

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS: IN THE TRENCHES WITH HR

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WORKING WITH HR MEANS SOLVING PROBLEMS YOU NEVER IMAGINED YOU'D HAVE

H

Handling Chaos

U

Untangling Problems

M

Managing Drama

A

Avoiding Lawsuits

N

Never Bored

R

Rumors

E

Empathy

S

Solutions

O

Order

U

Unusual

R

Resolve

C

Crisis

E

Emails

S

Serve

BEFORE WE BEGIN:

The stories you're about to hear are 100% true.

The names, however, have been changed, omitted, strategically forgotten, or otherwise redacted to protect the identities of those involved—and to ensure I still have people willing to talk to me afterward.

If you recognize yourself in one of these stories... well, that's between you and your conscience.

MEDICAL MARIJUANA DRAMA

- District Court Judge's office calls
- A company employee has failed drug screen the last two months probation officer
- Judge said employee named another employee as their supplier
- Employee insists marijuana was gifted, not sold
- At least one exchange reportedly took place right on company grounds!
- Surprisingly, one employee aces the reasonable suspicion drug test while the other fails.
- MRO (Medical Review Officer) calls and asked if employer will accept medical marijuana prescription card from California

BUGS, BIAS, AND BACKLASH

- Transgender employee requests HR approval to use the women's restroom
- Other female employees complain
- Transgender employee tells supervisor and coworker sitting closest to their workstation they have rented house infested with bed bugs
- Coworker complains they were bitten by bed bugs in workplace and took bed bugs to their home
- Coworker files worker compensation
- Transgender employee receives a corrective action for measurable metrics and claims they are being retaliated against because they are transgender

TAKE A SEAT - SAFELY

- Employer's chairs are engineered to safely support up to 250 lbs.
- Accommodating employees who weigh more than 250 lbs.
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)????
- Initiating open, respectful dialogue with employees who may surpass chair weight limits
- Equip the workplace with chairs with the correct weight rating
- Employee refuses to use chair with proper weight rating

FAMILY FEUD: HR WASN'T READY

(CAUTIONARY TALE ON NEPOTISM)

- Sister A chased Sister B down the hallway at work with a knife
- Sister A kicked Sister C out of the apartment they shared
- Sister A confronted Sister B at work again in the break room
- Sister B and Sister C later confronted each other at work
- HR called Sisters A, B, and C into a meeting
- Meeting reveals all three sisters have been involved with the same man, who was also the father of Sister A's baby

WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT LUNCH

- Employee reports they were asked to go to lunch with two other employees to smoke marijuana
- Company has a drug free workplace policy
- Question involved employees & evaluate for reasonable suspicion
- One of employees questioned states they did not smoke marijuana at lunch but cannot pass a drug screen because they took their mother's prescription hydrocodone the previous night
- Test or no test?

THE ONLY THING THAT SHOULD BE FOLLOWING YOU AT WORK IS YOUR TO-DO LIST

- Female employee reports she is receiving messages from another employee
- Employee sending messages will not disclose identity
- Messages to female employee are how pretty she is and what she is wearing in workplace in real time
- Resources are exhausted locating stalker
- Female employee resigns – feels harassed & threatened at work
- Female employee files police report
- Local police feel messages are coming from African American male supervisor
- Racial Profiling

LISTEN FIRST. DISMISS NEVER

- Team Lead makes off handed sexual comments to opposite gender employees
- Over course of 90 days three different employees file complaints
- All three complaints are "he said" "she said" with no witnesses
- HR communicates concerns to Team Leads supervisor
- Supervisor makes decision to send Team Lead to certification to be supervisor
- Team Lead is arrested 6 months later and charged with sexual assault of a minor
- Team Lead was convicted and sentenced to 10 years in prison

WHEN "WHAT HAPPENS OUTSIDE OF WORK" DOESN'T STAY OUTSIDE

- Two female employees have a dispute over a male outside of work
- Employee A has been with the company 6 months
- Employee B has been with the company 2 weeks
- Employee B makes threat outside of work to Employee A stating they will bring a gun to work in their purse and shoot Employee A
- Employee A calls supervisor and states she is not coming back to work because of the threat and alleges Employee B applied with company to have access to Employee A
- Employee A tells supervisor Employee B has an open warrant
- Police are called for assistance

PET PROJECT OR PROTECTED ACCOMMODATION?

Tarantula

- Employee requests accommodation to have an emotional support tarantula in the workplace
- Employee has live crickets in the office to feed tarantula

Dog

- Employee requests to bring dog to work.
- Claims dog is a certified emotional support animal
- Purchased signage for the dog online
- Trained dog themselves

WHEN EVERY DECISION IS THE WRONG ONE

- Supervisor soliciting prescription medication from the employees they supervise
- Supervisor babysitting multiple employee's children on off days and charging a fee
- Supervisor engaging in relationships with subordinates
- Supervisor makes purchases on your corporate credit card
- Male supervisor and female employee copy private body parts on color copier and email pictures to each other

If you're thinking, "There's no way that really happened"... it did.

Questions?