

# Solution Source



January 2010

## The HR Business Breakfast Series

**January 19, 2010**  
**8:00 - 10:00 AM**  
**The Open Door Café,**  
**Bel Air**

### Harassment in the Workplace

**Can you identify forms  
of Harassment that  
could make you  
vulnerable for a  
lawsuit?**

***Do you want to be better  
educated on Workplace  
Harassment, join us for  
our January Business  
Breakfast. This session is  
a MUST for all  
businesses!***

## February Business Breakfast

8:00 AM - 10:00 AM  
The Open Door Café, Bel Air

**February 18, 2009 – Social  
Media in the Workplace?**

For registration info, go to  
[www.hrsolutionsllc.com](http://www.hrsolutionsllc.com)

## Company Loss and Theft

In all business, small and large, we have to keep our eye on unnecessary loss and employee theft. A few key areas where we see repeated theft are:

**Time:** Employees that repeatedly come into the work area at exactly starting time, but then proceed to make coffee, chat with co-workers, use the restroom and then eventually make it over to their work station. We also have the issues of time spent on Facebook, the internet, etc. This is stealing time, and can easily be controlled through enforced policies and treating this, as it should be, a disciplinary issue.

**Payroll** - Often in small businesses one person is responsible for Payroll and there is not a solid backup and audit process. No business should allow one person to be solely responsible for managing the payroll system without a backup audit system in place.

**Office Supplies** - Believe it or not 67% of all employees steal office supplies! Post-it notes are the #1 item stolen by employees. We are not suggesting you micro-manage down to whether or not your employees are walking out the door with a Bic pen; however we are suggesting you pay attention.

**Full Product Theft** - If your business produces an actual product it is very likely you have some type of theft occurring. Often we find company owners that are making some small product that perhaps has pieces that can become something more valuable and they think "why would my employees steal these"? If that is what you are thinking, run, don't walk, to Ebay and do some searches on items similar to what your company makes; you will be surprised at the number of small items that are broken down for copper, stainless, etc. and are sold in large lots to companies that manufacture something else.

Why do employees steal? There are a myriad of reasons but some of the key ones are:

- They feel the company owes them because they are not paid enough
- They are concerned about losing their job - for reasons other than stealing
- They feel the company is mis-managed and no one will notice
- 

What can you do?

- Have a solid disciplinary plan to address
- Monitor your workplace and processes for equipment and office supplies
- We believe in and suggest often to our clients to install Webcams in critical areas of your workplace
- Audit; if your employees know there are random audits, they are less likely to steal.

## Top HR Questions

In an effort towards continuous learning, starting with the August 2009 Newsletter, we began posting the top HR questions we received from our clients for the month.

**We launched a costly new benefit that we expected to be met with great enthusiasm by the employees. Instead, they listened to the details in an all employee meeting and not one employee commented, thanked us or even seemed excited. What could we have done differently?**

*We can almost guarantee the issue came down to how this great new benefit was communicated. Often times the person that puts together the communication is too close to the project, has been working on it for a long period of time and unwittingly communicates a perspective that is beyond the initial reaction. It is always a good idea to get an impartial review of what you are communicating so you have a better chance of receiving the response you had expected.*

**Our company has never had a Human Resources person and we are starting to ask ourselves - do we need help? Are we vulnerable for a government audit? Could our employees sue us?**

*Typically HR Solutions, LLC starts with an internal compliance audit. An audit helps us determine your FLSA compliance; review your Human Resources recordkeeping practices are legal, review job descriptions and handbooks. From there we can develop a priority plan for your business based on needs, goals and budget.*

**Most of our employees get very defensive when we discipline for poor quality or productivity. How do we avoid these repetitive confrontations that don't change their performance?**

*This is clearly a communication issue. I can't help but wonder if your employees feel surprised by the disciplinary communication because there was no previous communication referencing their progress or work. Be sure, as you recognized an employee having problems, to be talking to them about expectations, perhaps a casual discussion of what is keeping them from meeting productivity standards etc. By the time you are ready to sit down with a formal disciplinary action, they should know it is coming and won't be as defensive.*

## Cobra Subsidy Extension Signed into Law

On Saturday, December 19, 2009, the U.S. Senate passed the Fiscal Year 2010 Department of Defense (DOD) Appropriations Act by a vote of 880in This federal spending bill included important provisions to both

1. Extend and expand the COBRA subsidy program that was enacted under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and
2. Extend expanded unemployment benefits through February 28, 2010.

The House also passed this same spending bill on December 16, 2009 by a vote of 3950in President Obama **immediately signed this bill into law** (P.L. No: 111-118) after Senate passage on December 19, 2009.

### COBRA

The COBRA subsidy program extension in the [DOD bill](#) will:

- Expand the ARRA's COBRA premium subsidy period from nine to 15 months
- Change the end date for eligibility for the subsidy from December 31, 2009, to February 28, 2010
- Provide a retroactive period of 60 days (commences upon enactment) for payment of premiums for eligible individuals whose subsidy period expired on November 30, 2009
- Require a special notice outlining these changes within 60 days to all eligible individuals on COBRA on or after October 31, 2009, or those who are terminated after this date
- Clarify the original COBRA subsidy program, noting that eligibility and notice are based on the timing of the qualifying event

**Did you know that the average jury award for harassment/discrimination lawsuits is \$1.8 million? Is your business safe?**

Take this quiz to find out...

- Would you recognize sexual harassment in your workplace?
- Do your personnel files contain everything they should—and nothing they shouldn't?
- Do you know that companies with as few as one employee are bound by the regulations of the Fair Labor & Standards Act? And that this is the law you are most likely to be violating – without knowing it?
- Are you confident that you are hiring and firing in accordance with appropriate laws?
- Do you know whether the Family Medical Leave Act applies to your organization?

Answer: If you own a business and answered “no” or “not sure” to one or more of these questions, your business may be at risk for costly lawsuits and fines.

At HR Solutions, we partner with small businesses like yours to:

- Ensure your compliance with state and federal employment regulations,
- Resolve specific employee issues, and
- Establish good employment practices including training and performance management.

These steps help minimize risk, improve employee retention and morale and increase productivity and profit for small companies that don't have the resources of an in-house HR specialist.

**HR Solutions is like having your own HR Department – only better!**

Flexible plans to meet your needs and budget with  
**FULL OUTSOURCING SOLUTIONS!**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| ✓ <b>Employee Relations Support</b>             | ✓ <b>Management Development</b>              |
| ✓ <b>Recruiting/Retention</b>                   | ✓ <b>Affirmative Action Plans</b>            |
| ✓ <b>Benefits Administration</b>                | ✓ <b>Performance Management</b>              |
| ✓ <b>Worker's Comp Management</b>               | ✓ <b>Weekly/Monthly on site office hours</b> |
| ✓ <b>Sexual Harassment &amp; Discrimination</b> | ✓ <b>Unemployment Hearings</b>               |
|   | ✓ <b>Policy &amp; Procedure</b>              |

**CALL NOW!**

**443-356-4352**

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**[www.hrsolutionsllc.com](http://www.hrsolutionsllc.com)**

# WHAT IS COACHING?

**Coaching** is a unique and distinct profession. A coach can help you and/or your organization to

- Solve problems
- Reach goals
- Design a plan of action
- Make decisions

In addition, a coach will stay with the client to:

- Implement the plan of action, working through the inevitable changes and any obstacles.
- Maintain a healthy balance between your personal and professional life.
- Keep looking ahead to take advantage of opportunities that are just now formulating.
- Bring out your personal best, keeping focused on your needs, values, and vision.

## A Coach is...

- Your **partner** in achieving business and personal goals
- Your **champion** during a turnaround
- Your **trainer** in communication skills
- Your **sounding board** when making choices
- Your **motivation** when strong actions are called for
- Your **unconditional support** when you take a hit
- Your **mentor** in personal development
- Your **wake up call** if you don't hear your own
- Your **partner in helping you have all of what matters most to you**

**CALL NOW FOR A FREE INTRODUCTORY SESSION!**

## Are You Paying Too Much for Payroll?

In this economic down turn, you're probably looking for ways to cut costs. **It's Payday!** offers cost effective payroll solutions. Call them **TODAY** for a quote and a comparison to your current payroll provider!

410-879-5200



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- An Advisor...knowledgeable about employment laws/regulations
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