An Essential Checklist for Getting Your HR Department Back in Order

It's August which means kids across the nation are heading back to school while a majority of organizations near the end of Q3. This time of the year is known to cause a little chaos. Even if you aren't balancing a shift in focus or preparing for a huge milestone, there is never a bad time to liven up your team's efficiency and organization. We created an HR checklist with tips and tools essential to keeping your department smoothly sailing to success.

☐ Get Feedback & Assessments Back on the Schedule

Summer typically means a lot of vacation time. A constant shift in staffing usually means teams are simply trying to hit deliverables while navigating the onslaught of out of offices. Performance reviews and feedback tend to take a backseat.

Did you know 65% of employees want more feedback and 4 out of 10 workers are actively disengaged when they receive little or no feedback?

> **Tip:** If you have the time to devote to one-on-one meetings, your employees will only benefit. Consider scheduling at least 30 minutes in early fall so that both you and your employee can discuss challenges, achievements and goals for the end of the year. Of course, not every team has the time for multiple performance assessments, so instead you can make a point to perform on-the-spot feedback. If you don't have a software to assist with this, we recommend drafting a quick template that you can easily send off. Include specific praise and areas of improvement. While these quick might not be as thorough, the engagement potential is still there, especially for your Gen Y employees (80% of Gen Y prefer on-the-spot recognition over formal reviews).

Tools:
- 100 Start Phrases to Align Employee Performance & Goals
- 5 Tips to Conduct Better Performance Review
- How to Deal with Employee Feedback
- How to Give the Right Amount of Feedback to High Performers

☐ Inspire Leadership Development

Summer is a time for conferences and networking, which often leads to a renewed sense of professional purpose. As the conference season begins to slow, don't allow interest in development to slow with it. It is easy to fall back into the habits that are most comfortable, leaving the newly inspired processes to fall to the wayside. Plus, impending busy-ness can have even the most motivated managers checking boxes over improving productivity and knowledge.

Did you know 58% of organizations consider closing leadership skill gaps as a top priority?

> **Tip:** Remind your colleagues and employees of some of the development and training opportunities that are still available to them no matter the month. If your organization has internal resources, send an email explaining how to best take advantage of them. Don't be afraid to encourage local seminars, online classes, webinars or industry related podcasts and articles as well. While they may not be the most formal of training, they still provoke thought and inspire innovation. Set aside a specific time for development so employees both understand the value and prioritize follow through.

Tools & Techniques:
- Listen to podcasts (The Bill Kutik Radio Show, The CYA Report, TED Radio Hour, HBR Ideacast)
- Check out TEDTalks

☐ Assess or Develop Employee Goals

Independent of vacations, a lot of time may have passed since you set or evaluated goals with your teams. Scheduling even a 30 minute meeting to recap progress and expectations can pay dividends in the back half of the year.

> **Tip:** Bring everyone back together on all fronts by revisiting goals weekly. Start with the overarching company strategy and cascade down from there. When you revisit goals weekly (or more), you give your employees a clear understanding of how their performance and daily tasks directly affect the overarching goals of the company. Better understanding of their place in the organization leads to improved confidence, better engagement and all around increased productivity. The ClearCompany Talent Operating System allows everyone in the company to track and align goals with ease.

Tools:
- How to Execute Organizational Goals Through Alignment
- 5 Noteworthy Tips for Successful Employee Goal Setting
- ClearCompany TalentOS

☐ Build On Your Professional HR Skills & Knowledge

Don't forget to focus on your own processes, strategy and skill set. Workforce regulations and compliance are always in fluctuation, but this has been especially true in the last few years. HR teams must understand the current landscape to maintain compliant business practices. HR professionals must be able to speak with confidence, advise leadership and reassure employees. It's tough, but not impossible.

> **Do:** Subscribe to industry specific channels so that you receive accurate updates on changes to regulations and laws. In addition to national organizations, many states have local HR society chapters that can be trusted to deliver timely information on changes happening right within your community. Consider attaining membership or join their mailing lists and follow their social media. In addition, continue pursuing professional excellence for your team and your career. That might mean getting HR certifications, going back to school, cross department training or any number of skill stretching exercises.

Tools:
- Society of Human Resource Management
- HR Certification Institute
- Department of Labor
- HR Business & Legal Resources (BLR)
- Talent University
- The Definitive Step-by-Step Guide to Launching Your HR Career (For personal career development)

☐ Reflect On Processes & Technology

Especially the ones for which you pay! Perhaps you purchased a new technology that promised to revolutionize the way you recruit or onboard or manage performance. Or maybe you added in a new time tracker app with hope of boosting productivity, or maybe you simply asked all employees to begin providing weekly updates in the intranet.

> **Do:** Whatever tool, process or hack was adopted, take time to audit its actual effectiveness. Solicit honest opinions from employees or discuss results with colleagues. Go back to conversations with tech representatives to ensure the tool actually meets all expectations and promises. Did you uncover new needs and goals since you signed the contract or began the procedure? This consideration is especially important for technologies or applications that require budgetary investments.