



HR BITES - January 2018

Welcome to the OAN's Human Resources newsletter where we share thought-inspiring HR trends, good-to-know practices and key HR information for your consideration. The OAN provides members agencies with free access to an HR shared service. It's like having your very own HR person except, just not in your office and, you need to share. This means that your agency has access to HR professionals who are ready to assist with your daily questions, urgent needs, policies, tactical and strategic HR needs, etc.



Thinking of leaving your 2017 HR memories behind?

Wait! Before you do, don't complicate your new relationship with 2018 by bringing along the baggage you thought you'd left behind. Check out the following and be sure to tie up loose ends...before you and 2018 decide to get too cozy.

Have you updated your **health & safety and harassment & discrimination policies** to reflect legislative changes? You need to include specifics around how you will assess and reduce risks, respond to incidents, handle confidentiality and conduct investigations.

Last year we saw an increase in awareness for **mental health in the workplace**. Increase your knowledge, take a mental health first-aid course, reduce stigma, promote awareness, expand support, start the discussion, make it happen in your workplace.

Smart managers make sure **exit interviews are conducted for almost all departures**. Don't let that feedback process end when an employee decides to leave. Exit interviews provide an opportunity to improve agency effectiveness.

We're almost certain that you already updated your **accommodation** policy so we won't remind you.

Bill 148 led us through many ESA changes. If you missed the details, email us so we can send you everything you need to know about your new romance with 2018:

Vacation with pay entitlement - Requests for changes to schedule or work location

Scheduling - Overtime pay - Determination of minimum wage

Public Holiday pay calculation - Equal pay for equal work

Record Keeping - Leaves of Absence - Temporary Help Agencies

Competencies to Build an Inclusive Workforce

<http://triec.ca/competencies/>

We really, really like this competency framework! Created by the Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council, this framework is free to share and use for your agency. The competencies cover ones for yourself, your team and your organization as a whole. Consider building these type of competencies into your job descriptions, recruitment/interviewing process, performance expectations/reviews, etc. TRIEC worked with employer representatives from a variety of sectors to develop the Inclusive Workplace Competencies. This is part of a broader project to develop new support for employers to help them build more inclusive organizations. Did we mention this is awesome? Need help building competencies into your HR processes and practices? We can help.



Interesting Info

November saw an increase of 44,000 jobs in Ontario
5.9% unemployment rate in November, the lowest since February 2008 *(source: Stats Canada)*

A guide to all the info that should reside in your **personnel/employee files**. Click here to see the list of info. Aren't you glad you found another HR project to tackle? <https://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/es/tools/esworkbook/record.php>

Approximately 20,000 part-time support staff at the province's colleges have voted to join the Ontario Public Service Employees Union *(Source: OPSEU)*

Complaints of **workplace harassment** (including sexual harassment) have doubled in Ontario since September 2016. Upon receiving a complaint, the Ministry of Labour may send an inspector to the workplace to assess/investigate (and yes, they've been visiting some of our ASOs). They are allowed to see your files, policies, postings, etc. The inspector can show up without notice, may also issue orders and, can come back for a follow-up inspection and, spend quality time getting to know you. Complaints can also be filed from past employees. *(source: Ministry of Labour)*

A recent study conducted by the EAP provider for Manulife Benefits showed this - 74% of respondents said that personal finances had the biggest impact on their mental and emotional health. *(source: Manulife)*

More **mental health first aid training**: <http://www.wsps.ca/Shop/Training/Training-Schedules/Mental-Health-First-Aid-MHFA.aspx>

[Click HERE to take the work-life balance quiz from the Canadian Mental Health Association](#)

Average Wage Increases for Unionized Employers in Ontario

Courtesy of the Collective Bargaining Information Services department of the Ministry of Labour. <http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/lr/pubs/index.php>.

Avg. Annual Base Wage Increases (%)	2015	2016	2017
Industry:			
Construction	1.40	2.00	1.80
Education & Related Services	0.60	1.10	1.70
Health & Social Services	1.50	1.30	1.40
Manufacturing	1.70	1.40	1.90
Other Services	1.60	1.80	2.20
Public Administration	1.20	1.60	1.60
Trade & Finance	1.30	1.40	2.30
Transportation, Communications, & Utilities	1.70	1.50	2.00



Getting to know you, getting to know all about you...

Reference checking can be insightful when done correctly and can help form part of the decision making process when recruiting. Getting to know your top candidate is always a good thing.

Here are some tips to consider:

Have candidates sign an agreement prior to the reference checking process.

Focus your questions on verifiable, job-related information.

Know what you want to ask (what, why, how, when)...before you make the call.

Ensure that you are not biased which, can be hard especially if you just fell in love with the candidate you interviewed (consider having a neutral person make the reference calls if you did the interview).

Have the resume in front of you during the call and, make sure you understand the content.

Have the interview notes in front of you during the reference call so that you can cross-check information and ask for more details on roles, responsibilities, accomplishments, decision making etc.

References should always be customized based on the job.

Ask open ended questions.

Use behavior-based interview questions during the reference check.

Be fair and consistent with your questions if you are checking references on multiple candidates for the same job.

Evaluate the quality of the information provided.

[Click HERE to read an article on reference checking that we found in The Harvard Business Review](#)

In Pursuit of the Elusive (or Accurate) Reference

Dishonesty during the reference process is now recognized as a global problem (HR survey last year). 82% of HR professionals said they believe there was truth bending once references were checked - from both the candidates and reference providers. The biggest areas discovered for truth bending: length of employment, job titles, embellishing roles and responsibilities, education and accomplishments. Most of the managers surveyed said it takes too long to do references and that they are not equipped with the right tools/training/questioning techniques to know what to ask and how to effectively ask the right questions. References should be conducted by someone with expertise whenever possible.



**Mental Health
Free Online Resources**

The Great-West Life Centre for Mental Health in the Workplace is a leading source of free, practical tools and resources designed to help Canadian employers with the prevention, intervention and management of workplace mental health issues. All of the Centre's tools and resources are available on the Centre's website in English and French, free to everyone: <https://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com/>

Here are just a few of the tools:

Identifying workplace issues <https://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com/managing-workplace-issues/identifying-workplace-issues>

Accommodation strategies <https://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com/managing-workplace-issues/accommodation-strategies>

Responding to issues <https://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com/managing-workplace-issues/responding-to-issues>



NEW 2018 Poster for all Workplaces

Click on the link for the new Ministry of Labour workplace posting. Employers must post a copy of this [version 7.0](#) of the poster by January 1, 2018 and provide a copy to employees electronically or in hardcopy. The poster is available in these languages, click on these links:

[English \[172 Kb\]](#)

[French \[162 Kb\]](#)

[Arabic \[264 Kb\]](#)



Supervision Meetings

What questions do you ask during supervision meetings? Do you always make a point of asking your staff for feedback, on you, as a manager?

If you are looking to grow as a

[Chinese \(Simplified\) \[255 Kb\]](#)

[Chinese \(Traditional\) \[288 Kb\]](#)

[Hindi \[375 Kb\]](#)

[Portuguese \[196 Kb\]](#)

[Punjabi \[216 Kb\]](#)

[Spanish \[177 Kb\]](#)

[Tagalog \[169 Kb\]](#)

[Thai \[249 Kb\]](#)

[Urdu \[270 Kb\]](#)

Health & Safety Check-Up

(source: Ministry of Labour)

Welcoming 2018 with new staff? Make sure they receive H&S training. H&S training is available FREE. **Workers (your employees and students) can use this training program as one way to meet the minimum training required by the Occupational Health and Safety Awareness and Training regulation.** The program can be completed using the workbook or the eLearning module.

<https://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/training/workers.php>

In addition, all **supervisors/managers are required to complete a supervisor-specific free training program.** Supervisors can use this free training program as one way to meet the minimum training required by the Occupational Health and Safety Awareness and Training regulation. The program can be completed using the workbook or the eLearning module.

<https://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/training/supervisor>

manager while also supporting your staff, consider asking the tough questions and obtain feedback that can benefit you.. We checked it out and found that some of you are already asking:

1. What can I do on a daily basis to better support you?
2. What's one thing I could improve?
3. How did that go from your perspective?
4. What do you think I might have done differently?
5. How would you rate my leadership style?

Tabletalk

2018 Outlook for Bargaining

The Conference Board of Canada has reported that wages will continue to be the key issue for both sides at the table in 2018. The projected, average increase for this year is 1.4% for all sectors, according to the Conference Board. Public sector



Why Job Ads Don't Work

Hiring managers can miss the boat when it comes to selling their job to the right audience. Far too often we see external job ads written as though they are internal postings, with a long list of duties or worse, repeating info that is already found on a website.

The biggest complaint professional recruiters hear from hiring managers? There are no applicants, we are not getting the rights ones applying, it's taking too long, etc. When it comes to recruitment advertising, remove your manager hat please, and put on your fabulous marketing/promotions/public relations hat ASAP.

Experienced, professional recruiters understand that the problem is rarely the lack of candidates (or lack of the right candidates who are ready to jump at what you offer). If your ad isn't working, the problem most likely exists with your ad. Ads can have tremendous power and, if written properly, will yield the right type of response within days. If you are into weeks 3, 4, 5, 6 or longer and not seeing action (or the right type of candidates), there is most likely a problem with your ad.

Improperly written job ads can negatively impact the impression you make on candidates, it can give the appearance that your workplace is "meh" or that the job is just a "job". And seriously, who has time to browse "meh" job ads?! Do it wrong the first time and you'll have to work ten times harder to attract them to come back, for a second glance.

increases are projected at 1.1% for this year.

The Conference Board's report goes on to state "Legislation changes in a number of jurisdictions across the country will make for a challenging bargaining environment in 2018. In addition, the pending legalization of recreational cannabis use—along with concerns about its medical use—add to these complexities.

Unions will be looking to improve health and safety for the employees on behalf of whom they bargain, and will also be focusing on job security in 2018.

Employers are focusing on flexible work practices, improving productivity, and workforce planning in the coming year. Mental health continues to be a significant area of focus on both sides of the bargaining table."

(source: The Conference Board of Canada, December 21, 2017, Report by Monica Haberl, HR Reporter)

The top performing candidates are busy and engaged with their current employer so, you have one shot to make the right impression about your organization and the opportunity. If you want that key person to apply, then you had better make that ad sound compelling, a come-hither approach that briefly highlights the reasons they SHOULD jump ship and sail with your organization (hint - it is almost never about the money). Exactly what are you offering? Are there challenges? Growth opportunities? Amazing staff team? Supportive work culture? The coolest Board of Directors? New work experiences to add to their credentials? What would appeal to the right candidate?

Writing short and compelling recruitment ad copy is like any other craft that requires skill, training and experience to be successful. When the right content is conveyed to the right candidates, they will happily click that “Apply” button without you trying to convince them for weeks and weeks on end.

Your job ad will make-it or break-it when it comes to first impressions about the job, your organization and your impression as an employer. Stop thinking internally and start thinking from the head space of the talent you want to attract. Recruitment ads should be written for your audience so don't start with a long paragraph about the org – if you have, it's too late, you've lost them already. *(from the diary of a professional recruiter)*

HR Shared-Services Available for OAN Member Agencies

- recruitment, interviewing, references
- employment contracts, orientation, on-boarding
- policies and procedures
- performance management
- employee communication
- employee surveys
- labour relations
- help with mergers, acquisitions, expansions
- org development and effectiveness
- benefits, compensation
- job evaluation
- disability and accommodation
- management coaching
- health and safety
- legislative compliance
- access to employment lawyers
- custom tools and forms
- exits interviews, terminations
- Board support, HR for Board members
- and so much more...

When you access the HR services (included in your OAN membership), the OPRAH program includes some access to pro-bono legal support and well as reduced-rates for member agencies, when they are working on HR matters with the OPRAH consultants. Please remember that accessing pro-bono and reduced cost legal support is only available via the OPRAH consultants and is assessed on a case-by-case basis. Any type of HR support that requires legal support should come through the ED or Board Chair (directly to the OPRAH program).



Looking for an HR partner to help you work through some HR challenges, questions or projects? Call or email us:

toll free: 1-844-376-7724

local: 416-520-3667

email: tcampbell@oan.red

Stay tuned for the next issue in February!