



HR Bulletin

January 22, 2015

Contents

- 1 Getting at Employee Feedback
- 2 Changes in 2015
- 2 Events Calendar
- 2 Sierra HR Team

There are many tools available to strengthen your organization's culture by eliciting and productively responding to constructive feedback.

Getting at Employee Feedback

Whether it's from a suggestion box, an employee survey, 360-degree feedback, or a hallway conversation, employee feedback can provide great value to your business. But employee feedback is not always easy to come by.

Some time ago, while leading a workshop on receiving difficult feedback, I shared how to effectively respond to criticism, particularly when it's the kind of criticism that's hurtful, insulting, or in-error. Learning how to respond positively to that correction, even when it's delivered tactlessly or mean-spiritedly, can bring great professional and personal benefits.

At a pause in the presentation, a hand shot up with a question. "Uh, have you done this with *our managers* yet?"

This question is not unusual. In fact, someone will ask it without fail. Most of the room will then nod in agreement. If I respond that, no, I haven't done this with management, someone will usually follow up with, "Well... can you?"

It's not hard to read between the lines. Employees are essentially saying, "I have difficult feedback of my own I'd like to provide to my manager, but I'm not comfortable" (i.e. I'm not sure it would be well received). You may be thinking the same thing. Perhaps you have sincere concerns you would like to address, if only you could be confident that the reaction would be positive.

Giving feedback is likely an integral part of your performance management philosophy. But what does your business do about receiving feedback, and taking constructive action as a result?

Now is a great time to take steps that encourage feedback from all levels. Even if you don't know where to start, there are many tools and approaches to use if you want to strengthen your organization's culture by eliciting and productively responding to constructive feedback. Our team is experienced in preparing and delivering employee satisfaction surveys, focus groups, coaching sessions and goal development. Contact us for more information.

Changes in 2015

2015 has brought with it many changes to California law. Just last month, we discussed the significant changes required by the Healthy Workplaces, Healthy Families Act. As a reminder, employers are required to provide an **updated version of the Labor Commissioner's Notice to Employee** form, which now includes information regarding employee sick leave rights under this law. We've attached a link to the [English](#) and [Spanish](#) forms for your convenience.

The **IRS optional standard mileage rates** have also changed for 2015. Effective January 1, the standard mileage rates are:

- 57.5 cents per mile for *business miles driven*, up from 56 cents in 2014
- 23 cents per mile driven *for medical or moving purposes*, down half a cent from 2014
- 14 cents per mile driven *in service of charitable organizations*

The IRS has also provided the **2015 W-4 form**, which may be accessed at [this link](#).

Events Calendar

- ❖ **Legal Beagle Bagel Breakfast: Common Pitfalls during the Hiring Process – Tuesday, January 27**
Email receptionist@ficz.net or call (559) 256-5000 to register.
- ❖ **Sierra HR Partners will be closed for Presidents day on Monday, February 16**

Sierra HR Partners Team

Sierra HR Partner's team of certified professionals are here to support you in the areas of legal compliance, training, recruitment, handbooks, audits, policy development, job descriptions, performance evaluations, compensation, terminations, and related employment areas.

As an HR Business Partner you are entitled to:

- ❖ **Unlimited** phone consultation by certified HR consultants (M – F)
- ❖ **Free** monthly LBBB seminars for designated representative
- ❖ **HR bulletins** covering breaking employment news and employment best practices
- ❖ **Discounted rates** on projects

Contact us at (559) 431-8090 or toll free 1-844-431-HR4U (4748).

[Brenda Budke, SPHR](#)
Executive Director

[Suzy Martirosyan, PHR](#)
Associate

[Dan Larsen](#)
Associate

[Janet Keene, PHR](#)
Consultant

[Nancy Vang](#)
Associate

[Kailee Woods](#)
Administrative Assistant

[Korinna Pedrosa, PHR-CA](#)
Consultant