Four Point Employer Workplace Reset

What does your people story look like? We understand the challenges faced by employers trying to create a compliant workplace with a great culture. We all want to run the business that our staff love to be part of!

We have compiled tools and guidance needed to review and reset your current documents and processes. With this cheat-sheet, you can achieve a workplace revision that sets you up for success, and sets you apart from the competition.

1. Employment Agreements

It is a legal requirement for employers to provide written employment agreements to all their employees. The idea is to ensure clarity and avoid potential disputes arising from misunderstandings or misinterpretations. Check your agreements include the following key elements:

1. Who is who: Clearly state the names and details of the employer (your business) and the employee (the individual being hired).

2. Position and Duties: Clearly outline the role and responsibilities of the employee, including job title, tasks, and reporting relationships.

3. Place of Work: An indication of the location of work should be provided to the employee.

4. Hours of Work and the Nature of the Agreement: This may include the number of guaranteed hours, the start and finish times or the days of the week the employee will work. If the agreement is to be fixed term or on a casual basis, this will need to be specified.

5. Pay: State the agreed-upon wage or salary, as well as the frequency and method of payment (e.g., hourly, weekly, or monthly).

6. Leave: Include details about annual leave, sick leave, bereavement leave, and public holiday entitlements, as outlined in New Zealand employment law.

7. 90 day trial: (If applicable 19 or fewer staff only) Mention the notice period if employment is terminated within this period.

8. Termination: Specify the notice period required for both the employer and the employee if either party wishes to terminate the employment contract. Additionally, include any grounds for immediate termination.

9. Confidentiality and Intellectual Property: Clearly define the obligations regarding the protection of confidential information and any ownership rights of intellectual property created during employment.

10. Health and Safety: Outline your own responsibilities and the employee's obligations in maintaining a safe work environment in compliance with health and safety regulations.

11. Dispute Resolution: Include a clause outlining the process for resolving disputes or grievances that may arise during the employment relationship.

12. Amendments and Variations: Specify how changes or amendments to the agreement will be made and whether they require written consent from both parties.

13. Entire Agreement: State that the employment agreement represents the entire agreement between the employer and the employee, superseding any prior oral or written agreements.

Following a careful process, there is flexibility to change employment agreements, based on the needs of the business and agreement between you and your staff. Make sure you can provide evidence of a good process and fair consultation as you make any changes. A positive and collaborative work environment is what we are all aiming to create and maintain.

2. Policy Handbook

A well-crafted policy handbook is the cornerstone of any effective HR strategy. Clear and concise policies that align with legal requirements and promote a positive work culture are key to a productive and inclusive workplace environment. Any good policy handbook should certainly include the policies below, but depending on your industry, there may be other policies that you should consider, like *Professional Conduct on Job Sites*, *Time and Attendance*, or *Vehicle Use & Safety*. Review your current policy handbook, or if you are yet to create one, start with the following:

Code of Conduct: Clearly define the expected standards of behavior, ethics, and professionalism for your staff.

Equal Employment Opportunity: Promote a workplace free from discrimination, harassment, and bias, emphasising equal opportunities for everyone based on merit.

Health and Safety: Outline your business' commitment to providing a safe and healthy work environment, including procedures for reporting accidents, hazards, and emergency response protocols.

Leave Entitlements: Explain the various types of leave available to employees, such as annual leave, sick leave, parental leave, and bereavement leave, along with the process for requesting and approving leave.

Flexible Working Arrangements: Address your business' position on flexible work hours, remote work, part-time arrangements, and any associated policies and procedures.

Performance Management: Outline your business' approach to performance evaluations, feedback, goal setting, and career development opportunities.

Grievance and Complaint Procedures: Provide a clear process for employees to raise concerns, grievances, or complaints, ensuring fair and timely resolution.

Confidentiality and Data Protection: Clarify expectations regarding the handling of confidential information, customer data, intellectual property, and data privacy regulations.

Social Media and Technology Usage: Set guidelines for appropriate use of social media, internet, email, and company-owned devices, emphasising responsible and professional

behaviour.

Drug and Alcohol Policy: Define your business' stance on substance abuse, including guidelines for testing, consequences, and any support programs you may endorse or provide.

Workplace Bullying and Harassment: Establish a zero-tolerance policy for workplace bullying, harassment, and any form of inappropriate behavior, with a clear reporting and investigation process.

Conflict of Interest: Address situations where employees may have personal interests that could conflict with your business interests, providing guidance on disclosure and appropriate actions.

Dress Code and Personal Appearance: Specify your expectations regarding appropriate appearance and grooming standards. This is a brilliant policy to have when there is a problem!

Termination and Resignation: Explain the procedures and requirements for terminating employment contracts, as well as resignation protocols, notice periods, and exit interviews.

Whistleblower Protection: Assure staff that they can report any illegal or unethical activities without fear of retaliation, outlining the process for reporting and protection measures.

Training and Development: Highlight your business' commitment to employee training and development, including opportunities for upskilling, career advancement, and ongoing learning. Good candidates will be impressed by this if they are considering joining your organisation.

3. Ongoing Support

We know that the journey towards maintaining a compliant and thriving workplace does not end with the implementation of employment agreements and a policy handbook!

There are plenty of opportunities for ongoing support, knowledge-sharing and access to valuable tools and guidance for small business owners. Consider exploring some of the following for the benefit of your own health and strength, and for the good of your business:

1. **Business.govt.nz:** This government-run website is a valuable resource for small business owners. It offers a wide range of information, tools, and templates on topics such as starting a business, managing finances, employing staff, legal requirements, and taxation. www.Business.govt.nz also provides access to guides, case studies, and practical advice to help entrepreneurs navigate various aspects of running a business.

2. **Regional Business Networks:** Regional business networks (eg Auckland Chamber of Commerce) offer support, networking opportunities, and resources tailored to specific regions. These networks provide access to workshops, training programs, mentoring, and events that enable small business owners to connect with other entrepreneurs, share experiences, and gain insights into local business environments.

3. **BNI (Business Network International):** Local meetings offer business owners a platform for networking and referral marketing. By participating in BNI, you gain access to a supportive community, potential business leads, and valuable connections. BNI membership leads to increased visibility, trust, and collaboration opportunities. At FixHR we have appreciated BNI enormously from a marketing as well as support perspective.

4. **Business Mentors New Zealand:** Business Mentors New Zealand is a non-profit organization that connects experienced business mentors with small business owners seeking guidance and support. They offer free mentoring services to help entrepreneurs navigate challenges, develop strategies, and improve business performance. Mentors provide valuable advice, share industry knowledge, and assist in goal-setting and problem-solving.

These resources can help business owners stay informed, connected, and equipped to overcome challenges and thrive in our respective industries. FixHR provides ongoing support to ensure that your HR practices remain up to date and in line with evolving regulations. Our dedicated team offers timely guidance on employee relations, disciplinary actions, performance management, and HR compliance. With FixHR by your side, you can navigate any HR challenges with confidence.

4. Tools of the Trade

To equip you with valuable resources, we offer a range of downloadable checklists designed to streamline your HR processes. These checklists cover various aspects of the employment cycle, including employee onboarding, performance evaluations, termination procedures, and HR best practice. These tools will help you avoid HR crises, maintain consistency, and minimise errors in your HR operations. Download them here and optimise your HR practices today.

Remember, effective HR management is crucial for building a strong foundation for your organisation's success. This Employer Workplace Reset programme is designed to unlock the potential to attract and retain top candidates for your vacancies, and help you achieve compliance with the Employment Relations Act 2000.