



## COMPASS CAREER NAVIGATOR January 2019

### READY FOR A NEW YEAR?

Hope you had a “healthy and happy holiday season”!!! The start of a new year always arrives with the winter season, which can include hazardous weather, bad colds and flu.

Much of North Carolina has been hit with excessive amounts of rain this 2018. With this much rain, there has been flooding and trees to fall due to the saturated ground. Glad not to have a drought, but we could stand to have less rain. In addition, our temperatures have been quite mild.

Stocks have taken quite a hit as a reaction to tension with our government, as well as stress from other nations. Another reaction is the increase in interest rates. Going through such changes leaves others to have doubts about the future. Otherwise, some events (i.e. lower unemployment, increased job development, etc.) have been positive.

Still, many companies have been stressed by the international tension. If these continue or increase, more companies could find themselves reducing their workforces.

What concerns does your company consider more serious? What can your business do to position your organization to be more stable?

When it comes to politics, the topic can stir a LOT of emotions and tension. Running a country verses a business has similarities and yet many differences. This is not good or bad – but different.

If you are a business owner, some of our president’s actions may seem more logical. However, most of congress are politicians and NOT business owners, which causes them to have a different perspective.

Therefore, it is wise for business owners to imagine what is likely to happen next and try to think more proactively. Strategic training in weak areas would help your workforce would help them to enhance their skills and grow your business. One excellent resource for business leaders is the Charlotte Economic Club, which is informative and educational.

An area that needs thoroughly focused training is “Leadership Training”. All companies need strong, confident, experienced and well-trained executives to keep a business strategically focused and moving forward. Therefore, in order to assure that a company stays strong, employers must keep alert to the status of their top leadership. The Human Resources Executive should be keeping the employer informed and aware of any possible leadership needs. All Employers would be wise to work closely with their HR Executives re: a Succession Plan.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD WORKPLACE BEHAVIOR

All employers want good employees, who possess good skills and experience, but that is only part of the requirements of a good employee. In order for a company to be healthy and experience growth and success, they need employees of good character, high integrity, and respect for others.

## **THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD WORKPLACE BEHAVIOR** (Continued)

If employees have good skills but demonstrate a lack of respect for others, the workforce can easily experience a poor working relationship. That can destroy any chance of a productive and successful future. In recent times there has been an increase of “poor workplace behavior”, where employees (and sometimes managers) have treated employees disrespectfully, criticizing and bullying employees, and possibly even demeaning them in front of others.

A good, healthy work environment teaches employees to respect each other at all times. Employees should be supportive and encouraging to their fellow workers. In addition, employers can also demonstrate a positive respect by providing all employees opportunities to receive training, to grow and be more beneficial to their employers.

Employers quickly learn that a healthy workplace environment equates to being more productive and successful. It is also wise to encourage their workforces to strive for:

- Healthier Way of Life
- Learning to Better Manage Finances
- Staying Better Informed/Educated
- Developing Respectful Relationships
- Keeping an Open Mind
- Praise Those Who Encourage Others

Such a focus can enrich the organization to be more proactive in many ways. The Bottom Line is that an employer who promotes more positive behavior and focus, the better chance the workforce will produce a better outcome. One trait in particular that positively impacts an organization is “**mutual respect**”, **which is key to good behavior**.

## **GOOD HEALTH IS A TOP PRIORITY IN THE WORKPLACE**

Think of the different benefits employers typically offer. These could include a retirement or pension

plan, healthcare, paid time off, or maternity leave. These are designed to help your organization recruit and maintain qualified employees.

Consider your wellness program. Unlike all the other benefits your workplace offers, wellness programs have been studied for decades. There are hundreds and hundreds of rigorous scientific evaluations of the impact of wellness programs.

But after decades of scientists evaluating programs, we have an enormous amount of very solid statistical evidence that show the benefits of having a wellness program.

### **1) Wellness Programs Improve Employee Health Behaviors**

Wellness programs are good at helping people adopt and maintain healthy behaviors. Healthy behaviors lead to lower health risks, and lower health risks lead to less chronic disease. With less chronic disease employees have fewer health care costs.

### **2) Wellness Programs Reduce Elevated Health Risks**

When you change your diet, get active, and avoid tobacco, good things happen. Boise School District- the results of their changes in health risks. After one year, a lot of employees who had elevated health risks at baseline, had reached healthy risk levels.

Low health risks are the foundation of good health, and wellness programs are a great way to help employees and their spouses avoid elevated health risks. There are hundreds of research papers that evaluated the ability of wellness programs to reduce elevated health risks. One particular study looking at almost 200,000 wellness participants and showed that 5 Of 7 health risks improved after one year.

### **3) Wellness Programs Reduce Health Care Costs**

*Comprehensive worksite wellness programs that improve employee behaviors will see a bending of the healthcare cost trend. Most often they will discover that the savings from program participation will be greater than the actual cost of the program. Almost every one of these return on investment (ROI) studies show a positive return on investment. Researchers from Harvard recently published another summary of the wellness ROI research. Among the 22 different studies that looked at wellness programs and healthcare costs, the average return on investment was 3.27.*

## **GOOD HEALTH IS A TOP PRIORITY IN THE WORKPLACE** (Continued)

### **4) Wellness Programs Improve Productivity**



*There are a lot of reasons why employees have low productivity. They may not know how to use the equipment, they may be distracted by other employees, they may not know what they are doing, they may be tired, or they might be on Facebook. One of the main causes of presenteeism is poor health.*

### **5) Wellness Programs Can Decrease Absenteeism**

*Any wellness program that can reduce absenteeism will experience cost savings. Harvard researchers looked at the ROI of wellness programs as they relate absenteeism and demonstrated that for every dollar wellness programs spend on wellness they can save \$2.73 and reduce absenteeism.*



Many studies have evaluated the ability of wellness programs to improve health behaviors. Not every wellness program is able to show positive results. The ones that are well-organized and follow effective behavior change models show the best results. Here are the results of an evaluation published recently. The 1,800 employees at this worksite reported their health behaviors at baseline, one year, and two years after the program began.

Please note that there are many aspects to health, including mental health, and today more and more employees share concerns about the stress that they endure, which can lead to other medical issues. Therefore, to provide coaching on dealing with stress is another way to benefit your employees. Often having an impartial exchange with others can help alleviate some of the stress.

## **DOES YOUR WORK ENVIRONMENT MEET THE NEEDS OF EMPLOYEES?**

As you know, “one size seldom fits all”. This is true for office or workspace arrangements as well as routines or clothing. A person’s workspace should match his/her personality and the type of work being done. Some individuals need an interactive environment with lots of energy and stimulation, which can help create new ideas and unusual scenarios, as well as effective outcomes.

On the other hand, other individuals require a more conservative and tranquil ambiance to allow that person’s mental creativity to develop a program, service, or product that addresses their goals. Therefore, this employee will benefit from a quieter workspace without distractions or interruptions. Such a reserved setting benefits the employee who needs complete concentration for more delicate situations.

Though many positions require joint group or team sessions now and then, other times might demand private and individual quiet, concentration times. With all this in mind, a company’s workplace layout needs to consider the different work efforts and projects and personalities using that space.

Another key factor is that on occasion, a company may require an area in the office, where there can be total privacy due to sensitive matters, delicate or confidential situations. Therefore, there should always be some area that provides such a setting.

If the employer wants to allow for a larger area to be designed for large group activities or socializing, etc., it might be best to have that area carved out on another floor, which can keep louder voices or noise away from those people working on intense or serious activities. An overall consideration is to allow for some “flexibility” within the facility for needed accommodations. An employer would be wise to be sensitive to the workforces’ needs.

## **DOES YOUR WORK ENVIRONMENT MEET THE NEEDS OF EMPLOYEES?** (Continued)

One last thought to consider is for employers to be aware that there may be times when emotions or stress is escalated. For this reason, it may be a good idea to select a space in your office where you can set up a “calming and soothing” environment, which would be instrumental when dealing with a sensitive or volatile situation.

Items, which could be beneficial for such circumstances, could include a small water fountain, that can help a person relax while listening and watching the water movement.

Another helpful resource is a fish aquarium, that has a small number of compatible fish, colorful items in the tank for fish to maneuver, and the bubbling water, which encourages a calming and relaxing response. This room can be more helpful than ever imagined.

Speaking of workspace and how to help employees be more productive, a request of many employees today is either “flexible work hours” OR “working from home”. Such arrangements can help attract top talent!

## **WHAT CONCERNS DO EMPLOYERS PLACE AS HIGH PRIORITIES NEEDING ATTENTION**

With the numerous issues that employers, managers, and human resources professionals face daily, which ones do you believe are their top priorities to address? And how can they be resolved?

**Poorly Selected Managers** - The selection of managers or supervisors is often not done in the most strategic and effective way. Just because a person seems polite and responsible, may not mean they are honest or respectful of others. There are several qualities that are most definitely required of a manager, which includes “responsible, honest, respectful, and of high integrity. In addition, this position should possess excellent communication and leadership skills and experience. Without experience, subordinates will have trouble trusting or having confidence in this manager, hurting the Bottom Line.

**Poor Workplace Behavior** – As companies and their workforces grow, there has been an increase of more “inappropriate workplace behavior”. This causes a lot of “Employee Relations” issues, which includes two core factors: 1) poor communication and 2) disrespect of others. The best way to address this is with an **Employee Survey**, allowing employees to discreetly voice their concerns.

From the survey, employers should use a professional human resources expert to open exchanges in discussing the findings of the survey and encourage input for resolutions.

The key to an Employee Survey’s success is for Employers to “**act promptly on the information, with ways to resolve issues**”.

**Be sure to respond to those concerns that employees have shared with you.** *Then clearly relay that the company’s response demonstrates a matter of **TRUST!***

Compass Career Management Solutions can assist with this effort, and be an impartial facilitator to help determine the real concern. Give this serious consideration and help your workforce to have a healthy work culture. Visit: [www.compasscareer.com/training](http://www.compasscareer.com/training)

## **HOLIDAYS: PEACEFUL OR STRESSFUL?**

As much as this time of year celebrates our many blessings, all should remember those much less fortunate. Anyone can be a source of relief and comfort, providing blessings to those in great need. Any form of support is encouraged. Doing this reminds ourselves that we all have many blessings. *Wishing You Peace!*

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**Compass Career Management Solutions** is a *high integrity human-resources consulting firm*, focused on addressing a variety of transitions, supporting employers & employees.

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