



**JMT &**  
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*Human Resources Consulting*

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**PEOPLE POINTERS**

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**REMINDER**

If your company is required to comply with the Occupational Health & Safety (OSHA) record-keeping requirements – don't forget to post your OSHA Form 300A (Summary of Work-related Injuries and Illnesses) from February 1, 2006 through April 30, 2006 for the year 2005. The summary must be posted in a conspicuous place or places where notices to employees are customarily posted.

**Measuring Performance**

By: Sandra Kay Neal, Ph.D.,  
 Industrial Organizational Psychologist

What gets measures gets done.

That is a simple maxim with enormous implications for the work place. Most jobs involve a myriad of tasks. If those tasks aren't measured, many of them won't get done the way the company wants them to be done.

If a task is measured, both the employee and the manager know that the task has been accomplished. That knowledge by itself acts as a reward for the employee. In addition, the manager can also provide at

minimum a verbal reward for task accomplishment.

To start the measurement process, look at the end product of the job. If that can be counted, that becomes a performance measure.

Each of the tasks that contribute to the end product should also be measured. Looking at those measurements gives a manager an understanding of tasks that need to be done better to improve the overall performance.

There should be performance measures for the individual employee, the work group, the department, and the organization. The measures need to be presented in an easily observed fashion so that everyone can see and notice what needs fixing, as well as celebrating that which is being done well.



**Employee Discipline**

By: John M. Turner, Ph.D.,  
 President & CEO

Nobody likes to talk about it and certainly no one looks forward to doing it. However, issuing discipline to your employees is part of effective management.

We would like to hope that we never have to discipline our employees, but unfortunately the situation does arise from time to time.

When one of your employees is not contributing to your company's goals, you must do something. You could simply ask the employee to leave your company, and if they do, your problems would be over. As you know, things are generally not this simple. When the employee refuses to leave, you must reach into your manager's tool box for your progressive discipline tool. There are five important reasons to use progressive discipline. These are:

1. You may be able to change your employee's behavior and have a productive employee.
2. You may find something wrong with your company policies/rules that need to be changed.
3. You may identify improvement opportunities within your selection process.
4. You demonstrate your fairness and willingness to work with your employees to help them improve their performance.
5. Your employee retention rate will generally improve.



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The first step in developing an effective progressive discipline program is to develop your written policy. As with any written policy, you should consult your legal council to review the specifics of your business. There are generally six basic components contained in this policy:

1. A company statement about your philosophy towards progressive discipline.
2. A description of the basic steps of discipline.
3. Who reviews the discipline before issuing it to your employees?
4. Who will issue the discipline?
5. The steps to file a rebuttal and review, including timelines.
6. Who will conduct the rebuttal review procedures? (In a union environment your labor contract will likely spell out this step.)

Progressive discipline means that you move through increasingly stronger counseling in an attempt to bring your employee's performance to acceptable levels. The key components are due notice, a chance to improve, and a review process. The typical steps are:

1. Verbal warning (Be sure to document this step.)
2. Written warning.

3. Suspension without pay and a final written warning.

4. Termination.

You should always follow your written policy and past practices in similar situations. During each meeting, you should tell your employee what performance is unacceptable, what improvement is required, suggestions to help them improve, and the consequences of not improving.

Another important component of your progressive discipline program is the investigation. The details will vary with each situation. An investigation is complete when all the evidence has been put together. Talk to all the witnesses and have them provide a written statement as to what they saw or know about the situation. It is very important to conduct a fair and thorough investigation. Remember that your other employees will be watching to see if you are being fair.

When dealing with employee performance, not taking action is a decision. By making this decision, you are sending a signal to your employees that this performance or behavior is acceptable. This is not the message you want to send. Ultimately, your customers suffer because of poor quality products or service.

Progressive discipline is an important tool in your toolbox. Taking the time to properly

develop your written program, as well as, fairly and consistently applying employee discipline is a critical component of your management practices. Now is the time to review your program. Don't wait until the next time you are faced with an employee that has a performance or behavior issue.



## Portable Power Tools

By: The Safety Department



We've all seen and laughed at "Tim The Tool Man's" antics and accidents with power tools. However, when it comes to real life, they can cause serious injury or death if the correct PPE and safety measures are not followed when using power tools.

### Saws:

Circular, Saber and Chainsaws

Be sure to choose the right tool for the right job.

A circular saw has interchangeable blades for cutting all types of wood. It is large and used for heavy-duty woodcutting. It can be very dangerous if you are trying to do



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any intricate work or make angle cuts and curves.

A saber saw is smaller, easier to handle. A Saber saw should be used for small jobs, curves or intricate work.

A chainsaw can be gasoline powered or electric powered. It can be large or small. The larger the saw, the harder it is to handle. If it is electric powered, the cord becomes an added danger.

Following these safety rules can help reduce the chance of injury.

- Before beginning the job, do an assessment. Look at what type of job it is and choose the right tool.
- Look for any foreign objects in the material you are cutting such as nails, screws or wedges.
- Make sure guards are in place and secure.
- Read the Manufacturing Guidelines on Safety, and make sure you wear the recommended PPE.
- Clear others from the area you are working to ensure their safety.
- Power tools are noisy. Make sure you are alert or have an attendant watch for any problems that may occur.
- Check your equipment regularly to ensure blades are tight and guards are secure. If your tool is electric, unplug before any inspection.

- Be sure your feet are secure and you do not place yourself in an awkward position.

Taking these few precautions could save you or your friend from losing a limb, hand or a life.



### Form I-9 Compliance

By: Bryan S. Mollohan,  
Attorney at Law  
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In an area of increasing complex employment and other workplace relationships preventing employment claims from accruing and effective government program compliance training are essential.

In small, medium and large business operations, local, state and federal governmental oversight and compliance requirements are ever-increasing. The best way to approach the numerous governmental requirements is to set up comprehensive training and compliance programs for your management and human resources staff.

In the employer/employee relationship, one of the very first acts of the employee after the decision to hire the employee is made is to have a member of the human resources staff prepare a number of employment documents, including the

Government's Employment Eligibility form to work, known as the Form I-9, and the Internal Revenue Service's Form SS-4. The correct completion and recordkeeping of these forms is essential to meeting your employment compliance responsibility. Correct completion of these forms will insulate the employer from claims by the Department of Homeland Security that you have knowingly hired and continue to employ illegal workers, which would cause you to incur fines up to \$10,000 per violation. A good, comprehensive program will allow you to have Social Security Administration audits with the comfort of knowing that your records are complete, concise and in good order.

You may or may not know that in May of 2005 a new Form I-9 was released by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). The new form I-9 is very similar to the old form and consists of the three pages. The first has instructions, the second is the Form I-9 itself, and the third contains a list of acceptable documents that may be acceptable to prove identity and employment eligibility.

There are several documents which may no longer be accepted by an employer to prove identity and/or employment. Documents which may not be accepted include: Permanent Resident Card - Form I-1512; Certificate of U.S.



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Citizenship - Form N-560 or N-561; Certificate of Naturalization – Form N-550 and N-570; Unexpired Re-entry Permit - Form I-327; Unexpired Refugee Travel Document - Form 571. Added to the list of documents acceptable for proving employment eligibility is the Form I-766, Employment Authorization Documentation.

Use of the new Form I-9 will become mandatory on December 31, 2005; however, you can begin using it any time before that date.

While preparing a fully complete and compliant Form I-9 and SS-4 does not seem like a daunting task, many employers have fallen into the pitfall of failing to properly prepare and keep these essential forms leading to thousands of dollars of government imposed fines.

A comprehensive Form I-9 training program which, if implemented, will ensure a reduction in Form I-9 preparation errors and continued monitoring will ensure compliance in the event of a Government I-9 audit. This program is an extremely cost effective way to ensure your Forms I-9 are in the best shape they can be.

A further benefit to a comprehensive compliance program is the verification of New Hires' Social Security Numbers which will grant you further protection from having employees who are not eligible

to work and will reduce the risk of you receiving an information request letter from the United States Social Security Administration because your employee's Social Security Numbers do not match with their records.

The time savings of your Human Resources staff alone in avoiding a Form I-9 audit or Social Security Administration request could easily make up for the cost of implementing these and other essential programs.

**This article should NOT be considered legal advice. If you require legal advice, you should contact your legal council.**

### SURVEY

#### Most Important Employee Benefits Strategies

- Benefits to help work-life balance 40%
- Employee decision support tools 29%
- Cost shifting to employees 29%
- Common platform for administration 24%
- 401(k) investment education 23%
- Retirement planning 22%
- Wider array of voluntary benefits 20%

- Employee self-service on net 18%
- Internet access for all employees 15%
- General financial planning 11%
- Outsourcing benefits administration 11%
- Build or expand benefits website 10%

Source:

The MetLife Study of Employee Benefits Trends, 2004

### ABOUT US

JMT & Associates, LLC is a full service Human Resources (HR) & Safety solutions provider. We partner with small, mid-size, and large companies to develop and improve HR processes and procedures. We offer extensive "real-world" experience in a variety of industries, including: manufacturing, service, union, union-free, profit, not-for-profit, private, and public sectors. Our level of involvement ranges from complete management of your HR needs to providing project-based assistance to your in-house HR person, depending on your specific business requirements. These services range from basic policy development to in-depth HR strategic planning. We begin with a comprehensive HR assessment of your current policies and procedures, then we provide a detailed analysis and a



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"roadmap of recommendations" to maximize your HR investment. We then provide the necessary follow-up to ensure process effectiveness.

**Areas of Expertise:** Coaching & Leadership Development, Compensation & Benefits, HR & Safety Compliance, Diversity, Employee Relations, General HR, HR Assessments, HR Policies & Procedures, HR Strategy & Planning, Labor Relations, Organizational Development, Performance Management, Job Analysis, Job Descriptions, Employee Assessments, and a variety of HR & Safety training courses.

**Legal Note:** JMT & Associates, LLC provides services in conformance with best practices of the human resource profession, but in NOT engaged in rendering legal advice or services. While implementation of effective HR management programs and systems significantly reduces potential legal liability, should legal assistance be required the company is advised to utilize the services of a competent legal professional.

**If you or a colleague wishes to be added to this newsletter's email list, please email [jmt@jmt-associates.com](mailto:jmt@jmt-associates.com).**