



# **Business - Creating a Wonderful Environment - What Documents Do You Need For Staff?**

By Dr. Linda Hancock

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled “All Psyched Up” for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of “Life is An Adventure...every step of the way” and “Open for Business Success” is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email [office@drlindahancock.com](mailto:office@drlindahancock.com)

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When you hire employees or set up staff contracts, there are a few important documents that you will need to prepare. Ensure that you and the other person each receive a copy of the following:

**Letter of Offer** - You do not usually need a lawyer to draw up a formal document but instead can prepare this yourself as long as you include everything that is necessary. The letter should be dated and addressed to the person who is being contracted or hired.

Include the following in the letter:

1. Their full name and address
2. Their date of birth
3. The starting date for services
4. The number of hours and rate per hour or total amount to be paid for a project
5. The expected end date of the contract (if there is one)
6. The things that the employee or contracted person will not get (benefits, sick leave or holidays)
7. Hours of work (if they are to be regular)
8. Indicate that there will be two attachments (Job Description and Confidentiality Agreement)
9. Leave two blank lines and ask the person to sign and date the letter, returning one to you
10. You then sign and date the letter and make a photocopy of everything for the other person

**Job Description** - Attach a very detailed and clearly written description of the tasks and duties that you have reviewed with the person before hiring them.

**Confidentiality Agreement** - Prepare a document which clearly outlines the importance of confidentiality and the consequences for breaching. You will need to have this signed after you have had a discussion in which you explain exactly what is expected and how to protect the information of both you and your clients.

**Banking Letter** - If the person you are hiring will be responsible for making bank deposits, you bank will need a letter to indicate this. Be very clear in the letter that the named person has your authority to ask for information and make deposits but NOT make decisions on your behalf. The original of the letter will go to the bank and a copy will be kept in the person's employee or contract file.

**Change letters** - If you decide to change the rate of pay, hours of work or job description, a full updated letter will need to be prepared and signed by both of you and a copy kept by each.

**Any mandatory government forms** - Ensure that any important government forms are completed and filed. This might include Tax withholding forms or annual tax slips which were given to the employee for their Income Tax submissions.

I keep a separate file for each of the people who I hire with an appropriate label and all the documents listed above for each person.

Having staff and ensuring that the proper documentation is in place is all part of the wonderful adventure of having a business.

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