

## PEOPLE POINTERS

Volume 1, Issue 1, March 2004

### LAKE WOBEGON EFFECT

Sandra Kay Neal, Ph.D.

**90% of employees believe they are above average; the other 10% believe they are adequate.**

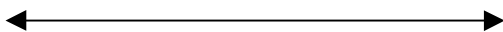
How can people be such poor judges of their own performance?

People value what they do well, and what they do well is probably done better than average. But they also tend not to put much importance on that which they do poorly. Thus, when they look at their own performance compared to co-workers, they notice that they are better than their co-workers in the "important" areas.

To get employees to value the other areas:

- Acknowledge those areas in which the employee is above average.
- Enlist the employee in a joint problem-solving mode to help devise strategies to ensure that the job aspects getting low priority get a higher priority.

This reduces defensiveness on the part of the employee and helps the employee realize the value of a task which tends to be done poorly. It also increases the likelihood that the solution developed will be practiced. As people practice skills, they get better at them. Remember, they value what they do well!



#### **HR Tip**

Are your job descriptions realistic, up-to-date and based on the requirements of the position?

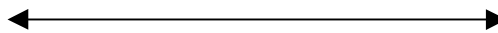
### OVERTIME CHANGES COMING SOON

John M. Turner, Ph.D.

Companies should begin to review their pay practices to determine if they will need to make any changes to comply with the proposed new federal overtime rules which are expected about very soon. By the end of March, the Department of Labor is expected to announce new rules clarifying which employees are entitled to overtime pay and which employees are exempt. The following are the proposed changes:

- Increase the pay level from \$155/week to \$425/week.
- Raise the "highly compensated" amount to \$65,000.
- Change the type of jobs exempt from overtime rules.
- Eliminate the "long test" rule.

We will have to wait and see what the final proposal includes. The DOL may still make revisions to the above proposed changes. The other factor that is important will be how long we have to implement the new changes. Also, remember that state minimum wage and overtime laws may require you to be more generous than the federal rules.



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