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MEDIA RELEASE

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Avoid Tears During Performance Reviews

Tips for keeping performance reviews professional and effective

Vancouver, BC: As we head into performance review season it's hard to tell who's more anxious; the Generation Y workforce being reviewed, or the Generation X managers conducting the reviews. Over the past five years, employee appraisals have become an emotionally-charged business exercise and the BC Human Resources Management Association is warning employers to get the process right or not bother doing it at all.

Generation Y has been called over-praised, used to formal recognition and encouragement, and unfamiliar with how to accept negative feedback. More and more managers are finding that to be the case, making performance reviews an unnecessarily arduous challenge.

"No one likes receiving criticism, and few people enjoy giving it," said Christian Codrington, CHRP and Senior Manager, Operations, BC Human Resources Management Association. "When you have a Gen Y workforce raised in a culture of praise and recognition and combine that with managers reluctant to discuss shortcomings and give negative feedback, you're faced with a potential HR disaster." Both employees and managers need to adjust their expectations or forget about the whole exercise.

Codrington advises both employers and employees to change their performance review process to better reflect today's modern workforce.

Traditional managers need to soften up

Generation Y may have been raised in a culture of praise and applause, but veteran managers often come from a culture notoriously lean on recognition and encouragement. Do away with the "you'll hear about bad news with a pink slip" style of employee engagement and start talking with the workforce. Employees need to know where to improve.

Today's expectations

Are the workplace expectations of yesterday still relevant? Don't criticize staff for bending irrelevant rules. Many companies are moving to a more "results based" workplace where workers can be more flexible with their time by starting later, staying late or working from home. Outcomes are more important than whether people arrived at work on time or not.

Once-a-year isn't enough

Generation Y needs more feedback than less. Many firms are adopting quarterly performance reviews or more frequent check-ins between staff and management. Trust and authenticity is paramount with Generation Y. That can't be built on once-a-year meetings.

Friends in the workplace

Being friendly at the workplace is very different from being friends outside of work. Always keep a line between business and personal relationships or the risk of favouritism becomes higher and bad news will be even harder to break in a professional manner.

BC HRMA is a non-profit organization dedicated to advancing professional people practices through professional development opportunities such as conference, workshops, symposiums, and mentorship and volunteer programs. The association provides leadership to more than 5,200 members and 3,000 affiliates that collectively represent CEOs, directors of HR, consultants, educators, students, HR generalists, and small-business owners. Established in 1942, BC HRMA is a founding member of the Canadian Council of Human Resources Associations (CCHRA) and the exclusive grantor of the Certified Human Resources Professional (CHRP) designation in British Columbia.

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