

Is Your Glass Half-full For 2011?

So many things look better today than back in 2009! Despite an inconsistent recovery, it's time to prepare for growth, put important workplace issues into context and prioritize actions. Look at these important statistics which may surprise you about employees, legal risks and the true costs of ineffective management:

Employees who report "I am actively engaged in my employer's work each day": 26%

Number of charges filed nationally each year at EEOC alleging discrimination: 93,277

Dollars lost each year to employee theft in retail workplaces: \$15 billion

Number one reason employees stay with their employer: a good relationship with their boss

What employees want most from their CEO: vision, honesty, deal with problem employees

Chance you will spend thousands of dollars recruiting for and replacing good, trained employees in 2011: medium to high

Number of NC employers cited in 2009 for having the wrong (or no) law poster on the wall: near zero

Percent who say they are actively disengaged from their work: 19% (so, 55% are "neutral"!)

Number of charges found to have merit: less than 10% (and only 314 suits filed nationally by EEOC)

Percent of all private sector wages lost yearly from low productivity: 18 to 39% (potentially trillions of \$\$)

Number one reason employees leave their employer: a bad relationship with their boss

What CEO's think employees want most: more pay and more time off

Chance you will be sued in state or federal court by a problem employee in 2011: very low

Cost of poor communication with employees over basic job expectations and goals: very high

8

MY PREDICTION:

Too many employers and managers spend too much of their time (and therefore money) on exhaustive plans to prevent every bad legal thing that MIGHT happen. Guess what? Nobody's armor is that well built, and there will always be a hole to exploit. I am NOT suggesting an irrational de-emphasis of compliance efforts. I am suggesting a proactive prioritization of limited resources. Just having the discussion with your team around workplace improvement priorities, communications, rewards and roadblocks will be fruitful.

!

HOW TO PREPARE:

- Consider these projects in 2011 for a better balance between problem avoidance and enhanced work output:
- Does each employee understand their true role, what success looks like at year end, and what's in it for them if goals are met? NOT just revenue goals from the business plan: what does the employee need to know and do to succeed and how they can self-measure each day?
 - Do your managers know how to solve workplace problems? The major sources of conflict and legal claims are poor problem recognition, problem solving and communication skills.
 - Good employers provide employees a reason to sleep well at night (pay/benefits) but too few give good reasons to get engaged at work each day. What are the reasons you want to provide as the skilled labor markets tighten?
 - Do your managers have the tools to increase engagement and minimize problems, or have you sent them into a foggy minefield with no map?
 - Legal compliance priorities: safety, salary/pay rules, solid recordkeeping, basic fairness in policies and decisions, detecting and stopping harassment.

Engagement is defined as the extent to which an employee brings their discretionary effort, heart, mind and energy to the job each day. Half of your employees are "waiting to be engaged"! There's no single formula, but it is worth more of your time than it is probably receiving. Focus on two or three new ways to get more employees truly engaged and have a great 2011!

Contact me directly if I can help you or your team.

Bruce

bruce.clarke@capital.org



Bruce Clarke, JD, is CEO of Capital Associated Industries (CAI), one of the nation's largest employers' associations, with offices in Raleigh & Greensboro, NC.
www.capital.org

Executive Scan provides a quick monthly update on legal and external issues affecting your workplace with timely advice on ways to respond. It is provided to members and friends of CAI.

Executive Scan is written by CAI's CEO, Bruce Clarke, JD.

Archived at www.capital.org/execscan



CAI serves over 1,000 North Carolina employers by helping to **MAXIMIZE** employee engagement and **MINIMIZE** employer liability through human resources and management advice, training, news, survey data, public policy advocacy and consulting services.

Add others or manage your print subscription by contacting execscan@capital.org.

Become a CAI member, or use your member benefits at www.capital.org

This is your December 2010 EXECUTIVE SCAN

Capital Associated Industries, Inc.

Raleigh Office
919-878-9222

Greensboro Office
336-668-7746