

HR UPDATE

STATE OF ALASKA
DIVISION OF PERSONNEL
AND LABOR RELATIONS

FY 08 - ISSUE 03
SEPTEMBER 16, 2007

HR.....SOLUTIONS FOR SUCCESS.



3991 © R. Valentine, Alaska Division of Tourism

IN THIS ISSUE:

- *Job Fairs
- *Retention
- * 2007-2008 Training

HR UPDATE LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK

Please let us know what you think of our publication. If you have any suggestions about how to improve the HR Update or topics you think should be addressed, please contact Inga.Aanrud@alaska.gov.

JOB FAIRS BY TARA STEPHENS

On September 12, 2007, the Division of Personnel & Labor Relations (DOPLR) attended the Anchorage Daily News (ADN) Job Fair at the Egan Center. This job fair was a huge success! Over 5000 job seekers attended.



ADN Job Fair Left to Right: Michael Buck, Rosanne Nowotenski, Michelle Williams, Tara Stephens, Angela Whittinger, Michelle Williams and Kimberly Giallopsos

As you are aware, DOPLR encourages and invites agency hiring managers to attend and/or participate in job fairs whenever possible. Attending job fairs allows the hiring manager the opportunity to show-case career opportunities within their agency directly with job seekers. DOPLR was happy to welcome Dale Crum a hiring manager from the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA), who participated for a few hours at this event. We would also like to recognize DOPLR staff who attended: Michael Buck, Kimberly Giallopsos, Rosanne

Nowotenski, Tara Stephens, Angela Whittinger, and Michelle Williams.

Hiring Managers, if you are unable to attend a job fair, we encourage you to consider creating recruitment flyers, and other marketing information for distribution at upcoming job/career fairs.

Mark your calendars! The DOPLR will be attending Alaska Veterans' Job Fair, November 8 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Anchorage Job Center – Muldoon.

If you would like more information and/or display any recruitment information, please contact Tara Stephens at 465-4432 or Tara.Stephens@alaska.gov

RETENTION—KEEPING THE GOOD ONES BY CAROL MCLEOD

In an earlier edition of HR Update, we discussed the costs associated with employee turnover. Turnover is costly; it has been calculated that it can cost as much as two or three times an employee's salary to find, hire, and train a replacement. In addition to monetary expenditures, there are the additional concerns of detriment to recruiting efforts, loss of morale of remaining employees, and damage to the reputation of the agency that is unable to keep good employees. While a holistic, enterprise-wide approach to dealing this issue is the ideal solution, it would not be unrealistic for line managers, supervisors, and directors to begin now by implementing some day-to-day strategies to use in their own shops to stem the tide of departing employees.

Employee retention can be a complicated matter. Not only is it a matter of identifying why people are leaving, but also means taking steps to correct the problems. While time-consuming, open-ended exit inter-

views and surveys can pinpoint specific issues in an agency, which, in turn, allows management to make critical decisions and changes based upon those issues. However, when it is not practical to conduct exit interviews, information and help from other sources can be useful in creating an agency-wide plan to deal with employee retention. The remainder of this article is compilation of general retention strategies that State of Alaska managers and supervisors may find helpful.

Many studies have shown that employees leave managers at about the same rate as they leave jobs for **all** other reasons. Unfortunately, it is not enough that the supervisor/manager is well-liked or a nice person. **Management and supervisory training for line managers help them become better bosses.**** Great bosses make employees stay longer and the stronger the line managers are, the more likely it is that turnover will decrease. Supervisors promoted from the ranks often find that they need to learn new skills in order to be effective in their new positions. Training will not only keep these new supervisors, but will help them hold on to their direct reports. Supervisory training takes time, but it takes less time than does dealing with the constantly revolving door of recruiting, hiring, re-recruiting, rehiring, training, and retraining of newly hired and newly departed employees.

Researchers in this field agree that a **satisfied employee, one who is prepared to stay in the job, is one who knows what is expected of him/her every single day.** Among departing employee comments are supervisors' lack of clarity about expectations, lack of feedback about performance, and failure to provide recognition for work accomplished. In time, employees who do not know what their supervisors expect of them begin to feel undervalued and under-

HR Update FY 08 - Issue 03

appreciated—and will start to look elsewhere to get direction and positive regard.

The perception of fairness and equality of treatment in the workplace is another factor that contributes to retention of seasoned employees. Nothing sours a workplace relationship like the feeling that there is an individual or group of employees who always receive preferential treatment. This could be anything from special project assignments to salaries for new employees at a higher step and range than current employees are making. There may be justifiable reasons for continually selecting the same individual to get the coveted projects or for hiring a new employee at a higher step, but supervisors should use these reasons judiciously and realize that there will be repercussions due to the impact on others.

The best employees, the ones an agency really wants to keep, will seek out opportunities to learn and grow in their careers. Offering cross-training, educational opportunities, mentoring, and the chance to serve on committees are some ways to keep employees engaged and interested in the job. Stagnant, stifled employees will produce stagnant, stifled work—if they stay at the agency.

Employees who are able to speak their minds freely, without fear of repercussion, are more likely to stay longer in a job. Employees and supervisors who are able to give and receive feedback are usually more committed to both the job and to its continuous improvement. Supervisors who encourage articulation of both problems and solutions often find themselves pleasantly surprised by the quality of the suggestions and employees feel valued that their ideas are being considered by management. Research suggests that employee-driven ideas do not necessarily have to be adopted in order for the employee to feel valued. As long as employees feel that they are being heard, they feel they are being respected and appreciated.

In conclusion, employees leave for a variety of reasons. Some of these reasons, such as salary, are beyond the control of line supervisors and managers. However, **making employees feel recognized and valued,**

providing training for new managers and supervisors, and having clear goals and expectations go a long way towards keeping your seasoned employees. Choosing to be proactive and work on what can be changed rather than focusing on what can't be changed can help the State of Alaska retain its valuable employees.

**For more information on supervisory and other training, go to <http://dop.state.ak.us/index.php?id=10>.

GET MORE "TOOLS" IN YOUR "TOOLBOX" BY CAMILLE BRILL

Sign Up For a Training Course

It's a great opportunity to learn new skills and solidify prior training. Check out the 2007-2008 Open Enrollment Training Calendar on the Division of Personnel & Labor Relations' Training & Development web page at: <http://dop.state.ak.us/index.php?id=10>.

Division of Personnel & Labor Relations (DOPLR) staff provides professional supervisory, management, leadership, EEO compliance, and interpersonal skills training development and delivery. Courses are offered on an open-enrollment (scheduled), special session (request), and customized basis. Actual comments from people who attended open-enrollment DOPLR trainings last year:

Academy for Supervisors

- “Excellent material presentation . . . could not have had a better instructor.”
- “I have been to national trainings, local, & state trainings through my 30-year work history . . . this learning experience (was) outstanding.”
- “It was awesome. I would take it again if I could. Highly recommend the course to all new and not so new supervisors.”
- “By far the best class I've had since (being in) state service 23 years.”
- “This course was excellent and I am excited to use my new skills.”

Change Management for Supervisors

- “Covered a lot of information . . . (I) will use it right away. Good job!”

•“Content was great!”

•“I wish I knew this before our last organization change. Thank you!”

Interpersonal Skills

- “Incredible class.”
- “I came reluctantly, but left with a lot of knowledge I desperately needed.”
- “This was one of the most informative classes I have taken . . . I gained a lot of useful information and skills.”

Performance Coaching

- “Great training. Energetic, interesting, informative.”
- “Very useful course. Excellent information.”
- “Great class and instructor. Expanded on previous trainings & demonstrates quality of curriculum development and management.”

Performance Appraisal – The Basics

- “Class was great!”
- “I found this course valuable, enjoyable, and answered my questions.”

Valuing Diversity

- “This class was great. I learned so much about myself and ways to help people whether at work or home.”
- “You made it a fun and easy way to learn.”
- “Wonderfully instructive.”

A Respectful Workplace

- “I learned a lot.”
- “Good overview of laws, responsibilities and how to comply.”
- “Every state employee should take this every 2 or 3 years.”

The Disciplinary Process

- “I enjoyed the class – it was very useful in my position and I'm sure I'll use it.”
- “Excellent class.”
- “I only wish it was two days.”
- “I learned more than I thought I would.”

Service Excellence

- “Excellent instructor – made course fun & very educational.”
- “Learned a lot.”
- “Awesome training.”

Sign up today! Go to **TrainAlaska** --

DOPLR's on line registration, enrollment and records system: <http://dop.state.ak.us/index.php?id=10>