

## Sustaining Your Business: Employee Plan

Employees are a critical part of your deployment plan if you sustain your business while deployed. To ensure your employees are prepared, a special employee deployment manual can become an important part of your overall deployment plan.

While you should have a written employee manual anyway, it is particularly critical to have on hand for each employee while you are deployed. It will reinforce how to perform certain functions and procedures, it will clarify the tasks for which each employee is responsible, and it spell out your policies and procedures. Your employee manual should include these topics:

- ◆ Compliance with employment laws
- ◆ Drug policy
- ◆ Employment policies
- ◆ Disciplinary actions
- ◆ Ethics
- ◆ Employee hiring and new employee orientation
- ◆ Family and medical leave act
- ◆ Benefits
- ◆ Paid time off
- ◆ Unpaid time off
- ◆ Pay and payroll matters
- ◆ Performance appraisals and salary adjustments
- ◆ Resignations and terminations
- ◆ Anti-harassment policy
- ◆ Workplace rules and guidelines
- ◆ Workplace safety

You should also have a “deployment manual,” that will go into effect when you deploy. It does not need to duplicate your regular employee manual, but it should include any changes that will go into effect when you are gone. For example, if you are the President/CEO, it should be noted that where the employee manual refers to the President/CEO, the person you appoint will act on the President’s behalf. As with everything, be sure to check with your attorney or legal advisor to ensure that both your employee manual and your deployment manual are in full compliance with state and federal laws.

Issues that should be addressed in your deployment manual include:

- ◆ **Job descriptions:** If you distribute responsibilities to staff members, it is important to outline additional tasks in the manual.
- ◆ **Position rotation:** If you plan on changing positions, rotating responsibilities, or altering the reporting structure within your business, make sure it is included in your deployment manual.
- ◆ **Pay, performance bonuses, etc.:** If your employees will be taking on a large number of additional responsibilities, you may choose to increase their pay or implement performance bonuses. These policies should be clearly outlined in your manual and should be consistently implemented across the board.

## *Sustaining Your Business: Employee Plan - Page 2*

- ◆ **Performance reports:** Your deployment manual should clearly explain how performance evaluations and reports will be handled in your absence, including who will perform the evaluations, how the reports will be submitted to you, and what performance bonuses will be based on.
- ◆ **Confidentiality:** Things that should not be included in your deployment manual include anything that is not for all employees to see. This includes items that are confidential, such as codes to security alarms, procedures for processing payroll, information about employees, contact information for key stakeholders in the business, or anything else that could possibly be used incorrectly by someone from your staff.

Once your employees have received and reviewed the deployment manual, it is important that they actually use the manual to comply with your deployment plan. These exercises would be useful:

- ◆ Conduct task-oriented training (rather than inundating them with the full contents of the manual at once).
- ◆ Ensure your employees can perform the tasks assigned to them; if not, find another solution.
- ◆ Conduct actual run-throughs of your entire deployment plan. It may take a few days, but you will be able to see how your employees fare and what problems or questions arise that you can address before you really do deploy.