be an example for others. He took me outside and said, ‘You see that door handle? When you touch it and walk through that door, you are the one setting the tone for the day. You can control that.’” As HR professionals we think many can relate. **THANKS, Elizabeth**, for representing the HR profession and Portland, Oregon so well!

[Oregon Business Magazine](#) recently recognized the [100 Best Non-Profits to Work For in Oregon](#). We are excited to see so many of the NFP clients we work with on this list. We want to send a special shout out to these organizations for the wonderful services they provide and the people they serve.

### **LARGE ORGANIZATIONS, 50+ Employees**

- #9** Mental Health & Addiction Association of Oregon
  - #12** Life Flight Network
  - #18** Exceed Enterprises
  - #25** Bridgeway Recovery Services
  - #26** Portland State University Foundation
  - #30** Metropolitan Family Services
  - #31** Emerald People’s Utility District

### **MEDIUM ORGANIZATIONS, 25-49 Employees**

- #13** South Coast Business Employment Corporation
  - #27** Columbia River People’s Utility District
  - #29** Patricia Reser Center for the Arts
  - #32** CASA for Children

### **SMALL ORGANIZATIONS, Less than 24 Employees**

- #25** Rogue Valley Mentoring



## hra happenings

### Exciting Changes Ahead: Transitioning to Just-in-Time Blogs!

At HR Answers, we are always striving to provide you with the most valuable and up-to-date information in the most efficient way possible. As part of our ongoing efforts to enhance our communication with you, we have made the decision to phase out our monthly newsletter and shift to a more dynamic and timelier platform - our new Advantage Blog. The November Advantage Newsletter will be our last formal newsletter.

Beginning in January 2024, you'll have access to a wealth of insightful content on our website. Our Advantage Blog will cover a wide range of topics, including industry trends, expert insights, company updates, and more. This transition ensures that you receive the latest information when it matters most.

For those of you already receiving our newsletter, you will receive monthly emails recapping the articles posted to our Advantage Blog. If you found our newsletters on our website, please stay connected and continue receiving valuable content from us by bookmarking our Advantage Blog page. We encourage all our clients to follow our social media pages to get the timeliest notifications.

We are confident that this transition will bring you a more personalized and timely experience, and we look forward to continuing to serve you with the highest level of professionalism and dedication. [Read our Blog here.](#)

Thank you for your continued support, and we are excited to embark on this new journey of communication with you.



## hr links

Every winter, common holiday injuries and fatalities affect thousands of families and businesses. There are free resources—including a brochure, PowerPoint slides, and posters—that will help keep your employees and their loved ones safe and show them you care.

Winter holidays are a mix of excitement, frustration, rushing and almost constant fatigue. When this is added to the usual workload (or even extra workload since some workplaces get busier over the holidays), it's a recipe for disaster.

Every winter sees a rise in injuries and fatalities caused by decorating, fires, car accidents, shoveling snow, and lifting suitcases, among others. Also, food poisoning, electrical shock (decorations), car crashes (and think of your pets too).

Be prepared for this holiday season and download the materials available below and make sure that your employees and their loved ones welcome the new year safe and healthy. Because caring about workers' 24/7 safety is not about trying to control their lives. It's about providing them with the tools and the information they need to stay safe wherever they are: at work, at home, or on the road.

And when you show your employees that you're genuinely involved in their safety, their engagement goes up and they'll care more about safety at work—helping to prevent injuries outside of work, helps prevent injuries at work.

SafeStart has free resources from posters, presentations tools, kids coloring book, and more to share with your employees and their families. And they are done in several languages. Use this link for the resources [Winter Holiday Safety – SafeStart](#)



## whatever the question

**Q:** Where I work, we do not have an HR Manager, so I am the “HR Department” (business owner, office manager, etc.). I had a complaint about an employee who works at the company, and I have never investigated a sexual harassment incident before. I have the complainant's statement, but I have not spoken to the subject of complaint(s). I don't really know how to handle this and what I need to do next. Any help would be appreciated!!

**A:** First off, take a deep breath! We know these are tough situations to handle and manage. We understand that conducting internal investigations, especially when you're not directly responsible for “all things HR” can be challenging. For the purposes of this Q&A, you will be referred to as the “HR Administrator”. Therefore, here is some guidance to help you navigate a complaint of sexual harassment in an effective and timely manner:

The initial step is crucial: Ensure the complainant's statement is acknowledged by letting them know the allegation will be kept confidential and taken seriously. In your role as an HR Administrator, gather as much information as possible from the complainant by meeting with

them to discuss the written or verbal complaint. This includes the details of the incident(s), dates, times, locations, and any potential witnesses. Cover the five (5) W's and the H which means create questions that cover the: Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How.

Your next step is to inform your immediate supervisor, higher management, or general counsel about the complaint. This is especially important since you are the "de facto HR Administrator". Transparency and collaboration with management will ensure the process proceeds appropriately. At this time, we would suggest you determine if you are the best person to manage this investigation. Consult with an HR professional or employment attorney, as needed. Ensure that the process will be conducted professionally and free from any preconceived judgments. This underscores the importance of involving a third party. You will want to minimize any perception of a conflict of interest by taking lead in the investigation if there is a bias.

Following the meeting with the complainant and informing those who need to know about the actual complaint, the next step is to meet with the employee who is the subject of the complaints. Again, this meeting should be face to face (in-person or virtual). Be sure to prepare your questions in advance to structure your interview with the subject. Ensure confidentiality, no retaliation, and that your questions are unbiased. It's essential to conduct a fair and impartial investigation. Structure your questions to allow them to provide their side of the story and gather any relevant evidence they might have to tell you at this time. If there are any witnesses mentioned, follow up with them and capture their details. Document every interaction and piece of evidence meticulously. At all times reminding and assuring people of privacy, confidentiality, and no retaliation.

It is important to remain neutral during the entire process and at the same time be supportive of both parties throughout the process. This is done by maintaining open lines of communication with both the complainant and the subject of complaints. Let them know that their concerns and well-being are a priority. Offer resources such as counseling or support groups as needed. Equally as important is ensuring the safety of each person involved, be sure to review their comfort level to continue working together, if required. This might include talking through options with an experienced HR professional consultant or employment attorney.

After you have gathered all your facts and details, if you are unsure about how to proceed next with the investigation, do not hesitate to seek guidance. If there are any questions or concerns with the facts collected, consult with an employment attorney or an experienced HR professional consultant. Remaining neutral and unbiased is paramount to evaluating the facts and determining the outcome and conclusion.

Once the investigation is finalized, compile a comprehensive report with your findings, evidence, and conclusions. Management can then decide on the appropriate action if any will be required.

However, final determinations may be case-by-case and the result may involve disciplinary measures or other necessary steps. At this juncture, you may decide to seek out an experienced HR professional consultant or employment attorney to review the findings, solutions, and recommendations before concluding. Then you need to communicate to both the complainant and the subject of complaints to reflect the investigation is complete.

In many cases, additional findings may include coaching, updating employee handbooks, and/or training on conducting investigations for yourself or someone else within the organization to ensure better management of situations that arise in the future. HR Answers is offering a session on Tuesday, November 28. [Register Here](#).

Remember that conducting internal investigations is challenging and creates discomfort within the organization, however, equally invaluable to your business is managing them successfully. Seek guidance when unsure, maintain professionalism, and ensure fairness to all parties involved. Your commitment to handling these situations conscientiously is vital in creating a safe and respectful workplace as well as mitigating risk.

**Is there a question you would like us to answer?**

**Email the question to [info@hranswers.com](mailto:info@hranswers.com) and include the subject “newsletter question”. We will publish the answer in our next issue.**



## thoughts to think about

*"Success is no accident. It is hard work, perseverance, learning, studying, sacrifice and most of all, love of what you are doing or learning to do." - Pele*

*"Love recognizes no barriers. It jumps hurdles, leaps fences, penetrates walls, to arrive at its destination full of hope." - Maya Angelou*

*"There lives inside each of us a genius, a power, a capacity – an untapped potential. This possibility for being and becoming is seen in the shadows of our past achievements – the mist of dreams and aspirations. We tap our potential by gaining confidence from our achievements, accepting responsibility for our present, and committing to our goals." - Anonymous*

*"If you have dreams you want to pursue, the time is now. There is no perfect time, and there is no better time. There is only the time you lose while you're making excuses." - Holly Lisle*

*"Understand one thing—the time is the only actual currency you have. Even though it might be daunting for some people, it's the ultimate truth." - Neeraj Agnihotri*

*"Don't let procrastination take over your life. Be brave and take risks. Your life is happening right now." - Roy T. Bennett*

*"The desire for perfection often leads to the awakening of the Procrasdaemon. Allowing yourself to make mistakes is the single most effective way to get rid of it." - Neeraj Agnihotri*

*"Just because we're busy doesn't mean we're being productive. Working is one of the most dangerous forms of procrastination." - Gretchen Rubin*

*"We are so scared of being judged that we look for every excuse to procrastinate." - Erica Jong*

# calendar of events



- 01** HR Lunch Bunch: Wellness that Works
- 03** Supervisory Short: Blended Learning for Employees
- 07** Workplace Civility and Etiquette



- 08** Diversity, Equity, Inclusion: Managing Generational Differences



- 14** Professional Practices: Auditing Oregon Pay Equity

- 15** Coaching Essentials: People, Purpose, Passion



- 16** Professional Practices: Employee Leaves



- 28** Professional Practices: Internal Investigations



- 29** C-Suite: How to Influence; How to Wow



- 01** Supervisory Short: Motivating Employees



- 06** Onboarding: Jump Start the Employee Experience

- 06** HR Lunch Bunch: 401k/403b Tricks, Improvements, and Updates



- 12** Professional Practices: Fair Labor Standards Act



- 13** Employee Recognition

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[REGISTER](#)

# on my soapbox

*There's a sad sort of clanging  
From the clock in the hall  
And the bells in the steeple, too;  
And up in the nursery  
An absurd little bird  
Is popping out to say "coo-coo."  
Regretfully they tell us  
But firmly they compel us  
To say goodbye to you . . .  
So long, farewell,  
Auf Wiedersehen, good night.  
I hate to go and leave this job delight.  
I leave and heave a sigh and say good-bye.  
So long, farewell,  
Auf Wiedersehen, adieu.*

This is my last Soapbox. As I write that, my feelings surface. I must come to terms with them. All the things I have shared with you. Yes, I was letting you know what I was thinking about; but some of it was me writing to myself to help me work out what path to take or how to address an obstacle that surfaced in my life. I hope I didn't over-share.



## **I want to thank you – all of you:**

- To the students in my classes at PSU, U of W, and at Willamette University who asked great questions and had a thirst to know what HR was really like in organizations. You kept me on my toes, and it was great to watch you “get it” when we were talking about a law, a concept, or something the book didn’t tell you.
- To the folks I met through PHRMA and SHRM, I thank you for the great conferences, workshops, and seminars where we learned what changes our organizations had to make;

and I loved our after-hours recreation. You gave me reasons to laugh. You are such super people!!

- To the clients I worked with – You are such special people. You care deeply about your organizations and your employees. You know the value of doing things right and you make efforts to be both productive and positive. I will miss working with you to achieve your goals.
- To the staff members who graced our firm with your talent and capability, both past and present, I will always cherish the finished work and relationships you built with our clients. I will remember your smile when you first closed a new project and when you heaved a sigh of relief because a complicated project was completed.
- To the others, professionals, peers, friends, you were my strength at times I needed encouragement, you were there when I had an idea that required objective serious review, and you were there when it was time to celebrate.

As you might guess, I have been doing some remembering of special occurrences during the 51-years I have worked in HR. I will no doubt continue my mental trip down my HR journey and find more things to be grateful for. If you want to have a cup of coffee and chat, I now have time to join you.

I understand that there is a party on November 3rd, and I hope to see you there so I can say “thank you” personally. Check with the staff if you don’t know the details.

I guess it has come to this... Auf Wiedersehen, adieu.

*Judy Clark, Principal and Founder*

To see more of Judy’s writing and read the history of HRA Answers, [visit our website](#).

Editor: Deborah Jeffries, SHRM-CP, 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 resources professionals and labor relations professionals. If you have questions about the content, an opinion about the information, or questions about your subscription, please call us at 503-885-9815 or email us at [info@hranswers.com](mailto:info@hranswers.com)

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