



QUOTE IT:

"A well-informed employee is the best sales person a company can have."

E.J. Thomas, Late Chairman and CEO
Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company

DID YOU KNOW *that employers are required to allow employees time off to...*

. . . attend jury duty or act as a witness, but are not required to pay the employee for this time away from work? Under Minnesota state law, employees are protected from termination or the threat of termination while participating in jury duty or acting as a witness. Additionally, under Minnesota state law, employers must allow crime victims sufficient unpaid time away from work to attend court proceedings, answer a subpoena, or respond to a prosecutor's request. Leave must also be extended to employees whose spouse or child has been a victim of a crime.

THE MANAGER'S CHAIR: *Communicating with Employees*

In his book, *The Instant Manager*, Cy Charney outlines the basics of communicating with employees. These are not new ideas, nor are they dramatic or overly academic - they just plain make sense. Try them out and see what you think. Sometimes rediscovered knowledge is just as powerful as learning something brand new.

- Encourage communication by making yourself visible - walk around, make it easy for employees to talk with you.
- Listen first, tell second - no exceptions.
- Ask for employee opinions - but only if you really care to listen fully to them. Don't ask as a "nice gesture" - employees can feel sincerity.
- When appropriate, gather employee focus groups to assess a situation and brainstorm solutions.
- Act on employee ideas as quickly as possible - keep them in the loop until an action plan is implemented.
- You don't always and won't always agree with employee ideas, but you can always thank them for their input and encourage them to keep talking.
- When possible, allow employees to try out their idea on a small scale. *Positive* failing, in a small way, can pave the way for them to unearth huge improvements down the road.
- Use language everyone will understand - customers, vendors, employees.

- Choose words carefully - once said, words can never be taken back.

Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can break my heart. R Fulghum

- Paraphrase what the employee has shared to ensure you clearly understand their message.
- Offer to explain why something needs to change. People, in general, can agree to disagree and then move ahead IF they understand the “why” factor.
- Bad news should always be delivered in private - no exceptions. This is essential for maintaining the dignity of the party receiving the bad news.
- Bad news doesn’t get better with time. Deal promptly with the tough issues. Utilize a trusted colleague or external resource to prepare for the conversation.
- Be conscious of your own communication style. Adjust your style to that of the person who will be hearing your message. Avoid preaching, patronizing, scolding.
- Develop trusting relationships by being trustworthy. Don’t criticize an employee to another member of your management team. And don’t criticize the boss to the front-line employee. Hold confidences as privileged information. Only share if absolutely required.
- Don’t engage in argumentative behavior. Arguing only escalates the issue.

If you can’t quite recall when the last time was that you genuinely talked with your employees, it’s past time. You’re due to get out of your office, away from your meetings, back on the floor and get chatting.

When you think about the complex maze of HR regulations, do you ever get the uneasy feeling that you might be missing something?

The Instant Advantage is an easy and affordable way to stay on top and in control of the complex maze of HR regulations. In just minutes you can simply and effectively manage HR, instead of letting HR manage you.

Call us for details today!