



HIRE WITH CERTAINTY

February 2008

Visit Us On Our Website:

www.AccuScreen.com

Protect Your Company From:

- Workplace Violence
- Dangerous, Unsafe and Violent Employees
- Unqualified, unproductive, Turnover Risks
- Negligent Hiring and Retention Lawsuits
- Embezzlement, Employee Theft

Inside this issue:

- The Mystery of Valentines Day 2
- Check your Morale Killers (continued) 2
- What's an Employer to do? 3
- Dealing with 2008 Laws, Regulations and Decisions 3
- Trivia: Who Said It? 3
- What's an employer to do? (continued) 4

Letter from Kevin Connell

President & CEO of Accu-Screen, Inc.



I want to cover two important announcements with you this month. The first involves Accu-Screen Online, our secure 24/7 Applicant Background Ordering and Tracking System. We will be rolling out some significant upgrades to our system by May. There will be even greater ease in ordering and a new Client interface, as well as some other significant improvements and additions. You will be receiving more information about the New and Improved Accu-Screen Online as we move closer to May 2008.

The second announcement deals with a New Membership Site. This site is the result of the collective knowledge gained from helping companies across the globe with their background screening services over the past 15 years.

You'll find a wealth of valuable tips and resources all aimed at helping you to have the most successful recruiting, background screening and hiring system available today.

Within the membership site, there will be a compendium of laws relating to hiring and background checks, streaming audio, video, and much, much more. You will be receiving a brief survey that will assist us with the features and content that you would like to see in the site later this month.

Stay tuned, you are going to LOVE what you see coming your way!

All the best, all the time,

Kevin

Check Your Morale Killers



Are you killing morale with HR Anti-Patterns? Today's expert points out a series of all-too-common actions that

will drive the best people right out of your company.

What are you and your managers and supervisors doing right now that's turning good employees into ex-employees? Here are several of the most damaging acts, we will call them HR "worst practices" anti-patterns.

--Public insult. This is when the manager dresses the employee

down in front of other employees or customers. This is the most common and, over the years, one of the most effective of HR anti-patterns.

--Everyone else knows. This insult also occurs in public, but without the insulted employee being there (bonus points for doing it in front of a senior manager who does not know the employee).

--Thanks for nothing. When an employee completes a job, make it clear that the task didn't really require that much effort; saying things like "tasks aren't hard, people are lazy."

--When describing a major accomplishment, be sure to point out any elements that failed and how the work, no matter how well done,

still needs to be improved.

--Cone of irresponsibility. Demand accountability from employees, but never of yourself. After all, it's not likely that failures are due to your inability to manage. Understaffing or poor performance are the likely culprits.

--Ignorance is bliss. Why bother to learn the cause of a problem when you can just lash out at the people involved?

--Amorphous position. Hire people into positions with no real job description and no clear roles and responsibilities. Extra points for hiring several new people with similar job titles, like Product Manager, Project Manager, and Program Manager. Let them fight it out to see who gets to do what.

Continued on Page 3



The Mystery of Valentine's Day



Its history is a mystery to date, but there are a number of legends surrounding this day; all have been passed on through the generations and there are bound to be some additions and deletions. We bring to you various legends regarding the mysterious past of Valentine's Day and why it is celebrated as a lovers' holiday, with the giving of candy, flowers, or other gifts between couples in love.

It originated in 5th Century Rome as a tribute to St. Valentine, a Catholic bishop. For eight hundred years prior to the establishment of Valentine's Day, the Romans had practiced a pagan celebration in mid-February commemorating young men's rite of passage to the god Lupercus. The celebration featured a lottery in which young men would draw the names of teenage girls from a box. The girl assigned to each young man in that manner would be his sexual companion during the remaining year.

In an effort to do away with the pagan festival, Pope Gelasius ordered a slight change in the lottery.

Instead of the names of young women, the box would contain the names of saints. Both men and women were allowed to draw from the box, and the game was to emulate the ways of the saint they drew during the rest of the year. Needless to say, many of the young Roman men were not too pleased with the rule changes. Instead of the pagan god Lupercus, the Church looked for a suitable patron saint of love to take his place. They found an appropriate choice in Valentine, who, in AD 270 had been beheaded by Emperor Claudius. Claudius had determined that married men made poor soldiers. So he banned marriage from his empire. But Valentine would secretly marry young men that came to him. When Claudius found out about Valentine, he first tried to convert him to paganism. But Valentine reversed the strategy, trying instead to convert Claudius. When he failed, he was stoned and beheaded. During the days that Valentine

was imprisoned, he fell in love with the blind daughter of his jailer. His love for her, and his great faith, managed to miraculously heal her from her blindness before his death. Before he was taken to his death, he signed a farewell message to her, "From your Valentine." The phrase has been used on his day ever since. Although the lottery for women had been banned by the church, the mid-February holiday in commemoration of St. Valentine was still used by Roman men to seek the affection of women. It became a tradition for the men to give the ones they admired handwritten messages of affection, containing Valentine's name.

The first Valentine card grew out of this practice. The first true Valentine card was sent in 1415 by Charles, duke of Orleans, to his wife. He was imprisoned in the Tower of London at the time. Cupid, another symbol of the holiday, became associated with it because he was the son of Venus, the Roman god of love and beauty. Cupid often appears on Valentine cards.



**Be different, if
it means higher
personal and
professional
standards**

Denis Waitley

Check Your Morale Killers (cont.)

--Ridiculous promotion. Move people to positions in which they have no experience or interest. Do not explain what their duties are. When they fail, revert to public insult and everyone else knows.

--Random hiring. As long as you (and maybe the boss) like the person, hire. Hey, you didn't get this far without a sixth sense for quickly judging people's nature, right?

Here are a few of our own favorites:

--Ignore complaints. They're usually not valid because workers just don't understand the intricacies of modern management, right?

--Delay decisions. Don't respond to employee requests too quickly—it suggests that they are in charge. Extra points if people have to redo vacation plans because of the delay in approving a request.

--Keep your cards hidden. No need to let people know about

policy and rule changes ... until they've violated them, that is.

--Top Killer: Tell your workers that you expect great things, and then cut their budget.

These "anti-patterns" are obviously offered tongue-in-cheek, the way Dilbert cartoons are. They are ridiculous, you laugh. But then you look around the office and see them enacted word for word. If you do not see it then maybe you should ask your employees if they do.

Trivia: Who Said it?

"Realize deeply that the present moment is all you ever have."

Send your answer to resources@accuscreen.com
(Winner will receive a \$20.00 gift card to Amazon.com)

Answer will appear in March Newsletter....



Dealing With New HR Laws, Regulations and Court Decisions

As every year does, 2008 brings new laws, new regs, and new court decisions to deal with.

OK, take time to groan, but only a little. Shift that energy toward getting your organization geared up to comply. No matter what changes the law brings, there are some general principles and techniques to follow in dealing with them. You may want to follow this step-by-step approach:

1. To get a sense of what the new challenge is all about, ask:
 - Does the new law or regulation apply to my organization?
 - When does the law or regulation take effect?
 - What are the penalties for non-compliance?
 - What is the intent of the new law or regulation?
 - What does the new law or regulation require us to do?

2. Determine what changes the new law or regulation will require:

- What budget allocations will be necessary?

- How will policies change?

- What procedures need to be revised?

- What existing plans need to be altered?

- What departments will be affected?

- What individuals will be affected?

3. Make an implementation plan for management's approval. Be sure to include:

- The name of the person in charge of implementation

- Goals and outcomes

- Schedule and deadlines

- Milestones and intermediate

- steps, if it's a complex implementation

- Specific policy and procedure changes

- Associated paperwork, online forms, or recordkeeping

4. Follow and complete the plan.

5. Perform dry-run testing if necessary.

6. Implement.

Not Sure You Know All the New Rules for 2008?

In 2008, you'll be facing challenges in the family and medical leave arena, continuing confusion with employee benefits such as health savings accounts and retirement plans, a completely redesigned I-9 immigration form, and more aggressive attempts by federal authorities to root out misclassified employees, to name but a few.



Workplace Romance: What's an Employer to do? (continued)

Few employers appear to outlaw dating and romance between coworkers.

The 2007 Workplace Romance survey -- conducted by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)-- revealed that only 9 of 100 responding HR professionals said their organizations prohibited dating between coworkers. And this survey found that more than 70 percent of employers responding had no written or verbal policies dealing with romance and dating between coworkers. But because Cupid's love potion is often active in the workplace, some employers do adopt some type of policy to dampen the passions to some degree...choosing from the following seven approaches:

1. Accept it and do nothing. Many employers simply ignore romantic involvement between

romantic involvement between coworkers. But this approach is dangerous unless it is coupled with the next policy...strict prohibition of sexual harassment.

2. A strict, clear policy on sexual harassment. At the very least, an employer needs to adopt a policy spelling out in detail that employees are prohibited from engaging in any form of sexual harassment. And then employers need to communicate this policy clearly and firmly, at least annually, to all employees...especially to all executives, managers and supervisors.

3. A Right to Transfer policy. This policy tells employees that if coworkers become romantically involved or date, and if one of the employees is a supervisor and one is a direct report, management has the right to transfer one or both employees to new positions...so a supervisory-

positions...so a supervisory-direct report relationship does not exist between them. [If such a policy is adopted it is important for the employer not to target the female employee involved in the relationship. The employer must avoid making an automatic assumption that the subordinate employee (often a female) is the only choice for a transfer.]

4. An anti-nepotism/romance policy. Some employers adopt anti-nepotism policies and policies prohibiting romantic relationships between supervisors and their subordinates. The business-related reason for such policies is to prevent the appearance, or the real practice, of favoritism that can result in poorer productivity and a lowering of morale among coworkers.



Continued on page 4



5303 S. MacDill Avenue
Tampa, FL 33611
813-837-1920
800-689-2228
813-831-1839 Fax

HIRE WITH CERTAINTY

February 2008

DARE

TO BE

DIFFERENT!

We're on the web!
www.AccuScreen.com

*"In 2008,
you'll be facing
challenges in
the family and
medical leave
arena, continu-
ing confusion
with employee
benefits such
as health
savings ac-
counts and re-
tirement
plans....*

article on page 3

FAST and ACCURATE BACKGROUND

CHECKS in 24 to 72 Hours

PROTECT your Company from:

- **Workplace Violence**
- **Dangerous, Unsafe and Violent Employees**
- **Unqualified, Unproductive, Turnover Risks**
- **Negligent Hiring and Retention Lawsuits**
- **Embezzlement, Employee Theft**

24/7/365 EASY and Secure Online Ordering

Experienced, Professional Customer Service Guaranteed!

Workplace Romance: What's an Employer to do? (continued)

An additional business-related reason for a policy prohibiting or restricting relationships between supervisors and their subordinates is to reduce or prevent the possibility of situations that could lead to a mistreated or scorned employee filing sexual harassment charges against the employer.

These types of policies typically prohibit a family member or spouse from managing or supervising a relative or spouse or a person with whom the employee is co-habiting. Such policies typically prohibit a manager or supervisor from being romantically involved with a subordinate.

When such relationships occur or develop, one of the employees will be transferred to another position or department.

5. An anti-dating, anti-romance policy. This approach is similar to the approach above (anti-nepotism/romance policy), ex-

cepting its focus is just on prohibiting coworkers from dating and romantic involvement. Realistically, most employees will consider such a policy an invasion of privacy. And realistically, such a policy is difficult, if not impossible, to enforce.

6. A Dating/Cohabitation policy. Such a policy requires employees who are in a reporting relationship (a supervisor or manager and a direct report or subordinate) to disclose the dating or romantic relationship to management. If they fail to disclose the relationship to management, the employer can discipline them up to and including termination.

7. A Consensual Relationship Contract policy. This is also called a Love Contract or a Dating Contract policy. This approach, when used by an employer, usually is intended for use by the firm's top-level executives, CEOs, officers and, sometimes,

directors. It also can be extended to apply to managers and supervisors.

The Consensual Relationship Contract involves several elements: It restates the voluntary nature of a relationship, that each party is freely choosing to engage in a relationship outside the workplace. It includes an acknowledgement by the parties that they feel no pressure to continue the relationship and will fear no retribution if they choose to end the relationship. It affirms that the parties will use the employer's sexual harassment policy if problems arise as a result of the relationship. And it states the parties agree that if work-related problems come up as a result of the relationship, they will resolve their differences using alternative dispute resolution rather than going to the courts.