



Central Louisiana Society for Human Resource Management



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2007 SHRM SUPERIOR MERIT AWARD CHAPTER



CLSHRM Mission Statement

Be the primary influencer of workplace policies and practices that benefit our members and the organizations they serve;

Build a broad and actively engaged membership that ensures dissemination of leading practices to the workplace;

Be the major source for building strong competence and developing the talent and leadership of people in our organizations; and

Ensure a solid financial structure that permits reinvestment in initiatives and learning that advances the state of the profession.

2012 Officers:

- President: Lori Patrick
- President-Elect: Sandy Mask
- Past President: Candy Gerace
- Secretary: Open
- Treasurer: Shannon Tassin
- Vice President of Membership: Jane Walker

Chapter News

It's already June! Can you believe that we're almost half-way through 2012? What can we do, as a chapter, to keep you fresh and energized for the rest of the year? Do you need help or advice in any particular area? Is there a topic you would like to learn more about? These are the questions that help us plan our meeting and conference topics. If you have suggestions, please email us at clshrm0367@live.com. We look forward to hearing from you.

Our membership numbers have remained steady since our roster cleanup at the beginning of March, but we really need to be recruiting new people in order to meet our SHRM goals for 2012. Do you know anyone who is new to HR or new to our area? Invite them to a meeting, request a membership application for them, or send us their contact information so we can give them a call.

There were five students who participated in the certification prep classes recently held at the LSUA Continuing Education Center in Alexandria. We would love to hear any feedback you may have about the classes, how you prepared for your exam in other ways, and any suggestions for those considering the certification program in the future.

Our chapter service project for June is a food drive to benefit the Food Bank of Central Louisiana. Please bring a non-perishable food item to the meeting.

Our chapter service project for August will be a school supply drive for the local schools. Look for more details in the upcoming weeks.



June Meeting

Wednesday, June 20, 2012 at 11:30 am

Southern Creations | 3140 MacArthur Drive | Alexandria, LA 71301

Valerie Aymond, Chief Resource Officer for Gilchrist Construction

Topic: Best Practices of Instituting an Employee Health and Wellness Program

Note: Topic has been submitted for HRCI Credit

SERVICE PROJECT FOR JUNE: FOOD DRIVE

Please bring a non-perishable food item for the Food Bank of Central Louisiana

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Our spotlight this month is on Tyra Rabalais.

Tyra currently serves as Human Resources Generalist for Antoon Enterprises in Pineville. She is a Past President of CLSHRM and remains active in the chapter today. We value her service, her input, and her dedication to the HR profession.

What is your favorite part of Human Resources?

I would have to say the diversity of

issues that arise. There is never a dull moment in the HR Field which means that you encounter new opportunities to learn and grow and expand upon your experiences.

What is your least favorite part of HR?

This may sound like a simple answer but terminations. It's never an easy thing to do and as a Human Resources professional you want everyone you impact to succeed.

What are some personal/professional accomplishments you would like to share?

Juggling your professional life and personal life can sometimes be a challenge. I have two beautiful daughters that keep me grounded and focused. They remind me daily why I wake up every morning and watching them grow into strong young women gives me a great sense of accomplishment. Working in the HR field provides me with daily accomplishments. Every

day I have the opportunity to make a difference for my organization and those who are employed there. I stepped out of the HR field for about 2 ½ years when I served as the Operations Director for Rapides Senior Citizens Centers, Inc. When I took my current position with Antoon Enterprises it opened my eyes to how much had changed in such a short time and to the opportunities we as professionals have to make an impact.

Any advice for the rest of us?

Do what you love and stand up for what you believe in and stay true to who you are.

What are some of your hobbies and interests?

I love Saints football, NOLA, and anything to do with Louisiana....the culture, the people....the Pelicans! I also enjoy traveling and spending time with friends and family.



The SHRM 2012 Annual Conference & Exposition has everything you need to return to your office and make a real, measurable impact with the information you've learned. In addition to a proven combination of innovative strategies and essential HR fundamentals, you also have access to the most expansive HR marketplace in the world at the SHRM Exposition, some of the most powerful in-person and online networking available, and our exclusive Premium Package.

BE INSPIRED

Our keynote speakers' stories and life lessons will add another dimension to your understanding of HR — and increase your connection to the world. Speakers include Condoleezza Rice, Jim Collins and Tom Brokaw.

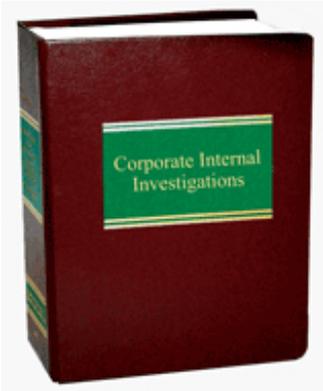
Tuesday night's entertainer is Jerry Seinfeld.

The CLSHRM Annual Seminar is scheduled for Thursday, October 18, 2012, and will be held at the Pineville Convention Center at the Country Inn and Suites.

Mark your calendars now and plan to attend this exciting event.

July Meeting
Wednesday, July 18, 2012
11:30 am
Southern Creations
Michael Johnson
North Rapides Business Alliance and Workforce Development

How to Conduct an Investigation



We are on the web!!!

www.shrm.org

<http://clshrm.shrm.org>



SEND YOUR NEWS, PICTURES AND JOB POSTINGS

We encourage our members to submit announcements, articles, job postings, or pictures for our newsletters.

You may submit your information to Sandy Mask by the last day of each month via email at sandy.mask@crestoperations.com or by telephone at 318-767-5678.

All information should be beneficial to our chapter members and will be subject to approval of the CLSHRM board members prior to newsletter publication.

Following is an abridged version of a SHRM article titled "How to Conduct an Investigation." You may find complete information along with sample forms and processes by visiting SHRM at <http://www.shrm.org/templatestools/howtoguides/pages/howtoconductaninvestigation.aspx?homepage=mpc>

When an informal or formal complaint is made, the employer should take immediate steps to stop the alleged conflict, protect those involved and begin investigations. Under many laws (i.e. Title VII, ADA, ADEA, OSHA, Sarbanes-Oxley, state and local nondiscrimination laws, etc.) employers are legally obligated to investigate complaints (harassment, discrimination, retaliation, safety and ethical) in a timely manner. In addition, any appropriate corrective action is required to be taken by the employer to ensure illegal actions/behaviors cease immediately.

Responsiveness to a complaint and an investigation will not only yield the best information and evidence, but it will also enhance both the investigator's and the employer's credibility. Investigations can help the company identify and resolve internal problems before they become widespread. Since every complaint has the potential to become a lawsuit, employers should investigate every case in a manner in which it can be presented to a court of law, if necessary. As potentially disruptive as investigations can be, they must be prompt, thorough and effective to ensure everyone's protection. The following steps should be taken as soon as the employer receives a verbal or written complaint.

Step 1: Ensure confidentiality

The employer must protect the confidentiality of employee claims to the best of its ability. At the same time, the employer has to conduct a prompt and an effective investigation. Therefore, it may not be possible to keep all information gathered in the initial complaint, such as interviews and records, completely confidential. The employer should explain to the complaining party and all individuals involved in the investigation that all information gathered will remain confidential to the extent possible for a thorough investigation. It should also be explained that in order to conduct a prompt and effective investigation, some information will be revealed to the accused and potential witnesses, but that information will be shared only on a "need to know" basis.

Step 2: Provide interim protection

One of the first considerations may be the need to take immediate measures for the protection of the accuser or the alleged victim. It may be necessary to separate the alleged victim from the accused to guard against continued harassment or retaliation. Actions such as a schedule change, transfer or leave of absence may be necessary; however, employees should not be involuntarily transferred or burdened. These types of actions could appear to be retaliatory and result in a retaliation claim. The employer and the accuser must work together to arrive at an amenable solution. Employers may wish to seek legal advice prior to making any decisions.

Step 3: Select the investigator

The appropriate investigator should possess all of the following:

- An ability to investigate objectively
- To have no "stake in the outcome." They should not have a personal relationship with the involved parties. The outcome should not directly affect the investigator's position within the company.
- Skills that include prior investigative knowledge and working knowledge of employment laws
- Strong interpersonal skills in order to build a rapport with the parties involved and be perceived as neutral and fair
- Attention to details
- The right temperament to conduct interviews

To be in a position to maintain confidentiality, be respected within the organization (since his or her conclusions will be used to make a determination), have the ability to act as a credible witness and, if internal, have the likelihood of continued employment with the company. Employers generally use the resources of HR, internal security, legal counsel (inside or outside) or a third-party investigator. There are distinct advantages and disadvantages to each type of investigator that can be selected.

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How to Conduct an Investigation (continued from Page 3)

Step 4: Create a plan for the investigation

An investigation must be planned to be effective and properly executed. A complete plan should include an outline of the issue, the development of a witness list, sources for information and evidence, interview questions targeted to get crucial information and details, and a process for retention of documentation (i.e. interview notes and evidence like e-mails, etc).

The use of all available resources will assist the investigator in developing a proper plan. The EEOC provides guidelines and definitions to employers on specific topics such as sexual harassment and discrimination. Additionally, there are numerous sources on the Internet and in publications that can be purchased to assist and even provide a step-by-step guide.

Step 5: Develop interview questions

Questions should be developed ahead of time in the planning stage, although additional questions will be added throughout the investigation as more evidence and information is shared. Good questions are relevant and designed to draw out facts without leading the interviewee; they should be open-ended to elicit as much information as possible. The EEOC has sample investigation interview questions, and SHRM has sample questions for the accuser and questions for the witnesses that may get you started.

Step 6: Conduct interviews

Once the appropriate investigator has been selected, an investigation plan has been developed, and interview questions have been developed, interviews can be conducted. The investigator should inform all parties involved of the need for an investigation and the urgency for confidentiality, and then explain the investigation process. The investigator should focus on being impartial and objective in order to gather and consider relevant facts. Prevention from pushing the investigation in any particular direction is imperative. The investigator should never offer any opinion or say anything to interviewees that will discredit his or her impartiality. Objectivity must be maintained with every interview. Taking notes, looking for inconsistencies, looking for opportunities for more evidence and names of other potential witnesses should be a consideration as well. Asking the employee to write down what happened may help to find inconsistencies. There may be a disparity between what the employee is willing to write and what he or she told you in the interview. SHRM has an example of Investigator Interview Methods/Techniques.

Step 7: Make a decision

Through the investigation, the investigator must be careful not to jump to any conclusions before all of the facts are available. Once the interviews are conducted, other necessary procedures, such as evidence collection, are completed. When any credibility issues have been resolved, the investigator will evaluate all the information for a formal recommendation. The investigator and/or member of management, as well as legal counsel, should make the final determination of any employment actions that are warranted based on the investigative report. The employer must consider all of the parties involved as well as company processes, not just whether the accused is guilty, in the final determination.

Step 8: Closure of investigation

Once a decision is made, the employer should notify both the complaining employee and the accused of the outcome. It is important to let the complainant know that the company took the complaint seriously and took appropriate action. Ensure the complainant agrees that he/she has been properly heard and understood, even if he or she is not in agreement with the results. Set a timeframe to follow up with the complainant to ensure there are no other issues and that he or she is settling back into the work environment. Encourage communication and follow up until the complainant is comfortable again. Finally, remind all parties to preserve confidentiality. SHRM has information on why it is important to follow up with those involved in the investigation as well as a webcast.

Step 9: Develop written summary investigation results

If operating on the premise that every investigation of a serious nature could potentially be heard and reviewed by a court, the employer will want to consider preparing a final investigative report. Keep a clear paper trail of the evidence, such as examining documentation of previous employee behavior and incidents. The investigator should have a clear record of everything done, any findings as well as other steps taken during the investigation. It is also necessary to document interviews with the accused, the accuser and witnesses. Investigators should ensure their notes from interviews are as factual as possible, have as much relevant information as possible, are dated and indicate the duration and time of the interview.

The final report will summarize

- The incident or issues investigated including dates
- Parties involved
- Key factual and credibility findings including sources referenced
- Employer policies and/or guidelines and their applicability to the investigation
- Specific conclusions
- Party (or parties) responsible for making the final determination
- Issues that could not be resolved and reasons for lack of resolution
- Employer actions taken

The goal of the document is to ensure that if a court, jury or government agency were to review it, they would conclude that the employer took the situation seriously, responded immediately and appropriately, and had a documented good-faith basis for any actions taken during or as a result of the investigation.

Once the investigation is completed and documented, the employer needs to determine what documentation should be retained and for how long.