



Recruiting & Search  
Outplacement  
Human Resource Consulting  
Assessments  
Talent Management

## **Handbooks – A Welcome Addition?**

Employee handbooks aren't unlike that cute little puppy in the store window. Everyone wants (or already has) one, taking care of it will be easy and everyone will love it! As with puppies, handbooks may sound like a great idea on the surface, but if an organization is unprepared for its arrival, it may soon wish that handbook had stayed on the shelf.

### **Everyone Wants (or Already Has) One**

As handbooks become increasingly popular, it isn't difficult to find a distributor, software program or consultant willing to assist you in the development or purchase of one. Many of your competitors are already using a handbook and your neighbor is working on one now. These handbooks must be the wave of the future - I must have one as well!

An employee handbook can be an extremely valuable management tool in any organization, no matter the size or industry. Written documentation provides consistency and guidance in administering the organization's policies. It tells your employees what you expect of them and what they can expect of you. Although every situation will not be treated the same, handbooks provide guidelines for determining what course of action to take regarding employee issues. Before implementing a handbook, employers must be prepared to follow the procedures once they are in place. Always remember that it's better to have no handbook at all than one that is ignored.

### **Taking Care of It Will Be Easy**

Once you've made the decision to implement and distribute a handbook, it must regularly be reviewed and updated. Each policy or section of the handbook should be marked with the publication date. As new policies are added or old ones reviewed, corresponding dates should be changed as well. Upon receipt of the original handbook and for each subsequent update, all employees should sign an acknowledgement form (a sample is included) indicating their receipt and review of the policies. This will ensure that all employees are aware of expectations and may prevent the "I didn't know" excuse for rule infractions.

### **Everyone Will Love It!**

It's not surprising that employees may not welcome a written book of rules, regulations and disciplinary action. To minimize negative reactions from the workforce, it is crucial for management at all levels to communicate the rationale for the handbook and publicly support its contents. This is especially true for organizations that may have been lenient or entirely without formal policies. Aside from providing guidance, handbooks set the framework for an organization's culture by letting employees know what they can expect from the company and what the company expects from them.

Employee handbooks have been, and will continue to be a popular means of communicating an organization's philosophies. When properly developed and implemented they can help alleviate confusion, indecision and uncertainty in the workplace. Like a new puppy, time, training and care go a long way to developing a successful handbook.

phone: 920-432-7444  
920-738-7055

2611 Libal Street, Green Bay, WI 54301  
47 Park Place, Appleton, WI 54914

fax: 920-436-2966  
920-738-1842

[www.thehsgroup.com](http://www.thehsgroup.com)

**Acknowledgement for Receipt of Handbook**

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Company’s Employee Handbook. I agree that I have read it thoroughly, including the statements in the preface describing the purpose and effect of the Handbook. I agree that if there is any policy or provision in the Handbook that I do not understand, I will seek clarification from the Human Resources Director. I understand that the Company is an "at will" employer and as such, employment with the Company is not for a fixed term or definite period and may be terminated at the will of either party, with or without cause, and without prior notice. No manager or other representatives of the company have the authority to enter into any agreement for employment for any specified period of time, or to make any agreement contrary to the above. I understand that this Handbook states the Company’s policies and practices in effect on the date of publication.

I further understand that the Company needs flexibility in the administration of the policies and therefore the policies contained in the handbook may not be applicable in every situation and the Company’s actions may vary from written policy. I also understand that these policies and procedures are continually evaluated and may be amended, modified or terminated at any time.

Please sign and date this receipt and return it to the Human Resources Director.

Printed Employee Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_