

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 *Wavelength* Performance Management is Here !
- 2 What Should be Included in an HR File
- 3 The Pros & Cons of "Forced Ranking"
- 4 Health & Safety Update - June 2012

Wavelength is Here

Performance Management, Simplified

When was the last time you thought about your Company's Performance Management Program? If you are like most Employers, probably not recently. Managing and improving Employee performance through Constructive Feedback and effective Goal-setting is essential, yet there have been very few improvements to the Performance Management processes of most organizations in recent years.

We've developed a new, web-based system to help you draft Employee Performance Appraisals. Whether you're just starting to think about Performance Appraisals, or getting your already established process back on track, our *Wavelength Performance Management (WPM)* system will simplify, standardize and accelerate your review process significantly. Whether your organization is evaluating one employee or thousands, the automated performance-builder technology will enable you to concisely draft constructive feedback for your Employees while at the same time allowing you to tailor comments to their individual situation.

We've designed *Wavelength* to support Managers who understand that robust Performance Management is integral to Employee engagement, but who equally may not have the time to complete several evaluation forms from 'scratch'. *WPM* primes your review process and provides you with exceptional content that will allow you to complete your reviews in a timely manner, with confidence.

Be among the first to try the Demo version of this new appraisal tool now ([Wavelength DEMO](#)) at no charge and check out some of the features of *WPM*, today.



What Should be Included in an HR File ?

“...Human Resources information must be stored in a secured location and maintained with the utmost confidentiality....”

We're often asked this question. An HR file is a collection of an employee's basic personal information, as well as a concise history of that person's employment relationship with the company. This information is critical to keep on file in the event of management changes, restructure, grievance, or any other workplace event that will require a review of employee documentation.

Human Resources information must be stored in a secured location and maintained with the utmost confidentiality. The following is an overview of key documentation that should be included in this file:

- Job application
- Resume and cover letter
- Interview and selection notes
- Education and employment verification
- Reference checks
- Other background checks and verification
- Position job description
- Job analysis records
- Job offer letter or employment contract
- Emergency contact information
- Signed acknowledgment form showing receipt and review of Employee Handbook
- Checklist from employee orientation showing topics covered
- Any contract or written agreement between the employee and the employer (ie: non-compete agreement, etc.)



The HR File may also contain any documentation that is produced over the course of employment, including:

- Performance appraisals and employee development plans
- Records from any formal counseling sessions
- Notes on attendance or tardiness
- Disciplinary action reports
- Compensation changes, transfers, promotion, or internal job applications
- Employee recognition certificates or letters
- Training records

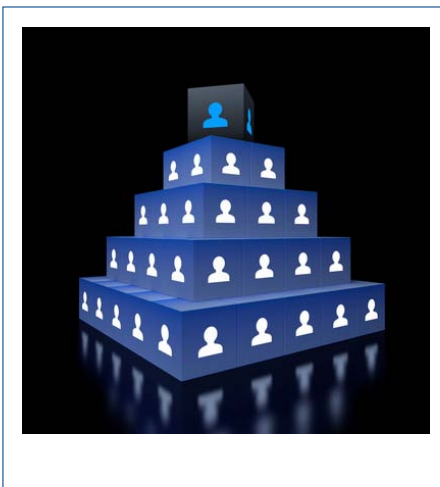
Continued, please see *HR FILE*, page 3

HR FILE from page 2

Finally, in the event that an employee resigns or is terminated, the file should include:

- Letter of resignation
- Exit interview documentation
- Employment ending checklist
- Notes on final paycheck, vacation pay, return of property

The Pros & Cons of Forced Ranking



Performance Appraisals have a bad rep in many organizations: time consuming, bureaucratic, and sometimes leading to the dismissal of struggling employees. Once-popular forced ranking systems have also come under fire in recent years. In a forced ranking management system, each manager ranks all of his or her employees from the best performers to the worst. (*In at least one very large, well-known multinational, the bottom 10 percent of employees were let go annually for not performing well enough*).

This all sounds pretty harsh, but the reality is that 25 percent of current Fortune 500 companies have now adopted this system, and many, with very positive results. Ideally, separating the "stars from slackers" creates a performance-driven culture, with overall performance improving each year as only the best rise through the ranks.

Dick Grote's controversial 2005 book *Forced Ranking: Making Performance Management Work*, dispels some of the common myths associated with forced ranking, ie that it pits colleagues against each other and creates a negative workplace culture. Grote argues that forced ranking, when used correctly, increases productivity, profitability, and organizational value. Using a framework of research, case studies, and consulting experience, the book establishes appropriate guidelines for categorizing employees, as well as how to manage employees at different ends of the performance spectrum. He points out that by using forced ranking tools, managers can identify future leaders, give honest performance feedback, and grow the talent needed for business success.

The challenge is how to use forced ranking fairly and effectively. A system where each employee is ranked relative to peers has a great deal of potential when it is administered properly, but can be a recipe for disaster if it allows managers to pick favorites, to discriminate unfairly or is applied unevenly between departments.

Continued, see *FORCED RANKING*, page 4

Health & Safety Update - June 2012



A new development under the Ontario *Occupational Health and Safety Act* requires the posting of a "Health & Safety at Work – Prevention Starts Here" poster. The poster was recommended by an Expert Advisory Panel back in 2010, but is now legally required in all workplaces.

The poster summarizes workers' health and safety rights and responsibilities and the responsibilities of employers and supervisors, and encourages workers to get involved in health and safety, explaining when and why to contact the Ministry of Labour. If you have not yet obtained your free poster, it can be downloaded through the following link:

http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/pubs/poster_prevention.php

To give employers time to become aware of this new requirement, **inspectors will begin enforcement effective October 1, 2012.**

FORCED RANKING from page 3, continued

The key is to create a performance management system that is not only objective, but which is also viewed by employees as being fair and equitable (perception is absolutely key). You may be surprised to find that your employees (or at least some of them!) welcome a more rigorous appraisal system that rewards their efforts and takes a harder look at those members of the team who are not pulling their weight. As Grote points out, more than 30% of employees feel that poor performance is routinely tolerated, which can quickly and silently de-motivate your best performers.

Ultimately you have a find a grading system that works for your business: Rewarding the top performers and creating some kind of consequence (not necessarily dismissal) or improvement plan for those who aren't producing results. A carefully planned and balanced performance management system will produce improvements with those who need some coaching to meet standards.

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