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Mistakes Every HR Manager Should Avoid | Aparna Sharma | Senior HR Professional & Certified Corporate Director I Editor's Collection

It's often said that mistakes provide great learning opportunities. However, it's much better not to make mistakes in the first place. Human resources management in itself, though is construed to be anybody's cup of tea, increasingly is being known as a difficult function where humans (employees) have to be dealt with care.

So, here are the top 10 commonly made mistakes by HR managers. I hope HR managers are all ears to avoid them now, having read & understood points mentioned in this article.

1) Micromanaging

It is a common trend for HR heads to delegate work to employees and then continually supervise them in every step of the way. Supervision is necessary to a limited extent. But if you go overboard, it will have different effects on different people. Some would do anything to earn the trust of their manager and some would get used to being micromanaged. Employees should be

accountable for their own work. The challenge is to eliminate the need for HR managers to hover over their subordinates.

2) Playing favorites

It's human nature to like somebody more than the others, but it's best to keep favoritism out of office. If HR managers assign key roles or assignments to a certain few, or an alliance is formed between a boss and an employee, it will affect the morale of other employees. This can demotivate the employees and that would indirectly result in reduced productivity at work. Thus, it is best to have no favorites at work.

3) Socializing too much with employees

If HR managers are friends with employees, then it will result in everybody thinking alike. A famous quote "Where all think alike, no one thinks very much", rings true to me. Managers should have great relationships with their employees, but it is best advised to always have a professional curtain. It may result in employees not dedicating their full resources to productivity, attendance and attitude, thereby misusing the friendship for personal gain. It is the duty of an HR manager to keep the right balance at work, in being a management representative and a friend.

4) False commitment (when recruiting)

When recruiting a potential candidate, an HR manager sometimes sweetens the compensation package, promises a promotion, highlights a growth potential or provides a better cultural fit. But sometimes, organizations fail to live up to its promises and the growth that the HR manager/s may have promised during recruitment does/do not come true in reality. Though it is really tempting, an HR manager should refrain from making promises which may not be delivered. This common HR mistake leads to disappointed employees in most organizations.

5) Lack of written policies and standard operating procedures (overlooking the importance of an internal HR audit)

HR managers need to draft out policies for leave, attendance, etc to reflect the standard of acceptable behavior in an organization. A common mistake made by HR managers these days is leaving everything disposed to interpretation as situations (or problems) arise. This happens because of not drafting clear policies for employees. Rules and policies shrink the window of unprotected work ethics.

6) Incomplete employee profiles

It's important for organizations to keep employee profiles (basic information, work history, salary details, etc) updated at all times for compliance reasons. HR managers who don't implement such rules in their organization are actually making a substantial yet common human resource mistake.

They must also stay fluent in employment laws and regulations because an unclassified employee can be a costly mistake.

7) Thinking that proper training is unimportant / disregard towards training

HR managers sometimes show disregard towards the training requirements of the employees in order to cut down costs and gain browny points with management wrt savings. But they don't realize that proper training is a very necessary and valuable investment for a wrinkle free workflow. Training helps employees to fully engage with company's work and develop their skill set. This benefits the company in the long run.

8) Hasty hires

Managing a team or playing the role of an HR manager has its own ups and downs. Being an HR head, a person needs to cope up with multiple pulls & pushes. Meeting the hiring needs of a company could be helpful but trying to fill a required position in haste or not fleshing out exactly why you're hiring, could lead to a disastrous mistake. Hurrying recruitment is a common HR mistake and can lead to recruiting the wrong people for your team. Investing enough time in hiring the right people for the right job ultimately helps build the company for success.

9) Not delegating tasks properly or being too authoritative

Employees who do not have clear goals end up muddling through their day. HR managers have to maintain a proper routine of setting and delegating tasks because if an employee is clueless about his work, he won't get any work done. HR managers who do not delegate adequate authority to their subordinates can face a lot of mishaps later as employees do not get room to make decisions and complete tasks.

10) Employee privacy

HR Managers have a lot of responsibilities, but the matter of employee privacy shouldn't be considered trivial as compared to the other issues. HR managers may pass a harmless comment unknowingly, which can disclose an employee's personal information in front of his co-workers. Disclosure of personal information should only be done with an employee's knowledge and consent.

Avoiding these top 10 HR mistakes will help get through difficult tasks as smoothly as possible, while protecting the company from potential litigation and other damages. Identifying potential problems sooner can make a world of difference in the success of your business.

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