

November 2021

# Keys to finding – *and keeping* – the employees you want *now*










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# Upcoming Events

## Free Webinars

Wednesday,  
**November 10th**  
2021

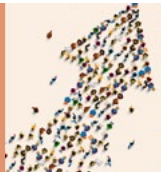


### Stay Strategic with Your Employee Onboarding

How to Lead New Hires Through Virtual and Hybrid Environments

sponsored by EMP Trust HR..... [learn more](#)

Tuesday,  
**November 8th**  
2021



### What Does Benefits Enrollment Look Like for 2022?

sponsored by Colonial Life ..... [learn more](#)

Wednesday  
**November 17th**  
2021

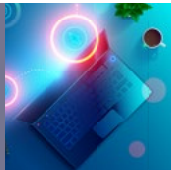


### Supporting Employees During the Mental Health Access Crisis

Help your struggling employees get the resources they need

sponsored by Vida Health ..... [learn more](#)

Thursday,  
**November 18th,**  
2021



### Future of Work – Digitizing Workplace Experience

sponsored by Nintex ..... [learn more](#)

Thursday,  
**November 11th**  
2021



### Upgrade Without the Upset: A Disruption-Free Way to Tweak Your HR Tools

Make the changes you need – minus the headaches

brought to you by Premier Learning Solutions..... [learn more](#)

## Premium Event

Thursday,  
**December 2nd**  
2021



### COVID-19 and ADA Accommodations:

Updates You Need to Know NOW

brought to you by Premier Learning Solutions ..... [learn more](#)

# News Briefs

## HR Stories You Might Have Missed

### Predicted healthcare costs for 2022

published 10-15-21

Is it possible that healthcare costs will return to pre-pandemic levels in 2022?

According to a Mercer's national survey you can expect to see an increase of 4.7% for 2022. That's what 1,502 employers predicted in the survey. And it's on par with the average annual cost growth over recent years – minus the past two pandemic years.

[Read more](#) 

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### Company denies high-risk COVID-19 employee an accommodation, ends up in court

published 10-14-21

Ronisha Moncrief worked as a manager for ISS Facility Services, Inc. She had a lung condition and high blood pressure, which made walking and breathing difficult.

Moncrief wanted the ability to work remotely two days a week and to take frequent breaks while in the office, but ISS denied her request. A few weeks later, Moncrief was terminated for performance issues. The EEOC filed a lawsuit on Moncrief's behalf, noting that the company had granted other employees' work-from-home requests. The lawsuit is currently pending.

[Read more](#) 

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### Survey: 60% of employers use software to monitor remote workers

published 10-13-21

Business review platform Digital.com surveyed 1,250 U.S. employers and found 60% of them use this monitoring software to track employees' activity and productivity. Seventeen percent more are considering implementing it.

[Read more](#) 

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### Employees are ready to quit – with or without a new job secured

published 10-11-21

A whopping 19 million employees quit their jobs just between March 2021 and July 2021. So what were the top reasons for workers leaving their companies?

Burnout came out on top, with 40% citing that as the cause of their resignation. Thirty-seven percent were looking for better pay, and 34% of people left due to organizational changes at their companies. A lack of flexibility, discrimination and not feeling valued all tied at 20%.

[Read more](#) 

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### OT pay for sleeping on the job? In this case, yes

published 10-07-21

A federal appeals court ruled that Akal Security Inc had to pay employees for time during which they were free to sleep. It also said the employer violated the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) when it automatically deducted one-hour meal periods from those employees' overtime pay

Akal staffs its flights with air security officers, who must return to the United States on the same aircraft that they leave in.

Because there are no detainees on the way back, there is not much work for the officers to do, and they are free to sleep, meditate or just watch television on the empty flights home.

[Read more](#) 

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## Financial well-being benefits employees need and want

published 10-09-21

Sixty-nine percent of employees say their employer doesn't offer any financial well-being support/benefits. Yet, 57% said they would like to have them. And 62% believe it's an employers' responsibility to provide them. That's according to a survey by Alegeus, a consumer healthcare funding company.

[Read more](#) 

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## 10th Circuit: Remote work not always reasonable accommodation

published 10-07-21

A healthcare fraud specialist for the Defense Health Agency (DHA) was diagnosed with PTSD and panic disorders related to his time in the military. His conditions made it difficult for him to manage his stress and concentrate, and his work environment sometimes made things worse.

The DHA tried to offer the employee accommodations, such as moving his cubicle to a quieter area, but he rejected that, wanting two days of remote work and the ability to work weekends.

The employee sued the company for failure to accommodate him under the ADA, but the 10th Circuit ruled in favor of the DHA. It found that the employee's accommodation requests were unreasonable.

[Read more](#) 

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## People who need HSAs aren't using them

published 10-05-21

In 2020, 13% of people age 50 to 80 delayed getting medical care due to being worried about cost. And 12% who actually needed medical care didn't get it because they couldn't afford it.

And it doesn't stop there. People are worried about paying medical bills in 2022. In fact, 18% of the people were doubtful they'd be able to pay for their healthcare expenses next year.

[Read more](#) 

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## Vaccine surcharge & incentives: 5 compliance issues

published 10-04-21

1. Firms shouldn't administer the COVID-19 vaccine.
2. COVID-19 vaccine surcharges and incentives can't exceed 30% of the total cost of an employee's health insurance premiums under HIPAA/ACA wellness program rules.
3. Firms can't take into account any discount or vaccine surcharge avoided by being vaccinated when figuring out its lowest-cost plan expense.
4. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act requires firms to provide a reasonable accommodation – unless it would pose undue hardship – if a worker says they can't get the COVID-19 vaccine due to a "sincerely held religious" belief, practice or observance.
5. President Biden's Emergency Temporary Standard (ETS) will only be around for six months, and it doesn't include employees' families.

[Read more](#) 

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## Judge won't micromanage employer's disciplinary process

published 10-07-21

A firefighter sued for sex discrimination while the incident she's suing over was still being investigated.

She asked the court to order the city to "immediately" discipline another firefighter; not send him to fires; and to, apparently, appoint a different investigator.

The judge said no, finding that granting this order would improperly "micromanage" the fire department's "personnel procedures and decisions[.]"

[Read more](#) 

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## WELLNESS

# 5 ways to help everyone rediscover joy at work



by Michele McGovern

Build a  
positive  
company  
culture

HR MORNING



**J**oy at work. Does it sound more like an oxymoron, a thing of the past or a new goal?

Many HR pros want joy to be part of the [company culture](#). Most employees hope they find joy – either at their current workplace or the next one.

But it's probably never been more difficult to infuse happiness at work. Employees don't interact as much as they once did. Front-line managers can't give their ideal level of hands-on coaching. Not to mention, people are stressed about *everything*.

Still, joy at work matters. Happy

employees are 12% more productive, according to [University of Warwick](#) research. They also have better health and relationships in and out of work than their less-happy colleagues. Generally, happy employees make their companies better, the researchers said.

So it's important for HR leaders to ask: *Is there joy in our workplace?*

Here's what challenges the joy of employees these days. Plus, we have ways you can help everyone in your organization – yourself included – overcome challenges to create a better, joyful culture.

## Isolation

Regardless of working circumstances – on-site, remote or hybrid – many employees feel isolated. The loss of workplace normalcy, routines, physical contact and personal connections made work less joyful.

**Joy regained:** Sometimes the cure to issues such as isolation, is to change up life outside work. Give employees opportunities to:

- **Get involved with positive projects, people and activities.** You might point them to service groups to help others – and

grant them time to be involved. Or direct them to form or join in Employee Resource Groups (ERGs).

- **Get outside more.** They might schedule walking meetings. Invite employees to create ERGs focused on outdoor activities, too.

## Lack of upward mobility

More than 85% of employees feel their professional growth stalled due to the pandemic, according to Monster's recent [Job Index Poll](#).

Many aren't happy because of uncertainty: Will they gain skills? Where is their career headed? How will they get ahead?

**Joy regained:** The most direct route to help employees regain joy through professional growth is to offer more opportunities to train and learn. You may want to set a regular cadence for career growth meetings and documented plans between managers and direct reports.

Create a library of virtual training courses or ask a trainer to keep an updated internal website of [webinars employees can take on a variety of topics](#).

## Loss of productivity

For the last year and a half, many employees felt they were under so much pressure, they only got urgent tasks done. They fell behind on the things they felt would get them ahead.

Fifty-five percent of employees feel productive only half of the work day, according to a [Paychex survey](#).

Many of those employees are drained by that feeling of being less productive.

**Joy regained:** Instead of just pedaling to keep up, set time to work on

your strengths each day, suggests Rebecca Newton, [author of \*Authentic Gravitas: Who Stands Out and Why\*](#). [Newton recommends](#) you first ask yourself, "When are times recently that I have felt energized at work? In these situations, what was I doing?"

When you identify your strengths, schedule them in your day. For instance, if you recognize you love strategic planning, schedule that for the hour you're generally most productive. Or if you get excited about creating new things, allow your mind to wonder for an hour at the end of each day.

## Managing other people's issues

This shouldn't be too surprising: Dealing with drama and dilemma takes the joy out of work for managers, in particular.

Nearly two-thirds of managers said handling employee issues has been more challenging this year because of the hybrid work structures, according to the HR Acuity survey, People Leaders and Employee Relations: The Case for Technology.

Front-line managers are stressed and overwhelmed. And they often end up neglecting their own needs when they're trying to help employees overcome issues. That's draining.

**Joy regained:** Give front-line managers platforms and opportunities to open up about what they face and how they feel. You might facilitate groups where managers are prompted to talk about challenges and share best practices for overcoming them. Also, amp up communication about the benefits you offer on stress management. If managers feel more in control at work, they'll find joy – and likely spread it to their employees

## Fear

Fear can suck the joy out of everything – not just work. And employees have felt more fear in the last year and a half.




Right now, more than 40% of employees don't want to return to work because they're afraid they'll contract COVID-19 or expose family members to it, according to a Conference Board survey. Other employees are afraid they won't be able to juggle child- or adult-care with office work.

Some fears are with remote work, too: Employees are afraid their career will fizzle from home. Others are worried about the lack of connection with colleagues, the Conference Board researchers found.

**Joy regained:** HR leaders and frontline managers will be challenged to combat fear and revitalize joy. Granted, not all of your employees live in fear. But everyone can use reassurances on everything you do to keep them safe and healthy. You might want to talk regularly with employees about the challenges they face balancing work, life, childcare and professional development to create working situations that make them feel secure. From that vantage point, joy can blossom.

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Recommended reading from [Michele McGovern](#)

- [Best practices to measure remote employee engagement](#) 
- [Re-engage employees who don't want to come back to work](#) 
- [Can't connect nowadays? Let's communicate effectively again](#) 

# FMLA abuse? Worker took ski trip while on leave



HR manager Lynn Rondo frowned as she reviewed the video on her screen. After watching it all the way through, she picked up her phone and dialed company attorney Eric Bressler.

"Hi, Lynn," he answered. "What's up?"

"I wanted to talk to you about Jeffrey Tolliver," Lynn replied.

"Oh," Eric said knowingly. "How's the investigation going?"

"Well, I'm looking at a video he posted on Facebook, and he definitely doesn't look incapacitated to me," she said.

"Remind me of the timeline here," Eric said.

## Plenty of energy

"A month ago, Jeffrey asked to go on FMLA leave to help manage the physical symptoms of his diabetes," Lynn began. "He had all the paperwork, and we granted his leave request, no problem.

"But then one of his co-workers made a comment to me, asking if Jeffrey was on vacation. I said he was out on leave, but the co-worker said that was strange, since this is the same time of

year he always goes on his annual ski trip. So I did some digging."

"And you found the video," Eric concluded.

"Yes," Lynn replied. "Jeffrey claimed to be too exhausted and unwell to come into work, but he had plenty of energy on the slopes."

"Did you ask Jeffrey about this?"

"I tried to," Lynn said. "But he suddenly needed to extend his leave, and he's been dodging my calls. I think we need to fire him."

"I think so, too," Eric said. "But he might fight us on this."

When Lynn fired Jeffrey, he sued for retaliation under the FMLA. The company fought to get the case dismissed. Did it win?

## The Decision

Yes, the company won when a judge dismissed Jeffrey's lawsuit.

His attorney tried to argue that Jeffrey was fired too hastily and hadn't been given a chance to defend himself. The company

should've spoken to him before firing him, the attorney said.

But the court disagreed. It said the company had good reason to suspect FMLA abuse, and it conducted an investigation to

prove its suspicions. The company attempted to contact Jeffrey to discuss the issue, but he didn't return the calls. The company had a non-discriminatory reason to fire Jeffrey, the court ruled.

## Analysis – FMLA doesn't provide immunity

This case acts as a reminder that, under the right circumstances, an employee can be fired while they're on FMLA leave. If FMLA abuse is suspected, it's very important for the employer to conduct

an investigation before making termination decisions.

It's also important to remember that not all "fun" activities are considered FMLA abuse. If

the employee is caught doing something but it doesn't contradict doctor restrictions, it's likely not FMLA abuse. In this case, skiing was a very physical activity Jeffrey shouldn't have been able to do.

*Cite: Botelho v. U.S. Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Dist. Crt. of HI, No. 18-00032 ACK-WRP, 9/30/21.*



45% WERE  
LESS LIKELY  
TO LEAVE  
THEIR JOBS



## BENEFITS

# Employer's support has major positive employee impact



by Renée Cocchi

**T**he pandemic has put many employees through the ringer. You've seen it first hand. But the employees who've come out on top are the ones who have their employer's support!

Why?

Because it has "a direct impact on the health and resilience of employees," according to [Mercer's "Health on Demand" survey](#).

Stress isn't your employees' friend. And the pandemic has brought most employees a ton of stress. So, it's no surprise to Benefits pros that the pandemic has affected employees mental, physical and financial health.

In fact, 20% of U.S. employees reported they felt less physically healthy or fit.

The survey also found:

- More than 50% of employees had at least some level of stress during the pandemic
- 25% of employees have experienced mental health issues (i.e., depression or anxiety), and
- 20% are financially worse off than before the pandemic.

Benefits pros are learning just how much of a positive effect an employer's support can have on employees' health and resiliency. And according to Mercer, it's the most important finding of the survey.

### Big impact from essential support

The pandemic brought out the good in companies. They wanted to make

sure their employees were happy and healthy working from home or the office. Because as we know, employees who are stressed, sick and burned out aren't productive.

But it's not just productivity at issue. Employers who truly care about their employees, want them to be happy and healthy for their own well-being.

And the survey showed that employers who provided essential support during the pandemic had a big impact on employees:

- They were less inclined to report their pandemic experience as "mostly" or "entirely negative" compared to those who didn't get support (25% vs. 49%), and
- 45% were less likely to leave their job because of their employer's support.

What else can you do to make sure you understand and support the diverse needs of your workforce?

To support employee health and well-being, the study found employers need to do the following four things:

### Supply diverse, valued benefits

Customizing your benefits package to meet the needs of your staff is "highly" or "extremely" valued by 55% of employees. Having something for everyone increases your chances of each employee finding something of value.

When offered 10 or more health and well-being benefits, 52% point to it as the reason they stay at their job. That's compared to 32% who are offered one to five benefits/resources. Here's the kicker: Employees in the "10 or more benefits" group say they're "more confident" they'll be able to afford needed health care AND they believe their company cares about their health and well-being.

### Offer digital health care access

The pandemic was the reason for the sudden popularity of [telemedicine](#):

- 20% of employees were first-time users during the pandemic
- 23% used it more than previously during the pandemic, and
- 72% plan to continue its use.

An uptick in the use of telemedicine isn't the only big increase of technology. Employees showed a strong interest in digital health tools like apps that find providers to virtual reality self-care tools.

Employees' interest in digital healthcare tools from 2019 to now has been enormous. Firms need to include virtual visits and access to care because they're a valued benefit to employees.

### Decrease stress, anxiety

The survey revealed that 25% of respondents indicated they were highly or extremely stressed. The sad news: Of the 13 countries in the survey, the U.S. had the highest percentage of highly or extremely stressed respondents. The UK only had 16%. On the other hand, 48% of U.S. respondents gave their employers [mental health support](#) the thumbs up, rating it as highly or extremely valuable.

If you want to create a strong bond that'll lead to steadfast loyalty, provide a strong mental health and counseling program. Reason: 40% of employees said they had a hard time finding quality mental health care. And the lower a person's wages were, the harder it was for them to find access to it with the percentage rising to 47%. That number jumped even higher to 58% for the LGBTQ+ community. And this group placed the highest value on employers providing mental health support.

As you can see, mental health care support is much sought after and valued by a large majority of employees. Avenues for employers to pursue that are cost effective: virtual counseling via video chat with mental health professionals, via text and via AI-powered text chats – no human involvement.

### Address bias in health care

Employees who earn more find it easier to afford medical and mental health care. That's pretty much the norm, and it shouldn't be. Reason:

The people who need it the most, typically can't afford it.

In the survey, respondents with a household income (HHI) the same as or less than the U.S. median were less likely to feel confident they can pay for their family's medical needs (60%) than those above the median (83%). Benefits pros need to help their companies create strategies earmarking benefits/resources to those who have the greatest need.

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#### Recommended reading from [Renée Cocchi](#)

- [Digital health tools: The pandemic impact & challenges](#) 
- [Open enrollment: Improve your benefits offerings by analyzing social & environmental risks](#) 
- [Financial wellness programs decrease healthcare costs](#) 

## Case Study

# Job ad tweak helped us overcome hiring woes



Every employer out there knows hiring is tough right now. You can offer competitive salaries and benefits, but a lot of the time, that just isn't enough.

We were having an issue filling our open positions. We needed new hires fast, and our current offerings weren't doing the trick.

So we put our heads together and brainstormed unique ways we could attract talent.

### Hiring bonus, flexibility

One of the things we came up with was a hiring bonus. We settled on \$2,500 for entry-level positions, and up to \$3,500 for more advanced positions.

The hiring bonus was sure to grab candidates' attention, but we didn't want to stop there. We knew flexible hours and the ability to work from home were crucial perks candidates want right now, so we decided to offer those benefits as well.

Between the hiring bonus and the increased flexibility, we were sure we had a winning combo to snatch up some great talent. Now, we just had to make sure we successfully communicated these things to candidates.

### Open conversations

Knowing what we now needed to add to our job postings, we revamped them. We stated up front how much of a hiring bonus the candidate could expect for the position they applied for.

We then detailed the possibility of flex and remote work. Some jobs could be done completely remotely, and others required more of an office presence. We made sure to explain what the situation was for each position, and also detailed we'd be willing to negotiate the amount of remote work with the candidate during interviews.

If remote work was truly impossible for a job, we emphasized in the job ad the ability to work flexible hours. Again, we made it clear we were open to discussing all of this. We let candidates know they had control over their future work situation.

### Several great options

The bonus and the flex scheduling has helped immensely. Since putting this in our job ads, we've had more candidates apply. They've enjoyed the open discussion around remote work arrangements in the interviews,

and talented people have made it all the way to the end of the hiring process.

Before, we couldn't find any qualified candidates to fill our positions. Now, we have three great options to choose from for one job. We know our hard work of revamping the job postings had everything to do with this.

*(Linda Pappajohn, HR director, Santora CPA Group, Newark, DE)*

## COMPENSATION

# 4 reasons you should practice pay transparency now



by Rachel Mucha

Greater  
diversity and  
productivity



**W**hether it be at work or in a social setting, discussing salary has always been taboo.

In fact, 75% of employees reported that they are actively discouraged or prohibited from discussing salary with their colleagues.

It makes sense that employers wouldn't want employees comparing paychecks — it can result in major conflict and resentment amongst their teams.

And while many experts lately have been pushing for it, the idea of pay transparency is still controversial, and only around 17% of companies practice it.

### Gaining popularity

But pay transparency can actually have many benefits for both employers and employees, and some companies have begun to implement it. Just ask [Kimberlea Kozachenko](#),

the CEO and founder of coaching and consulting agency Kolmeta. She implemented pay transparency as soon as she founded her company.

"My main goal was to create an environment in which my employees could thrive and feel a sense of ownership in everything they did. I realized transparency and openness was the key to achieve this goal," Kozachenko said.

Pay transparency doesn't have to be all or nothing, either. While some companies (like Kolmeta) have a



master list of every employee's pay, others simply reveal a salary range for each role at the organization.

Here are all the reasons you should consider implementing pay transparency now, based on Kozachenko's experience as well as experts' research.

### 1 Better cohesion amongst employees

Employees who know what each other make are proven to work better together, according to Kozachenko.

"Since everyone knows what their colleagues earn, poor performance simply isn't tolerated amongst the collective group."

This drives team members to work harder, as their colleagues will hold them accountable if they drop the ball. Employees at Kolmeta work well together, and there's a sense of trust with everything out in the open. Goals are met more easily, and there's little conflict within teams.

Social media scheduling tool company [Buffer](#) found something similar. Their research went even further, saying employees also trust their company when pay transparency is in play. Buffer says their workers feel so respected by their employer, they're 110% more likely to remain with the company.

### 2 Greater diversity

When companies are transparent about pay, it essentially eliminates the issue of unequal pay. A woman will easily know if she's [earning less](#) than her male counterpart.

Groups often discriminated against will know they'll be paid fairly at your company, which will give you a competitive edge in recruiting. For example, after Buffer adopted pay transparency, it received twice as many applications as it did before.

More applicants means more talented candidates to choose from — which also helps lead to greater diversity, too.

### 3 Higher productivity

According to a study done by the Academy of Management Journal, employees who know their colleagues' pay perform better than those who don't. When employees know they're paid fairly, they naturally work harder. They feel the need to perform better and meet their goals to justify their pay to themselves, their colleagues and their managers.

Pay secrecy has the opposite effect. If employees suspect they're being underpaid, they aren't going to put forth the effort. They're more likely to be unhappy and to underperform.

### 4 More value

Pay transparency simply adds greater value to a business. [Workplace cultures improve](#), as there is a lesser chance of resentment between colleagues. The added bonus of increased diversity will help too, since many studies show diverse companies are more successful ones.

The biggest positives Kozachenko has seen at her company are happy, hard-working employees and reduced turnover.

### How to implement

So where do you begin if you're interested in trying pay transparency? You can follow Kozachenko's model.

She knew the first step would be coming up with a fair compensation model. Before you start revealing everyone's salaries, you'll need to make sure everyone is truly paid fairly — or you'd be asking for trouble.

For each position at the company, Kozachenko came up with a guaranteed base pay. Then, employees would get more money added to that based on their individual performance and whether their teams met their goals.

"We looked at how each person contributed to the overall success of the company, and whether they reached the goals they set for themselves," Kozachenko said.

She then made sure everyone had access to their co-workers' job descriptions and goals — as well as salaries — so no one has to wonder why someone is making more than them.




### One drawback

Of course, pay transparency isn't a perfect system, and there was at least one drawback for Kozachenko — and that was occasional difficulty with recruiting.

Pay transparency is still a pretty new concept, and a lot of people aren't comfortable with having their salary out in the open. During the hiring process, Kozachenko made sure to inform candidates about their salary transparency practices.

"Our salary transparency repelled some talent," Kozachenko said. "Some people just aren't comfortable with it, and we fully recognize and respect that."

### Recommended reading from [Rachel Mucha](#)

- [Study: Salary history bans are working – and spreading](#) 
- [Three trends for containing healthcare costs](#) 
- [Emergency savings accounts can help relieve employees' financial stress](#) 





# Two experienced workers, but only one job: Who stays and who goes?

## The Scenario

HR manager Stu Capper had just finished his lunch when vice president Karen Wheeler walked into his office.

"Hi, Karen, you're right on time for our meeting," Stu said. "Have a seat."

"Hi, Stu," Karen said, without much enthusiasm.

"You don't sound too happy," Stu said.

"It looks like we're going to have to get rid of either Anna or Paul."

## 'Out of our hands'

Stu sat back, shocked. "Why?"

"We just don't have it in the budget to keep both of them on," Karen said.

"They've been doing a great job, though," Stu pointed out. "Ever since they both started running things, we always meet our deadlines. The employees are more motivated, too."

Karen nodded. "I know, it's a shame," she said. "But it's out of our hands. Our CFO just told me we don't have the money to keep paying

two manager salaries, and we've had one person do the job before."

"True, but the department's bigger now," Stu said.

"We don't have much of a choice," Karen replied.

Stu sighed. "Who were you thinking of laying off?" He asked.

"That's the thing, I'm not sure. They're both great workers," Karen said. "Paul's been here forever, but it seems like the employees prefer Anna. I don't want to hurt morale, but I don't want to get rid of the employee who had the job first."

*If you were Stu, who would you lay off?*

## Reader Responses

**Judy Schreckenbach,**  
*HR VP, Community Connections, Inc., Durango, CO*

I would open up the job and allow anyone at the company to apply for it (including Paul and Anna) to ensure we choose the best candidate. We'd assemble a team to conduct interviews and make the decision.

**Reason:** This would be the fairest way to do it. The hiring team would prevent a biased decision. Opening up the job is important; we can make sure that Paul and Anna are both actually interested in the job, and we can see if there's a more qualified candidate out there, too. This process keeps everyone in the loop – no surprises.

**Margie Tuckta,**  
*director of HR, Indian Head Casino, Warm Springs, OR*

What Margie would do: Because Paul has been here for so long, we really should try to keep him. I'd go back and look at his records to try and find if his unpopularity has anything to do with performance. I'd see if there was something we could fix to make him the best fit.

**Reason:** Paul has been here longer, so it's only fair that he should get to keep the job. If he's been doing well other than some likeability issues, we owe it to him to work around those.

# 5 tips to bond with new remote hires



by Michele McGovern

## MANAGEMENT IN A HYBRID WORK MODEL



**Y**ou loved them. You hired them. Now it's time to bond with new remote hires – if only you were together.

It's not an easy task since many organizations have postponed the reopening of their offices. So those new, sought-after and anticipated employees work from home – just like most of their colleagues.

While it might seem natural to [work and interact remotely](#) nowadays, it's not ideal for new employees. HR professionals know: New employees need to feel welcomed, become engaged and connect with the culture so they can succeed.

And when you find ideal new hires, you want to do everything to keep them, considering about 60% of employers have a difficult time

keeping employees, according to [a Willis Towers Watson survey](#). And those companies expect the problem to linger into next year.

“Employers are in the middle of an intense war for talent that's not likely to let up anytime soon,” said Adrienne Altman, managing director and North American head of Rewards at Willis Towers Watson. “The challenge of hiring and keeping employees has now spread from isolated industries and skill sets to most industries and workforce segments. To compete, it's imperative for employers to take strategic actions and find ways to differentiate.”

How can HR pros and front-line managers bond with new remote hires?

Here are five strategies to bond with new remote hires and get them engaged with your workforce.

### Recognize, react to the difference

The [hybrid work model](#) feels almost natural now. So many front-line managers are tempted to onboard exactly the same as they did before the pandemic – all in hopes everything seems “back to normal.”

But a hybrid or fully remote situation calls for different approaches – and it presents an opportunity: More than half of employees believe hybrid work can improve their well-being, [an Avaya study](#) found.

So you might as well start improving it during onboarding, even if you plan to bring new hires fully on-site.

## 5 tips to bond with new remote hires

Try to:

- Communicate daily so they never feel like they aren't in the loop
- Remain fluid and transparent. Let new hires know circumstances can and will change – and you'll let them know immediately
- Set a schedule so at least one team member or colleague interacts with the new hire every day
- Involve them in meetings. Invite them to all relevant Zoom meetings and give them a role so they interact, and
- Regularly update new hires on the [well-being benefits](#) at their fingertips, such as access to online meditation and yoga, telehealth and your Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)

### Connect the brethren

Help new hires across the organization connect. Their shared experience of starting remotely – regardless of age, department and role – builds a natural bond.

Informal “virtual watercooler sessions” can help. [Researchers from the Harvard Business School](#) found new workers who join in the regular online events are happier and perform better at work.

Online, informal meetings between new remote hires foster career-building connections and build bonds to the company.

One caveat: You don't want to overwhelm new employees with Zoom meetings. Make informal chatting sessions voluntary and during work hours.

### Connect managers

Direct managers often stick to business when they meet virtually with their new remote hires. After all, there's so much to teach, tell and track.

But one of the Harvard Business School researchers cautioned us. “Managers have to be careful of ensuring that their remote employees get as much attention and opportunity for those casual sessions as in-person employees,” said Iavor Bojinov, an assistant professor of business administration. “That's not something managers had to think about [before the pandemic]. Now, they do.”

So front-line managers want to plan time in each business call for casual conversation. Consider it similar to the Monday-morning, pass-you-in-the-hallway, how-was-your-weekend conversation.

Aim to find out what new remote hires are passionate about – family, hobbies and career-wise. And be willing to share yours.

Another caveat: If an employee seems reluctant to share, don't push it. It's more difficult to read the reasons – perhaps shyness or a preference for privacy – but you'll want to let them open up when and if they're ever ready.

### Remember the ancillaries

If your office is remote or hybrid, it's not likely anyone is signing up for the local softball league, cornhole tournament or any of the other events people walked out of the office and did together.

So now you want to look for ways to recreate those new employee bonding opportunities. Your [ERGs are a great start](#). Surely, many of them still meet, interact and maintain a semblance of your company culture. Even better, some likely continue to build stronger [Diversity, Equity and Inclusion \(DEI\) efforts](#).

You might try a virtual event that promotes all your ancillary employee activities and groups. Then – similar

to a job fair or college activities fair – new employees can “visit” with those that interest them during designated online meeting times.

### Monitor well-being




As much as you want new remote hires to connect with colleagues, the company and their work, you also want to make sure they aren't overdoing it. If remote work gets lonely, stressful or overwhelming, they'll leave before they become fully engaged.

So front-line managers and HR will want to give new hires tools to avoid burnout. Here are three from tech experts at The [Wall Street Journal](#):

- Drop some apps. Delete email and IM apps from your phone so you get away from work when you're supposed to be away from it. They're too tempting to check.
- Create a separate space. Even if you don't have a separate home office for work, maintain a “difference” between work mode and life. For instance, a different set of headphones, an office chair or a barrier within the room to keep the computer out of sight.
- Pursue a passion. For at least 30 minutes a day, avoid the banal tasks and do the kind of work that excites you – the part of the job that you'd talk about at the bar (if you went to a bar).

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Recommended reading from [Michele McGovern](#)

- [Struggle to find new hires? 6 ideas to win the talent war](#) 
- [Hiring mistakes are valuable learning opportunities](#) 
- [4 things to look for while hiring remote candidates](#) 

## HEALTH AND WELLNESS

# Cost-effective voluntary benefits your employees will love



by Rich Henson

## TAILOR YOUR VOLUNTARY BENEFITS TO FIT EMPLOYEE DEMOGRAPHICS



**I**n 2018 only 36% of employers rated voluntary benefits to be important to their “value proposition and total rewards strategy three years from now,” according to a survey by Willis Towers Watson, a global advisory, broking and solutions company.

But in the past three years that number skyrocketed to 94%.

The cause of this huge jump? The pandemic of course!

“The pandemic has given rise to an increase in benefits that protect employees against big hospital bills and loss of income, and provide personal protection,” said Lydia Jilek, senior director, Voluntary Benefits Solutions, Willis Towers Watson.

### Sell their value

Many firms are offering more voluntary (employee-pay-all or unsubsidized) benefits to meet the needs of their employees who face different situations and challenges thanks to the pandemic.

“Employers view voluntary benefits as a cost-effective way to offer employees a wide range of benefit options that best meet their needs,” said Jilek.

Amy Hollis, a principal at Buck Consultants in Atlanta, told the Society of Human Resource Management that businesses should tailor their voluntary-benefit menu based on employee demographics (including age, income level and marital status) while looking for ways to enhance the core benefits package.



## Cost-effective voluntary benefits your employees will love

"Employees want choices, and they want to be able to customize whatever packages are available to them," she said.

To highlight the value of voluntary benefits, Hollis recommends employers present them as an integral part of their overall benefits package, and not something separate.

It's equally important to back them up during enrollment with strategic communication that highlights their value.

### Top 5 benefits

The top five fastest growing benefits, according to the survey, are:

- identity theft – offered by 53% in 2021, 78% by 2022 and beyond
- hospital indemnity – offered by 42%, 65% by 2022 and beyond




- pet insurance – offered by 47% in 2021, 69% by 2022 and beyond
- critical illness – offered by 57% in 2021, 76% by 2022 and beyond, and
- group legal – offered by 58% in 2021, 75% by 2022 and beyond.

### Widespread benefits

Voluntary benefits being offered the most by employers are:

- financial planning/counseling by existing vendor (93%)
- tuition reimbursement (88%)
- telephonic financial planning (77%)
- onsite fitness center (54%)
- backup childcare (48%), and
- elder care (44%).

Recommended reading from [Rich Henson](#)

- [6 ways to help employees deal with stress](#) 
- [Supported our people by making mental health a value-driven benefit](#) 
- [Employees afraid to admit stress: How HR can help them now](#) 



FREE WHITEPAPER FROM **HealthEquity**

## FLEXIBILITY IS THE FUTURE

Covid-19 significantly reshaped employee work patterns. And 18 months in (with no clear end in sight) signals to experts the urgent need for organizations to enhance commuter benefits and remote work support.

The latest study, conducted by the team of experts at HealthEquity, provides eye-opening results for teams still questioning the validity of a flexible workforce.

[get the white paper](#) 



# DOL: Expense reimbursements and the regular rate of pay

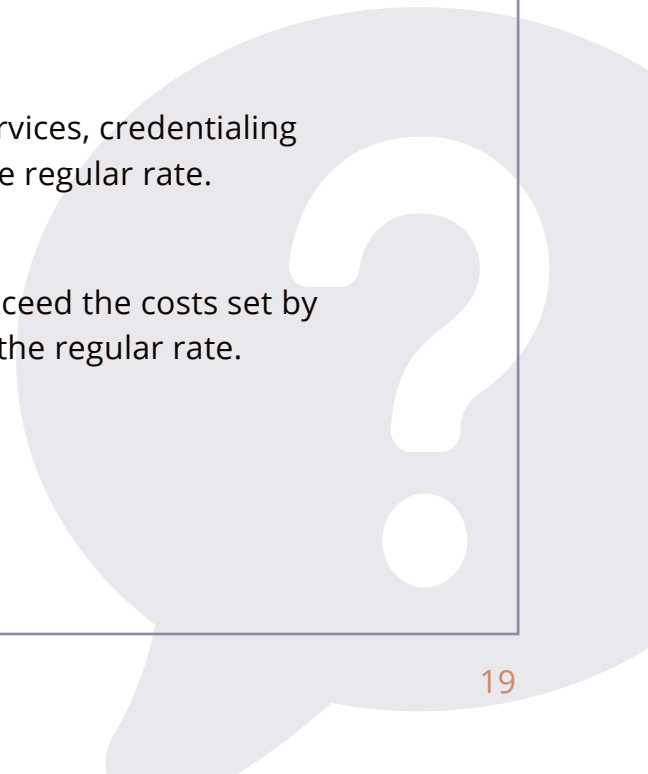


Certain types of expense reimbursements can be excluded from workers' regular rate of pay. As a reminder, we went back to the [DOL's update](#) to see if you're up-to-date on what's allowed and what's not.

Test your knowledge by answering True or False to the following statements and checking responses against the answers on the next page.

- 1 TRUE OR FALSE:** Expense reimbursements must solely benefit the employer to be excluded from the regular rate.
- 2 TRUE OR FALSE:** If expense reimbursements are larger than what the employee actually spent, the excess should be counted in the regular rate.
- 3 TRUE OR FALSE:** Reimbursements for cell phone services, credentialing exams and membership dues are excluded from the regular rate.
- 4 TRUE OR FALSE:** Any travel reimbursements that exceed the costs set by the Federal Travel Regulations must be included in the regular rate.

*Go the following page to see if you are correct.*



## Test Your Knowledge: Answers

### Answers from previous page



- 1 FALSE:** While the regs originally included the word “solely,” this wasn’t the intent of the law, says the DOL. The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) allows any expenses that were incurred in the employer’s interest to be excluded from the regular rate.
- 2 TRUE:** Only the actual amount or a reasonably approximate amount can be reimbursed and not counted as part of the regular rate.
- 3 TRUE:** The DOL updated the text of the regs to clarify that cell phone services, credentialing exams and membership dues reimbursements can be excluded.
- 4 FALSE:** Per the regs, amounts reimbursed in excess of these rates for work travel can still be excludable in certain cases.



#### Exclusive HRMorning Essential Insight

### Motivating Without Money: 91 Inexpensive Ways To Keep Employees Happy

Recognizing good work is the No. 1 way to motivate your employees, but that recognition isn’t enough to keep them motivated forever. You want to keep them at the top of their game, but the problem is: how can you afford to keep giving away incentives while staying within your tight budget?

[get the guide](#)

# ACA reporting is not like it used to be: Changes for 2021

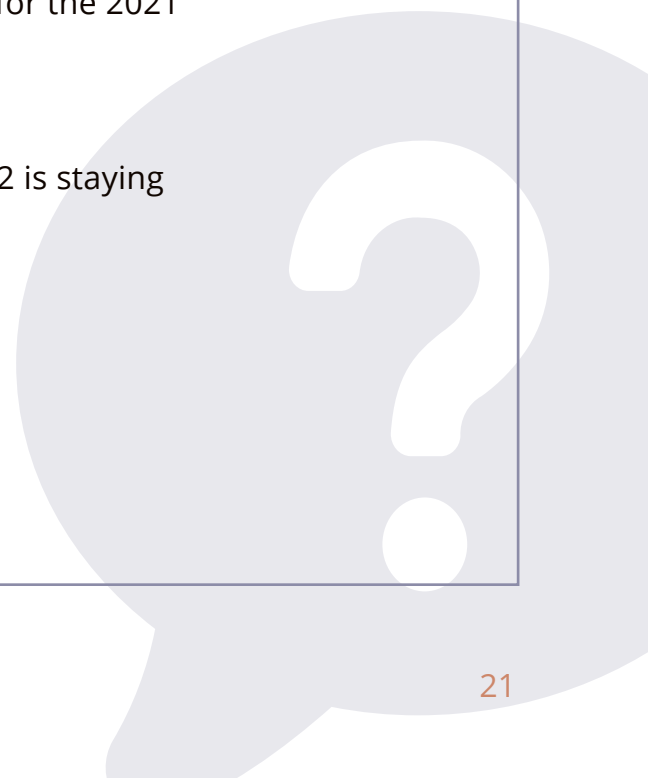


The Affordable Care Act (ACA) reporting deadlines will be here before you know it. The issue this year is changes have been made.

Find out if you're up on the changes by testing your knowledge: Decide whether the following statements are True or False. Then check your responses against the answers on the next page.

- 1 TRUE OR FALSE:** It's extra important this year to make sure that the info you report on Forms 1094-C and 1095-C to the IRS is 100% error-free because 2020 was the last year for the good-faith relief from errors.
- 2 TRUE OR FALSE:** It's extremely unlikely that anyone will be excluded from electronic filing for Forms 1094-C and 1095-C for the 2021 reporting season which occurs in 2022.
- 3 TRUE OR FALSE:** The affordability threshold for 2022 is staying the same as 2021.

*Go the following page to see if you are correct.*



## Test Your Knowledge: Answers

### Answers from previous page



- 1 TRUE** Last year in its Notice 2020-76 – the Notice that extended the good-faith relief and extended the deadline to furnish the Forms 1095-C to employees – the IRS stated 2020 would be the last year it would be extending the good-faith relief and deadline extension. To avoid penalties firms need to make sure what they're reporting is accurate and on time. Requisite employees need to have Form 1095-C by Jan. 31, 2022.
- 2 FALSE:** Proposed regs by the Department of Treasury would make electronic reporting for the Forms 1094-C and 1095-C mandatory for all applicable large employers beginning with the 2021 reporting season.
- 3 FALSE:** The affordability threshold in 2021 is 9.83% and will decrease to 9.61% in 2022.



#### Exclusive HRMorning Essential Insight

### Why Good People Jump Ship And What You Can Do To Keep Them

Good employees – the ones who are engaged, productive, and look forward to coming to work each day – are a hot commodity. There just aren't enough of them to go around, and competitive organizations find a way to steal the best and brightest. Your challenge is to keep them engaged and avoid having a revolving door that lowers

[get the guide](#)

# STUDY: STAFF WILL GIVE UP BENEFITS TO STAY REMOTE

HRMORNING



## RECRUITING

# Attract, retain employees with the flexibility they crave



by Michele McGovern

**I**f you want to attract and/or retain employees now, you need to know what they're willing to give up to be remote.

Many employees aren't ready to leave behind flexibility in their work situation. And you don't want to lose good employees who might prefer [a remote or hybrid work arrangement](#).

The good news: You might be able to find a happy medium – a way you can retain (or attract) employees and reduce labor costs or other expenditures.

The key is to know where employees or job candidates are willing to bend.

## Where they'll bend

Turns out many employees are willing to give up a little – and others will give up a lot – to keep working from home full-time. In a recent [Breeze survey](#), here's what employees said they'd do for their current or new employer if they had a full-time remote gig:

- 65% would take a 5% pay cut
- 38% would take a 10% pay cut
- 24% would take a 15% pay cut
- 18% would take a 20% pay cut
- 15% would take a 25% pay cut
- 39% would give up health insurance benefits
- 50% would give up vision insurance benefits
- 44% would give up dental insurance benefits
- 45% would give up disability insurance benefits
- 44% would give up life insurance benefits
- 46% would give up 25% of their paid time off (PTO)
- 23% would give up 50% of their PTO
- 17% would give up 75% of their PTO
- 15% would give up 100% of their PTO



## Attract, retain employees with the flexibility they crave

- 36% would give up their 401(k) or other retirement plan
- 53% would work an extra 10 hours per week
- 48% would give up their student loan repayment assistance benefit
- 44% would give up paid parental leave
- 47% would give up mental health benefits, and
- 64% would give up fitness benefits




### Can you work with good employees?

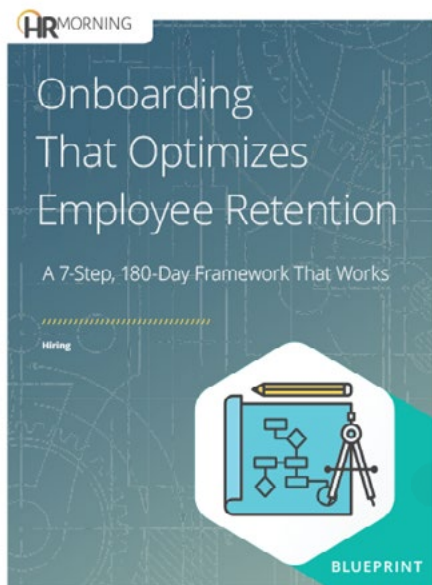
You might be able to find a situation that works with employees who are considering a new position in [The Great Resignation](#).

Talk regularly with your front-line managers to find out if any employees have indicated they're looking for full-time remote work. Also ask employees who've submitted resignations if they're interested in finding a compromise to remote or hybrid work with you.

In either case, you can try to come up with a plan that accommodates both sides.

Recommended reading from [Michele McGovern](#)

- [Keys to turn talent acquisition into talent retention](#) 
- [Secrets to unlocking your best female talent and preparing them to lead](#) 
- [Win at hiring: 6 ways to get the talent you need](#) 



## Onboarding That Optimizes Retention

### A 7-Step, 180-Day Framework That Works

Onboarding is more than simply signing legal papers and receiving training.

When it's done well, you and your company will reap the rewards of retaining successful, talented, contributing employees.

In this Blueprint, you'll discover how to:

- Fully integrate your new employee into their new work environment
- Give your new employee the tools they need to succeed and adjust to their position
- Convey your company's brand, values and culture
- Build your new employees' loyalty through your onboarding process

[get the guide](#) 

### Question

**Should we still be taking employees' temperatures as a COVID screening measure?**

### Answer

While at the start of the pandemic the EEOC said employers may take employees' temperatures to screen for COVID, it's important to remember this is still technically a health screening, so the information must remain confidential, says employment law attorney Brooke Schneider of the firm Withers.

Because of this, some employers may prefer not to deal with temperature screenings at all, as to not risk any privacy violations. And since cases of COVID-19 have started to decrease again, employers may want to do away with temperature checks.

If you decide not to check temperatures anymore, it's important to still remain vigilant for other COVID symptoms. Another option is to have employees take their own temperatures before coming to work, and record them in a confidential manner. This takes the onus off the company and is much more convenient for all involved.

### Question

**We've had several candidates come into interviews dressed very casually, but they performed well otherwise. Should we look past their clothes?**

### Answer

The answer to this depends on whether they'll need to dress nicely for the job they're interviewing for, says management expert and author of Ask A Manager blog Alison Green.

If the job requires business attire, be sure to let your candidates know before they come in for the interview. But if their clothes don't impact the work they'd be doing, I wouldn't hold the casual wear against them.

A lot of employers are re-examining their dress codes right now, and if nice clothes aren't necessary for, say, impressing potential clients, maybe you want to adjust your expectations as well.

If you're concerned the casual wear means the candidate isn't taking the interview seriously enough, think about how they performed otherwise. Were they enthusiastic and engaged? If they were wearing a suit, would you even hesitate to hire them? If the answers to these questions are yes, you might want to look past the casual wear and give the candidates a shot.

### Question

**An employee wants a religious exemption to our COVID-19 vaccine requirement. Do we have to grant it?**

### Answer

While employers are generally required to give religious accommodations, vaccine exemptions are a different story, say employment law attorneys Ashlea Edwards and Karen Buesing of the firm Akerman LLP.

So when an employee wants a vaccine exemption based on their religion, first employers must determine if their religious beliefs are “sincerely held.” This can be challenging, since that’s a subjective standard.

Here are some questions to ask when evaluating the employee’s request:

- Has this employee behaved in a manner consistent with this professed belief during their time at the company?
- Could the exemption be sought for a secular reason instead of a religious one?
- Is the timing of the request odd?

It’s important to ask these questions, because the employee may be trying to get out of the vaccine mandate for political reasons instead of religious ones.

If you find the employee’s religious beliefs are sincerely-held, you then need to evaluate if permitting them to skip the vaccine is reasonable for your business — or if there’s some sort of alternative solution available. Whatever you decide, you should carefully document the entire process.

LIVE EVENT: Wednesday, November 10th, 2021

# Stay Strategic with Your Employee Onboarding

How to Lead  
New Hires Through Virtual  
and Hybrid Environments

a free webinar from



# 7 ways to improve civility at work – on-site and remotely



by Michele McGovern



**C**ivility at work is in danger. Unfortunately, there will be rudeness, no matter *where* you work.

Even in remote settings, incivility is on the rise, according to [University of Michigan and Dalhousie University researchers](#). What's worse, minority, LGBTQIA and other marginalized employees experience it even more.

Incivility looks and feels the same whether it happens on-site, remotely or in a hybrid setting. It often comes in the form of subtle slights, outright interruptions, complete disregard or common discourtesy.

And the results are perilous. Employees who fall victim to incivility

often end up with lower self-esteem, higher stress and decreased job satisfaction, [researchers found](#).

Remote work makes it more challenging. Employees meet online and leaders have less of a chance to witness – and respond to – negative behaviors.

But it doesn't have to be that way. HR professionals can take the lead on combatting rudeness and making the workplace more civil.

"It's important for leaders to keep an open mind and address these feelings. Respecting employee concerns and frustrations are integral for maintaining healthy company culture," says HR Coach Marsha Akpodiete at [Paychex](#).

Through civility, HR leaders and front-line managers can [build a positive, diverse company culture](#) where all employees feel valued.

Here are seven ways to improve civility at work.

## Set virtual standards

Virtual incivility – the kind that goes on behind cameras in Zoom meetings, through keyboards in workplace apps and verbally on phone calls – is even worse for minorities, the University of Michigan and Dalhousie University researchers found. In those situations, the bully speaks over others, makes snide remarks and interrupts.

Stay ahead of that by creating a virtual workplace etiquette guide. A good starting point is your existing, on-site behavior guidelines and expectations.

Give employees examples of what's not acceptable, rather than blanket statements such as, "We won't tolerate rude behavior."

Some examples:

- Raise your hand (real or virtual) before speaking
- Address colleagues respectfully
- Do not yell or use profane language
- Maintain a professional tone, and
- Listen to the speaker.

## Involve the team:

You might encourage teams to help create and maintain group expectations for working together. When people are part of creating something positive, they will more likely embrace it.

The idea is to set a clear standard of respect within a team that works together all the time. As one team improves civility at work, their positive behavior will likely impact other people and areas.

- So, for instance, they might set expectations like these:
- "We will not speak over one another in meetings"



## 7 ways to improve civility at work – on-site and remotely

- “We will record team chats so everyone knows what’s going on and who’s responsible for each idea and task,” or
- “Team meetings will be smartphone-free zones.”

### Encourage calling ‘in,’ not ‘out’

Many people tend to call out people when they experience or witness incivility. Defense is a natural instinct, after all.

But the university researchers suggest a counterintuitive approach: Call in people.

Invite instigators into a quiet meeting to talk, understand, learn and hopefully correct negative behaviors. You want to collaborate with people who aren’t civil at work – while supporting their victims, of course.

Some keys to the conversations:

- Avoid blame and snap judgments
- Cite exact behaviors that violate codes of conduct
- Focus on how the behavior affects others, and
- Guide the person to take responsibility for the behavior and the fix.

### Remember the niceties

In today’s weird work world, many niceties have taken a back seat – especially in a remote work environment. People don’t bring in doughnuts for the crew like they used to. Teams don’t chat socially before meetings start. No one takes the time to ask – and care about – colleagues’ hobbies.

But, if we made time for niceties again, we might [curb incivility](#).

Don’t consider “catch up with colleagues” time as unproductive

or irrelevant. It builds kinship and potentially staves off disdain within groups.

Leaders who are still concerned that too much socializing and sharing will cause disruptions can facilitate connections. For instance, you might start meetings by giving employees a chance to share one good thing that’s happened to them today. Or you might set up a “brag board” on your internal communication app where employees can post news about themselves, families and accomplishments.

### Be ready for the negative

As much as you’d like to avoid incivility, you probably can’t: Some subjects and situations will spark negative reactions and poor behavior.

“It’s important to put a plan in place to address concerns and conflicts that may arise surrounding certain topics, such as vaccines, mask wearing and wishes to continue to work remotely,” says [Melissa Gonzalez Boyce, JD](#), Legal Editor, [XpertHR](#). “It is also important to put a communication plan in place to address concerns and conflicts that may arise surrounding certain topics.”

And don’t just consider COVID-related topics. You might need to address [how employees need to handle political and societal topics](#).

Most importantly, you’ll want to regularly remind employees and front-line managers about your policies and laws regarding harassment and bias. They need to understand the behaviors that violate company and [EEOC rules](#).

### Practice, encourage patience

My mother often told me, Patience is a virtue many desire and few have.

Today, this virtue is pivotal to civility at work.

“Everything is changing so fast—and the level of frustration is increasing because of the world around us. But patience doesn’t mean giving up,” said [Lauren Shin, vice chairman, Global Consumer Practice and Board & CEO Services at Korn Ferry](#), in [their Special Edition](#). “Keeping pace takes both urgency and patience on the part of everyone—and at every level.”

We understand that it’s tough to teach patience. But leaders who practice it build the credibility to preach it.

### Make reporting ‘a thing’




Only about 5% of employees report incivility to HR or a manager, the university researchers said. And that makes some sense. Reporting someone cut you off in a meeting or sent an abrasive email message seems trivial.

But if it’s a pattern of rude, demeaning or disrespectful behavior, it’s not trivial. And HR should know about it so something is done.

So make it easier for employees to report incivility. Perhaps you can create a form for them to report and log instances to help establish a pattern.

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#### Recommended reading from [Michele McGovern](#)

- [5 tough personalities – and how to manage each](#) 
- [Workplace conflict up: 5 tips to get ahead of collision course](#) 
- [Boost employee engagement by cultivating curiosity](#) 



## The Cost of NonCompliance



### \$120K

#### Company didn't pay its workers for breaks whether they were taken or not

**What happened:** GU Industrial & Business Corp. – operators of six Golden Coin locations in Hawaii – set up its payroll system to deduct meal break time from pay without considering if the breaks were long enough for their purpose or, in some instances, if workers took a break at all.

**What people did:** A DOL investigation found Golden Coin's improper timekeeping policies failed to count and pay for all the hours employees worked, including those workweeks when they worked more than 40 hours. This resulted in violation of the FLSA's overtime provision.

"Golden Coin deducted meal breaks automatically without affirming whether the employee was actually relieved from duty for a sufficient length of time or in other instances whether the meal breaks were actually taken. That is illegal under federal law," said Wage and Hour Division District Director Terence Trotter in Honolulu, Hawaii. "This case should remind all employers to review their pay practices to ensure they are complying with the law and avoiding costly consequences if they do not."

**Result:** The company had to pay \$97,503 in unpaid overtime wages for 137 workers. In addition, Golden Coin was assessed \$23,240 in penalties for the reckless nature of its violation.



### \$1.1 M

#### Race discrimination, harassment costs company over \$1M

**What happened:** A meat processing plant in Chicago was sued by the EEOC after giving a certain group of employees preferential treatment.

The African American employees who were hired were harassed, with co-workers and supervisors frequently calling them racial slurs. When an employee filed a complaint about this unacceptable behavior, he was fired.

**Result:** All of this conduct violates the Civil Rights Act, the EEOC says. Chicago Meat Authority agreed to settle the lawsuit for \$1.1 million. The company will also now be required to meet certain hiring quotas for African American employees, and it will have to conduct anti-discrimination training.

## The Cost of NonCompliance



**\$910K**

### Drywall contractor didn't pay for overtime, \$860K owed in back wages

**What happened:** A San Diego construction contractor kept his profits all to himself and failed to pay overtime to 568 drywall installers, tapers and hangers.

**What people did:** The DOL investigated and found New Vision Drywall Inc. – operating as Performance Drywall – paid workers on a piece-rate basis, ignoring the actual number of hours they worked in a single work week. Some employees worked up to 58 hours in a single week, and never saw a dime of the overtime they earned.

“Performance Drywall understood overtime wages and the rules for paying it but made a costly choice to recklessly disregard the law. By doing so, this employer hurt their workers and their families by denying them all of their hard-earned wages,” said Wage and Hour District Director Eric Murray in San Diego. “Our message to San Diego’s construction employers is simple: wage theft hurts workers and cheats your competitors. We will not tolerate these violations and their consequences are serious and costly.”

**Result:** In all, \$860,608 was recovered in back wages and liquidated damages for the workers. In addition, the DOL assess \$49,783 in civil penalties against New Vision Drywall Inc. for its reckless disregard for the law.

**H**RMorning, part of the **SuccessFuel** Network, provides the latest HR and employment law news for HR professionals.

But we don't stop there.

Our editors read and vet hundreds of sources and hand-select the most relevant, practical content. Then we add our seasoned perspective and deliver actionable insights to help you understand what today's trends mean for your business.

No bots. No algorithms. Just real people like you, delivering the advice and tools that help empower you to take action and make a difference for your organization.

## Meet Our Editors



### Renée Cocchi

Renée Cocchi has a passion for learning and helping other professionals do their jobs more effectively and efficiently. She's spent decades working as a writer and editor in the publishing industry, covering a wide variety of fields from benefits and compensation in HR, to medical, to safety, to business management. Her experience covers trade publications, newsmagazines, and B2B newsletters and websites.



### Rich Henson

Rich Henson has spent the past two decades curating and developing HR and Management content to help guide successful leaders forward with confidence. He is a former editor and reporter with The Philadelphia Inquirer.



### Michele McGovern

Michele McGovern writes. A lot. In the professional world, she's covered HR, leadership, customer service, sales, crime and passion in 25+ years as a journalist. In the real world, she manages to be a decent wife, mediocre mom, wannabe athlete and consummate pursuer of fun.



### Rachel Mucha

Rachel writes about Human Resource management and has been a member of the HRMorning staff since 2017. She is a graduate of Ithaca College.

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## About SuccessFuel

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