Yesterday is Today:

HR Practices in the Post-“Mad Men” World

Angie Davis
Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz
Memphis, Tennessee
901.577.8110
angiedavis@bakerdonelson.com
HR Practices in the Post-“Mad Men” World

• Overview
  • Comments and actions that were once out in the open have gone underground
    • Sexual harassment
    • Substance and alcohol abuse
    • Inappropriate conduct
  • Good HR and management practices haven’t changed
    • Proper terminations
    • Fostering positive relationships and retaining talented employees
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Pregnancy Discrimination
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- Pregnancy Discrimination
  - Recent EEOC panel stated that pregnancy discrimination still widespread
    - EEOC has increased the number of cases it has filed against employers for pregnancy bias, reaching 20 cases last year, up from 19 in 2010
    - EEOC charges filed peaked at about 6,300 in 2008 and fell to about 5,800 in 2011
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• Pregnancy Discrimination
  • EEOC reached a $1.64 million settlement reached with Akal Security Inc., the largest provider of contract security services to the federal government, in 2010.
  • The agency claimed Akal had a national policy “of forcing its pregnant employees, working as contract security guards on U.S. Army bases, to take leave and discharging them because of pregnancy.”
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• Addressing Pregnancy Discrimination
  • Interview Questions – Head off with training
  • Reasonable accommodations for pregnant employees
  • Americans with Disabilities Act – Temporary conditions may apply to pregnancy
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Substance and alcohol abuse
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• Substance and alcohol abuse
  • Employee Assistance Programs
    • Providing employees with treatment options
    • Approach cautiously – don’t expose yourself to liability while trying to help
    • ADA – perceiving someone as disabled
  • Tennessee Drug-Free Workplace Act
  • Train supervisors and employees to recognize issues and react appropriately
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Inappropriate behavior
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- Inappropriate behavior
  - Try and make clear what is inappropriate
    - Objective not subjective
  - Lead by example
  - Enforce policies
  - Foster respectful workplace
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Sexual Harassment
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• Sexual harassment
  • Properly respond to complaints
    • Always take complaints seriously – investigate
    • Train employees on who they can go to
    • Act on the information
    • Watch out for retaliation
    • Follow-up with the complainant
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Proper Terminations
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- Proper Terminations
  - Have an established, written procedure
  - Build “paper fortress” – analyze reasons for termination thoroughly in writing
    - Escalating discipline
  - Terminate respectfully
  - Have multiple company representatives
  - Terminating properly avoids lawsuits later!
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Retaining talented employees
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- Even if “that’s what the money is for,” thanking employees is important for morale and retention
- What employees look for in bosses hasn’t changed much since 1960
  - “Good Bosses Are The Same Today As They Were In 1992” by Robert I. Sutton, PhD - [http://www.fastcompany.com/1825035/good-bosses-are-the-same-today-as-they-were-in-1992](http://www.fastcompany.com/1825035/good-bosses-are-the-same-today-as-they-were-in-1992)
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Kim Vance and Brad Bakker
Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz
Nashville, Tennessee
615-726-5674
tvnance@bakerdonelson.com