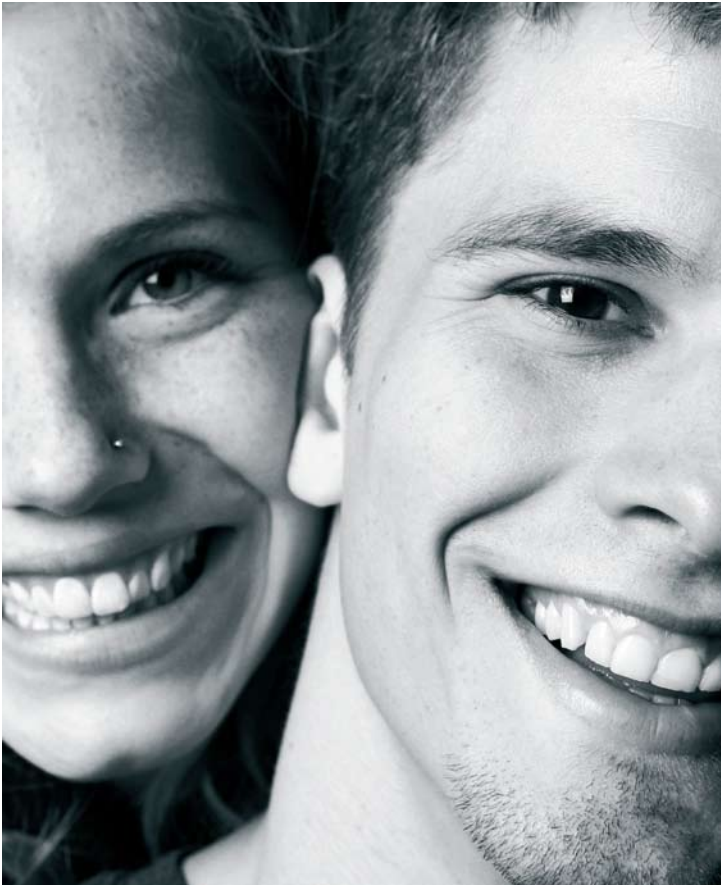




WORKMATTERS
The natural choice for human resources

NEWSMATTERS

April 2009



WELCOME TO THE SECOND NEWSLETTER FOR 2009

Our newsletter is issued to you quarterly to ensure that you can be kept up to date with employment issues. We will offer helpful hints on how to handle situations within the workplace, but never be afraid to give us a call for both guidance and support.

This Quarter the focus is on changes in the law which will affect your business from this month, April 2009.

- 1) Increase in holiday allowance from 1st April 2009
- 2) Flexible working
- 3) New Statutory Disciplinary & Grievance Procedure

Our helpful point this month is about planning for the future.

We think you'll find the articles very interesting. Please call us on **01442 870742** to discuss any of these articles and see how we can help you and your business more effectively in the field of Human Resources. Alternatively have a look at our website www.workmattershr.co.uk and email us from there or on info@workmattershr.co.uk.

If you would prefer not to receive any future newsletters from Work Matters (HR) Ltd, please reply to this email with 'unsubscribe' in the title and we will remove you from our list - thank you.

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CHANGES IN THE LAW

Increase in Holiday Allowance from 1st April 2009

From this date a worker's annual leave entitlement will increase to 5.6 weeks (from 4.8). On the basis of a 5-day week that would be 28 days annual paid leave (pro rata for part-timers). As before, this can include the 8 bank holidays. This amount of leave represents the minimum entitlement. Employers are free to give more annual leave under their contracts of employment if they wish. Employers should check their contracts to ensure that they are in line with the changes. This increased entitlement may make it tricky to calculate exactly how much a worker is entitled to. It will be easier if their leave year starts on 1st April but if it does not, then the holiday entitlement will not conveniently increase by the exact number of days. Employers need to take time to ensure their calculations are correct or risk treating their employees less favourably and run a risk of a tribunal claim.

Please Note the Part Time Rules

Under the Part-time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000, part-time workers must not suffer less favourable treatment than full-time workers on the grounds of their part-time status. If your full-time workers receive more than the statutory minimum holiday entitlement, then your part-time workers should also receive more, calculated on a pro-rata basis.

Part-time Workers and Bank Holiday

There is not a clear answer in any legislation as to what the position is where full-time workers have the benefit of a bank holiday which is a day when the part-time worker does not work. Should the part-time worker be given an extra day's holiday to make up for the loss of that benefit? Many employers only give the part-time workers that day if the bank holiday falls on a day they would normally work. It is recommended that as good practice, part-time workers are allowed to have the benefit of a Bank Holiday even if they would not normally work that day.

Flexible Working

From 6th April 2009 the Flexible Working (Eligibility, Complaints & Remedies) (Amendment) Regulations 2009 extend the right to request flexible working to carers of children under 17. (Previously the right applied to carers of children under 6 or disabled children under 18.)



New Statutory Disciplinary & Grievance Procedure

This comes into force on 6th April 2009 and significantly changes the existing statutory procedure. The new procedure is not dissimilar to the old one. In some ways it makes it more straightforward but there are some complicated provisional changes.

For further advice and support in changing your company policy on any of the above click on the link www.workmattershr.co.uk or call 01442 870742.

Helpful Point

BEING POSITIVE AND PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Recent research shows that organisations not investing in their people are twice as likely to fail than those that do. In previous downturns those that did invest in people development showed the most dynamic recovery. Work Matters (HR) Limited gives you a few ways to support employee performance in these challenging times.

Look at the bigger picture

- Think creatively about how to reduce employment costs, such as new ways of working and work reorganisation.
- Remember that making people redundant and recruiting again later when the market picks up is expensive.
- Protect and make the most of the training budget – focus resources on key areas such as improving line management capability and customer service.
- Bear in mind your long-term reputation and responsibility to act as a fair employer.

Support your employees they are still your most important asset

- Recognise the psychological burden and impact that can arise in a recession to prevent high levels of work-related stress regularly communicate with employees and keep them informed of how your business is doing.
- Where possible provide opportunities for flexible working to help employees balance their work and home lives.
- Ensure you have mechanisms in place to deal with workplace stress and potential conflict at an early stage – review your grievance and disciplinary procedures and ensure staff understand how they work.
- Recognise the potential negative impact of 'survivor syndrome' if your organisation has made redundancies – employees that remain in organisations where there have been job cuts often suffer from guilt while coping with increased workloads.

See what the future holds

- Reallocate jobs and responsibilities among the remaining workforce.
- Reorganise work spaces to eliminate gaps where people used to work: plan for a fresh start.
- Provide training for new jobs and new positions.
- Communicate and consult at all stages and pay particular attention to ensuring that line managers are fully involved in the change programme.
- Give positive messages focusing on the opportunities as well as the challenges ahead.
- Let employees know which direction you want to take the company and what the company's long term goals are and get their buy in to help you achieve it.



Thank you for taking the time to read our Newsletter which I hope you found informative.



An e-newsletter will be sent on a quarterly basis to help keep you up to date with current legislation changes, as well as giving you some helpful hints and tips to help your business run smoothly.

In the meantime please contact us if we can be of service to you or your company.

Have an enjoyable quarter and we look forward to issuing you with our next newsletter in the early part of July 2009.