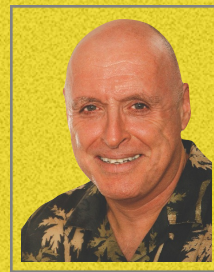


# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 1544 What's in Your Company Handbook?

Every company needs one. All big employers do, most medium-sized organizations likely do, and you'll find them in a growing number of small businesses. It's the good old employee handbook. Do you have one at your place? Have you read it? I'm Jerry Roberts, and today we'll talk about some of the things you can put in the employee handbook. That's next on The Extra Point.

Some people call the employee handbook the company playbook for how we're going to treat each other. All kinds of things may find their way into it, and it will vary from workplace to workplace. Today, we'll go over some of those things.

My list will not be in any way all-inclusive, but if you haven't got one where you toil for a living, this may give you a few ideas.

1. **Mission and Values:** Clearly define your company's mission and values to align employees with the organization's purpose and culture.

2. **Anti-Discrimination and Harassment Policies:** Establish policies that promote a diverse and inclusive work environment, outlining the company's stance against discrimination and harassment based on protected characteristics.

3. **Social Media and Technology Usage:** Provide guidelines on appropriate social media and technology usage, emphasizing responsible behavior and the protection of confidential information.

4. **Flexible Schedules:** Employees generally like the ability to adjust their schedule. Address policies and expectations, including guidelines for productivity, communication, and data security.

5. **Code of Conduct and Ethics:** Outline the expected standards of behavior, emphasizing honesty, integrity, and professionalism, and provide guidance on potential conflicts of

interest. Don't be afraid to spell things out in specific terms. Vague language is nobody's friend in an employee handbook.

6. **Attendance and Time-Off Policies:** Specify rules regarding attendance, punctuality, and requesting time off, including procedures for vacation, sick leave, personal days, and other types of leave.

7. **Safety and Emergency Procedures:** Detail safety protocols, emergency evacuation plans, and procedures for reporting accidents or incidents within the workplace. You can get with OSHA and/or the Guam Contractors' Association, and ask about safety info that your business should advocate.

8. **Performance Management and Disciplinary Processes:** We mentioned being specific. Here's another place you absolutely want to say what you mean and mean what you say. Describe the organization's performance evaluation system, performance improvement plans, and disciplinary processes to address performance issues or policy violations.

You'll need a substance abuse policy that is clearly stated. Guam has massive drug issues, and a large percentage of employers are impacted by them.

If yours is a small company and you don't have any of this in place, don't worry. Get the disciplinary info set in first. Then, contact SHRM, the human resources organization, and attend a lunch where you'll meet people who will be happy to help you in areas you're not sure of.

9. **Employee Benefits and Perks:** Provide an overview of the benefits package, including health insurance if you have it, retirement plans, paid time off, and any additional goodies you offer.

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10. Conflict Resolution: Lay out your method for resolving conflicts and disagreements within the workplace, including procedures for reporting concerns. If you've got a process that you follow, give the details.

Some small companies grab an example of a handbook online, and just copy it word for word. That will save you a few dollars from creating your own, but you have to be careful that you're not including stuff that really shouldn't be in your handbook.

It's also important to regularly review and update the handbook to reflect any changes in laws, policies, or best practices.

Seek help from SHRM, GCA, or the Guam Chamber of Commerce. All can provide some assistance.

Your employee handbook describes a lot about the relationships between company and worker, and it should be handled with the care it deserves.

That's the Extra Point. Be responsible and make something good happen today. For 93.3FM, the Ray Gibson Show, and First Hawaiian Bank, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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