



**Private Club
Performance Management**

Human Resources on the Go



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#06

Employment at Will

Reference: Personnel Policy - 200.02

It is the policy of the club that all employment is Employment-at-Will.

Employment-at-Will means that during an individual's employment, he or she is free to leave the club at any time for any reason, and the club reserves a similar right. Thus, both the individual and the club have the right to terminate an individual's employment at any time, with or without advance notice, and with or without cause.

No one other than the President of the club has the authority to alter this arrangement.

- Management and supervisory staff are not to make representations to employees or applicants concerning the terms or conditions of employment which are not consistent with this policy.
- No statements made in pre-hire interviews or discussions are to alter the at-will nature of employment or imply that discharge will occur only for cause.
- This policy may not be modified by any statements made in policy statements or any other employee handbooks, employment applications, training material, memorandums, or other material provided to employees in connection with their employment.

Successful completion of the introductory period or conferral of full time or part time designation does not change the employee's at-will status or in any way restrict the club's right to terminate an employee or change the terms or conditions of employment.

Take Away: All managers and supervisors must understand the club's policy of At-Will Employment.



#10

Hiring Screening

Reference: Personnel Policy - 200.06

It is the policy of the club that all prospective employees are carefully screened during the employment process.

The purpose of the hiring screening is to determine the absence or presence of alcohol or illegal drugs, the employee's physical suitability for the position, and the accuracy of information provided on applications and during pre-employment interviews.

Applicable screenings:

- Full and part time employees are subject to the following screenings:
 - ❖ Physical exam,
 - ❖ Drug screening, and
 - ❖ Background check, which may include all or part of the following:
 - ✓ employment history verification,
 - ✓ Department of Motor Vehicle records check (if position requires driving),
 - ✓ criminal records, and
 - ✓ work references.
- Seasonal employees are subject only to the Drug Screening and Background Checks, unless the position for which they are being hired requires heavy lifting, i.e., more than 40 pounds. In such cases, seasonal employees will also be required to undergo the Physical Exam.

Employment offers to external applicants are conditional on the applicant's ability to pass all required screenings, including the Drug Screening. Offers to existing employees to transfer to another position within the club may be made conditional on the ability to pass an alcohol and drug test in the same manner as external applicants for employment.

A check will also be made for a valid driver's license for all employees employed in positions requiring driving a motorized vehicle to include golf carts and lawn mowers.

Should an employee take an unpaid leave of absence of more than 90 days, he or she will be required to take another physical exam and drug screening before returning to work. This requirement is waived for an employee who is on a leave of absence of 90 days or less.

Former employees who are rehired within 90 days of their termination will not need to take another physical exam and drug screening; those rehired after 90 days will.

All employees are reminded that the club may require random drug testing at any time.

Take Away: All managers and supervisors must be familiar with the club's hiring screening and should inform applicants of these during the interview process.



#13

Legal Status to Work – 2

Reference: Personnel Policy - 200.08

It is the policy of the club to abide by all laws regulating the legal status to work in the United States.

Discrimination Prohibited. The law protects certain individuals from unfair immigration-related employment practices by a U.S. employer, including being refused employment based on a future expiration date of a current employment authorization document.

What is an Employee's Responsibility Regarding Form I-9?

A new employee must complete Section 1 of Form I-9 no later than close of business on his or her first day of work. The employee's signature holds him or her responsible for the accuracy of the information provided.

The employer is responsible for ensuring that the employee completes Section 1 in full. No documentation from the employee is required to substantiate Section 1 information provided by the employee.

What is an Employer's Responsibility Regarding Form I-9?

The employer is responsible for ensuring completion of the entire form. No later than close of business on the employee's third day of employment, the employer must complete Section 2 of the Form I-9.

The employer must review documentation presented by the employee and record document information on the form. Proper documentation establishes both that the employee is authorized to work in the United States and that the employee who presents the employment authorization document is the person to whom it was issued. The employer should supply the employee with the official list of acceptable documents (See HROG 15) for establishing identity and work eligibility; this list is contained on the I-9 itself. The employer may accept any List A document, establishing both identity and work eligibility, or a combination of a List B document (establishing identity) and a List C document (establishing work eligibility) that the employee chooses from the list to present.

The employer should examine the document(s) carefully and accept them if they reasonably appear to be genuine and to relate to the employee who presents them. Requesting more or different documentation than the minimum necessary to meet this requirement may constitute an unfair immigration-related employment practice.

If the documentation presented by an employee does not reasonably appear to be genuine or relate to the individual who presents them, employers must refuse acceptance and ask for other documentation from the list of acceptable documents that meet the requirements. An employer should not continue to employ an individual who cannot present documentation that meets the requirements.

Take Away: All managers and supervisors must be familiar with the laws regulating the legal status to work in the United States.



#20

Departmental Staffing Guides

Clubs will typically create well-defined employment categories for employees to make benefit determinations based on the number of hours worked. As an example one club created the following definitions:

- *“Full time – employees who work not less than 35 hours per week on a continuous basis and employment is anticipated to last 11 months or more.*
- *Part time – employees who work less than 35 hours per week on a continuous basis and employment is anticipated to last 11 months or more.*
- *Seasonal – employees whose employment is expected to last less than 11 months regardless of the number of hours worked per week.”*

In this instance, full time positions were eligible for full benefits, the part time staff received more limited benefits, and the seasonal positions received no benefits.

Given the seasonality of most club operations, clubs have a need to expand and shrink their labor force to meet the needs of each seasonal business levels. The ability to do this in a timely manner will save the club significant amounts of unnecessary cost. Further, most club managers recognize the benefits to member service and organizational continuity of having a stable work force. Lastly, clubs should avoid full time staff layoffs as much as possible for both the cost and morale impact they create. The challenge then is to balance the need for a stable staff with the cost-saving ability to shed excess positions when business levels warrant.

The solution to these competing needs is to establish staffing guides for each department made up “core” and seasonal positions. The core positions represent those staffing needs for year-round minimum function and service needs and can be either full or part time depending upon the needs of both the club and employees. Seasonal positions are just that – those that are added and reduced as business demand warrants.

Each department head, by creating a staffing guide of core and seasonal positions, determines optimal year-round staffing. These core positions, then, are “protected” from seasonal adjustments in all but extreme situations. Once the staffing guides are determined for each department, no new hires should be made for core positions without an existing vacancy or the express approval of the general manager.

Take Away: Staffing guides are a discipline to ensure that year-round staffing levels are established to protect core requirements while controlling seasonal pay costs.



#21

Exempt and Non-Exempt Positions

There are a lot of misconceptions regarding the paying of employees either as salaried (a fixed amount each pay period) or hourly (an amount based on the number of hours worked times an hourly rate of pay). Some managers seem to think that you can avoid overtime payments by paying the employee a salary. But nothing could be further from the truth and such a practice could put a club in violation of the federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) which specifies a number of wage and hour requirements for employers.

The FLSA mandates that employees who work more than 40 hours in a workweek be paid overtime – that is time and one half for each hour worked over 40. Exemptions are made to this requirement for certain managerial, professional, and commission-compensated positions – thus the term “exempt” employees.

But the requirements for these exemptions are few, defined, and have been narrowly construed in court cases. All other employees are considered “non-exempt” and must be paid overtime as required by the FLSA.

It is dangerous, then, for any club not to assess and classify each position as either exempt or non-exempt depending on a careful evaluation of job functions to meet the exemption requirements. Even after positions are classified, the club must be vigilant that new positions are not designated as exempt without a formal review of duties and responsibilities and that job requirements of existing exempt positions do not materially change, thereby affecting their exempt status.

Failure to carefully adhere to exemption criteria can be costly for clubs in terms of fines, penalties, and orders for payment of back overtime work.

Clubs may pay a non-exempt position on a salaried basis but are still liable for overtime payments for hours worked over 40 in a week. Thus paying non-exempt positions a salary requires ongoing vigilance to ensure overtime compensation is paid correctly.

Take Away: No position should be made salaried to avoid overtime payments without a careful review of job requirements and exemption criteria.



#35

Performance Reviews

Performance reviews are periodic, formal feedback sessions that help measure an employee's contribution to the overall effort. Reviews give important feedback to employees, reinforcing those things they do well while helping them improve in areas where their performance is weak. As such, they are part of the ongoing training and staff development efforts of the club.

Performance reviews must include an opportunity for the employee to give feedback as well. A performance review should be a dialogue with nothing finalized until the session is ended.

Prior to a performance review, a supervisor must explain to an employee the criteria by which his performance will be judged. This is only fair, as everyone deserves to know those things by which their work will be evaluated. The perfect time to share and explain the performance review form is upon hiring when the supervisor provides the employee a job description and explains the functions of the position.

The purpose of any performance review is to obtain the best possible performance from each employee by positively reinforcing desired skills and behaviors while developing his full potential by coaching and constructively correcting those behaviors that need improvement. The basic concepts behind achieving optimum performance from each employee are to:

- Set goals and expectations the first day of employment and adjust and reinforce them during the entire period of employment.
- Coach along the way, correcting when necessary and reinforcing positive performance.
- Ensure that any performance review is not a monologue by the supervisor; rather it should be a dialogue between the employee and supervisor to reach a mutual understanding of what optimum performance is and how to achieve it.
- Set goals for the next session and discuss how to accomplish them.

Take Away: Performance reviews are an important part of the employee development process.



#42

Training Requirements and Principles

Before establishing training requirements, the club must determine in great depth its operating standards, policies, and procedures. There are, after all, the backbone of any organized system of training. But there are certain things necessary for a training program to be successful:

- Leadership – the will to make it happen.
- The necessary focus and attention.
- Designated responsibilities and accountabilities.
- Established training objectives, standards, guidance, and budget.
- Curriculum development for each position.
- Administrative system or software to monitor and track training compliance.
- Training benchmarks and reports to track time and costs of training effort.
- Standardized list of teaching aids and equipment to facilitate training.

There are a number of principles which affect the development and implementation of a club's training effort:

- Not all employees learn equally well or fast; and not all employees find the same teaching methods conducive to learning. Therefore, there is a need to develop training formats that meet the needs of all learners. Such formats will include self-study manuals, checklists, handouts, quizzes, Power Point presentations, On the Go Training material, scripting of key member interfaces, and ongoing discussions at staff meetings.
- Training employees is not a one-time task. New employees must receive initial training, but the amount of material that must be mastered requires that initial and refresher training be given in most topics and job skills.
- Some sort of *Daily Huddle* should be used by every department every shift to inspect staff, remind them of important service details, provide On the Go Training, and ensure every employee has the proper mind-set and enthusiasm to deliver high levels of service.
- Some training, such as the topics of sexual harassment and safety, is required by law. Because of legal and liability issues, such training must be consistently taught throughout the club and thoroughly documented.
- All individuals tasked with training responsibilities must be trained. Completing a Train the Trainer class is a prerequisite to training other employees.

Take Away: In establishing a formal discipline of training the club is undertaking an extremely challenging endeavor. While it adds several time-consuming tasks to already busy schedules, it ultimately will make everyone's job easier.



#79

Glossary of Terms – 3

Performance Reviews – periodic formal job performance assessments and feedback provided by managers and supervisors to their employees.

Reasonable Notice – the customary period in advance that an employee who is voluntarily terminating employment with the club notifies his supervisor of his departure.

Sexual Harassment – unwelcomed advances of a sexual nature, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature in the workplace that are prohibited by federal law.

Sick or Personal Time Off Pay – a benefit whereby employees are provided a certain amount of paid time off for sickness or personal reasons.

Staffing Guides – guidelines that specify the number of “core” positions for each department; core positions represent those staffing needs for year-round minimum function and service.

Staff Notes – daily or weekly notes kept by managers and supervisors on the performance and conduct of employees under their supervision.

Standards, Policies & Procedures (SPP’s) – written documents used to describe the what and how to’s of a club’s organization and processes; collectively they make up the club’s operations plan.

Terminations – the collective term that encompasses all the reasons an employee terminates employment with the club, i.e., voluntary quit, abandonment of position, layoff, and discharge.

Timekeeping – the procedures to account for hourly employees’ work time; an essential element of validating payroll cost.

Tools to Beat Budget – a program to track revenues and expenses in real time, allowing managers with bottom line responsibility to more closely monitor the performance of their operation.

Training on the Go – a training program developed by Private Club Performance Management that provides essential knowledge and skills in small, easily presented formats for ongoing training of staff.

Unemployment Compensation – a federally-mandated, state-administered, employer-paid benefit whereby employees who lose their employment through no fault of their own receive defined benefits for a specific period.

Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Act (USERRA) – a federal law that dictates the rights of members of the U.S. armed services who are called to active duty or are otherwise performing their obligated service requirements.

Vacation Pay – a benefit whereby employees are provided a certain amount of paid vacation.

Verification of Hours – the discipline of ensuring that employee hours worked are validated prior to preparing payroll checks.

Workers’ Compensation – a federally-mandated, state-administered, employer-paid benefit whereby employees injured or killed on the job receive medical, rehabilitation, disability, and death benefits.

Workplace Relationships – a situation with sexual harassment potential that occurs when two employees have a personal or intimate relationship; such a relationship is forbidden when one of the employees is a supervisors who directs the work of the other.

Work Policies – those club policies and procedures that apply to all employees.

Youth Employment – federal and state laws that apply to the hiring and working of youths under the age of 18.

About the Author

Ed Rehkopf is a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy and received a Master of Professional Studies degree in Hospitality Management from Cornell's School of Hotel Administration. During his long and varied career, he has managed two historic, university-owned hotels, managed at a four-star desert resort, directed operations for a regional hotel chain, opened two golf and country clubs, worked in golf course development, and launched a portal web site for the club industry.