

People Matters

December 2007

PD News

December is an exciting month, with both Laura and Shannon embarking on trips overseas. At the end of the month, as Shannon travels to Europe to visit family, Laura will be travelling to Vietnam to take part in a four week volunteer program at an orphanage on the east coast. The program involves giving practical, hands-on assistance to staff and children at the facility. During Laura and Shannon's absence, Matt and Karen will be working Monday to Thursday and Pip will also be available to assist with any administrative needs.



Please note that People Dynamics will be closing for the Christmas break at 3.00pm on Friday the 21st of December and will reopen at 8.30am on Monday the 7th of January.

This issue of **People Matters** addresses the issue of ensuring your company policies are up to date and being adhered to. Our new **Legal Update** section is designed to draw attention to current issues in business and workplace arenas.

Legal Update

Breach of Contract

In a recent high-profile case, an employer was ordered to pay in excess of \$500,000 to a former employee for Breach of Contract. This came after the employer failed to adhere to documented policies on bullying claims. This case brings to light the importance of following existing policies to the letter. If employees are provided with policies relating to bullying, intimidation, OHS, or any workplace issue, it is vital to monitor these issues and follow through on outlined procedures, as prescribed in the policy. Keeping policies simple is a good way to ensure they are understood and respected.

Christmas Checklist



Christmas is upon us once again and if you haven't already done so, now is the time to remind all staff of company policies before the silly season arrives.

Christmas parties or other end-of-year staff celebrations are an integral part of showing solidarity in workplace relationships and are a great way to formally recognise the valuable input of all employees during the year.

It is absolutely essential that all staff members feel comfortable and appreciated during work festivities. All staff members should be reminded that there is zero tolerance for inappropriate behaviour, including bullying or harassment of any kind. Comments and actions of a derogatory or inappropriate nature cannot be excused as jokes by the informal or fun nature of the gathering or by the Christmas spirit.

Employers are accountable for all company organised events and should ensure that the safety and wellbeing of attendees is taken into consideration. The following areas should be given particular attention:



- If alcohol is to be served, a variety of non alcoholic drinks also needs to be offered, along with sufficient food.
- Access to public transport or private arrangements following the function should be taken into consideration.
- Behaviour that puts any person at risk must be addressed appropriately and immediately.
- If you are having Kris Kringles, remind staff to be mindful of the appropriateness of gifts to prevent embarrassment or offence.

Following these basic but fundamental steps will ensure that staff and employers alike can relax and enjoy themselves to the full, ensuring a happy holiday season for all.

On behalf of the People Dynamics team, we would like to extend our best wishes to all clients and friends for a safe and happy holiday. We look forward to continuing to work with you



Do you have a question you would like answered? Let us know - your suggestions for topics are welcome.

If you know someone who would be interested in People Matters let us know and we will forward a copy to them.

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