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Next Seminar:

Paying and Rewarding Staff

Demand was high last time we ran this seminar so it's being repeated on 16th March 2012

Getting pay and reward right in a firm is a complex business. It involves determining a market price for each job and for ensuring equity within the firm for jobs with the same level of responsibility. Most firms also want some link between reward and performance.

This half day seminar looks at setting pay bands, at avoiding future pitfalls in setting and paying wages, at how to use benefits to provide a complete package and at how to evaluate one job against another to achieve a balanced pay structure. We know SME managers find it difficult to spring the time and financial resources to attend courses so we limit this seminar to three hours and it costs only £55. [Book your place now](#); places are limited. See our [programme](#) for more.

TimelessTime Website

In recent months the hits on our [website](#) and [blog](#) have risen dramatically. The most read pages are the papers on [redundancy](#) and [recruitment](#). Do note that there's the equivalent of about 350 A4 pages of information on HR and organisational development. Do browse freely.

Legal Update

Tribunal compensation limits: Unfair dismissal currently £68,400 rising to £72,300 from February.

Limit on pay:
1 day £22.20 rising to £23.50 from February
1 week £400 rising to £430 from February

A tribunal award of £4.5m was made recently against an NHS Trust for sex and race discrimination. Disability, sex and race discrimination cases can attract huge awards if the employer is found to be at fault.

General Update

Current unemployment rate is 8.4%. Gatwick area unemployment is 1.9%.

The Government are considering charging claimants when they make a tribunal claim. There are several options being considered to ensure frivolous claims are not taken out.

The 2012 pensions reforms are under way. A scheme must be offered and eligible employees must automatically be enrolled into the scheme. This change will not affect smaller firms for another couple of years, but will cost an additional 3% for employers who do not currently pay into a scheme. This should be factored into budgets from now one. More on this in future newsletters.

TimelessTime is an ISO9001 certified firm



Timeless Update: January 2012

Welcome to the latest edition of Timeless Update, your regular roundup of topics provided to support you in ensuring the best possible performance of your organisation. The snippets of information here provide you with high level comment on aspects of HR dealt with in more detail (where appropriate) by articles and white papers written by TimelessTime. Just follow the links for more information.

Training: Who Pays?

Training is a form of investment and by its definition, investment means spending money now in the hope of greater returns sometime in the future. Training beyond tertiary education for a typical employee over the course of their working lives could be as much as £40,000 in courses alone. If it's even half that, it's still a lot and we need to think about who pays. Who pays for the upkeep of employees' competence?

There are three players in the game of training – the person, the firm and the Government. Our recent blog discusses the arguments for and against each picking up the bill and concludes that in the current political climate, we can expect little from the UK Government. That leaves the person and firm to fight over the liability and we suggest in the article an appropriate split. See here for the [full article](#).

Recruiting in a Skills Shortage

The UK has a skills shortage. That's both official and borne out wherever a manager tries to recruit specific trades. How then should one go about recruiting when it's a seller's market? How does the manager get the right person in to fill a vacancy without compromising on standards and having to choosing the 'best of a bad bunch'?

The critical thing is to be absolutely clear what knowledge, skills and abilities are essential (that is, those that can't be learned) and those that can be compromised on. Things like spatial awareness are innate whilst report writing can be learned. Essentials need to be tested for using [psychometrics and skills testing](#). See our blogs on [compromise in recruitment](#) and on [recruiting in a skills shortage](#).

Employment Tribunal Support

In the past months, we've been supporting a client against whom a Tribunal claim has been made. We've managed meetings and drafted the [ET3](#), the response to the [ET1](#). In the ET1 the claimant sets out their case. The firm responds to this claim as respondent. ACAS can act as mediator to try to reach a settlement. If this fails then a tribunal hearing will follow, with the firm having the burden of proof.

Perhaps the future changes proposed by the Government will go some way to discouraging opportunists. Claimants may have to pay a fee to lodge a claim, but on the flip side if the firm loses, a fine of up to £5,000 may follow. We'll keep you updated in future newsletters.

That said, firms need to tighten up procedures and train managers. Many claims come about because managers are not quick enough to respond to issues, including absence. In cases of absence due to stress, these can lead to substantiated claims of disability – and it's for the firm to know of the disability, not for the sufferer to advise management. Don't get caught out: manage early - and here's [some guidance](#).

Performance Related Pay

We're just closing a project for a client on performance related pay. It involved a comprehensive analysis of the competencies required within the firm. A competency framework was developed. The competency framework now supports a functional and robust performance appraisal scheme centred on clear, measurable objectives agreed between the employee and their line manager.

The final step is to ensure that the pay structure is fully transparent with all employees understanding how and where they fit into the defined bands, or ranges. The whole system is designed to ensure that the business pays market rates for competence and can additionally reward those delivering the required behaviours, whilst doing so with a given budget. Find out more about pay models for SMEs on our [blog](#).

[If you are interested in appointing TimelessTime to work with you so that you maximise your bottom line and become an employer of choice, we would love to meet with you to discuss how we can help and provide you with a competitive quote for our services.](#)

[All new client initial meetings are undertaken free of charge and without obligation.](#)

[If any of these topics interest you and you'd like to know more give us a call on 01825 724179.](#)

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