Workers' Compensation & Safety Seminar

The Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) system now requires all group rated employers who have had a claim in 2008 or 2009 to participate in two hours of safety training education.

Employers Resource Association will be hosting a Workers' Compensation and Safety Seminar that will update you on the recent BWC changes. This seminar includes safety training classes that will make your company compliant with the new safety requirement. Workers' Compensation and Safety Experts from Careworks Consultants, Inc., one of ERA’s partners and Risk Control 360 will facilitate the seminar.

The seminar agenda includes the following courses (each are one hour in duration):

- Workers' Compensation 101
- Advanced Workers' Compensation
- Safety for High Turnover Businesses*
- The Business Approach to Safety Management*

* Meets requirements for compliance with new BWC Safety mandates.

Tuesday, February 1
8:00 am - 2:45 pm
ERA Cincinnati Office

Wednesday, February 2
8:00 am - 2:45 pm
ERA Columbus Office

Click here to register.

2011 Roundtables

Looking for an informal forum to share information, ideas, and experiences among peers? Look no further than ERA for our Roundtables. We anticipate continued participation for these highly valuable, member-only, peer group meetings and look forward to new members joining.

For more information, please click the appropriate link.
As we enter into the first quarter of 2011, we would like to take a moment and thank our membership for the outstanding support you have provided Employers Resource Association over the past year. We now stand at 1,328 members in the Cincinnati, Columbus, Dayton, Northern Kentucky, and the South-eastern Indiana area.

What did you find of highest value in 2010 among the services we provide to members?

• Over 4,000 member employees attended over 200 ERA Training Programs
• Over 6,100 calls were made to the HR Hotline
• More than 4,400 copies of our annual wage, salary, and benefit surveys were sent out to participating members
• Over 521 members attended ERA sponsored roundtables, issues forums, and legal briefings
• Organizations made use of our HR consulting services, including:
  □ 18 Employee Engagement Surveys
  □ Nearly 200 Affirmative Action Plans
  □ 10 employee handbook reviews
  □ 19 member companies used our HR Consulting Services (HR On-Site, Recruiting, Projects)
  □ More than 200 other projects and other HR-related assistance
  □ 44 companies used our compensation services (job descriptions, bonus/incentive plan creation/updates, pay reviews, etc.)

The new year is already in full swing here at ERA; we’ve already had multiple training classes, roundtables, and several surveys have been published. Please be sure to keep watching our newsletter and ERA Update mailings so that you do not miss anything. This year promises several major changes on the legislative front, and federal regulators are stepping up their efforts in many different areas. You can count on us to keep you current, compliant, and confident no matter what happens.

Best wishes for a prosperous 2011!
As yet another new year begins; there are many discussions around resolutions. What resolutions are you setting for yourself and your organization? The end of the year can be very busy with holidays and for many organizations, their financial year end as well. This can leave little time for reflection, let alone resolutions or goals.

Consider a challenge for yourself. As the end of January approaches, take a time out. The time out may only be an hour or it could be a few hours spread out across several days. During your time out, ask yourself a few questions:

- During your busiest times, how does your organization perform?
- How do you, individually, perform?
- Who, as a business owner or executive, do you go to for discussions about new ideas or problem solving?
- Are there any individuals that need help?

Taking the time to reflect can help you prepare to make your next year even better. Your resolution may be to smooth out the bumps prior to your busiest time of year.

This is where Employers Resource Association can help. As you reflect on the questions, there may not be an answer. For example, if you do not have someone to discuss new ideas within your organization, one of our executive roundtables may help. ERA offers roundtables for CEOs, HR, Sales and Safety executives. Training catalogs are available for individual public courses, and ERA can customize our training for your employees and managers. ERA can also help you stay compliant. From the set up phase of employee handbooks to in depth law reviews, help your team stay current on the ever changing legislative and workplace environment. Challenge yourself and challenge ERA to be your partner in meeting your organization's resolutions.

Happy New Year! Thank you for using Employers Resource Association to help your organization succeed.
Happy New Year! Surveys are already off to a strong start in 2011 with the Office & Clerical Survey. This comprehensive survey covers 59 non-exempt positions in fields such as: Accounting, General Administrative, Computer Operations, Sales/Marketing Support, Human Resources, and Production Support. The deadline has been extended until Friday, February 4, so you still have time to get your questionnaires in!

In these challenging economic times, everyone is being asked to do more with less and it can be difficult to find the time to do even the most essential functions of your job. Despite the time crunch, I would urge everyone to continue taking the time to fill out our surveys. Even if your organization is not planning to hire anyone in the near future, it is important to have the most up-to-date salary and benefit information for several reasons:

- Having good market data is the best way to make sure that you are still paying enough to retain your best employees.
- The benefits that your company offers are also valuable retention tools. If you offer something that most of the market does not (e.g. a wellness program, or low employee premium contributions), then you can use our survey data to help show the unique benefits of your workplace.

And finally, perhaps most important of all...

- **Not participating is expensive!** Most of our salary surveys cost $250 for non-participating members. If you are on a tight budget it can be hard to find the money when you have an urgent need for the data. Better to take a few minutes now to participate and get survey data for free.

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**The 2010 National Wage and Salary Survey is Now Available!**

This comprehensive survey contains wage and salary data from 29 associations all around the country. It includes 151 jobs in the non-exempt office and clerical, production associates, and management fields. Free copies will be sent to members who participated in this and all of our core surveys last year, and the survey is available for purchase for $150.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Survey Department at 513-679-4120, toll free at 888-237-9554, or contact Douglas C. Matthews at dmatthews@hrxperts.org if you have any questions about our survey processes or need assistance with completing your survey questionnaires.
Benefits of Participation
This intensive workshop is a key component of the core “Excellence in Leadership” series for managers and supervisors. Participants will be exposed to a variety of competencies necessary to be successful leading others in today’s complex workplace. Highly interactive, participants will apply what they learn while in the classroom.

Learning Objectives:
- Adopt the qualities of a great leader
- Use authority and influence appropriately
- Flexing leadership styles to meet the needs of team members
- Discover the ”true” nature of motivation
- Utilize motivational techniques to get better results
- Identify the laws that govern the workplace such as Title VII, FLSA, FMLA, OSHA, ADA, and many more

About your instructor...
Jerry Yingling, PHR, Learning and Development Series, leads this informative and important program. He brings years of experience to this program and shares many insights to success.

Cancellation Policy:
Substitutions may be made at any time prior to the first class session. No-shows or cancellations in writing within 2 full business days will be charged.
Leadership Skills for Group Leaders

Benefits of Participation
Help your non-exempt level group leaders improve their ability to get things done through others without actual supervisory/management authority. This course will give them the tools to need to have more success, with more people, more often, by exposing them to the most important leadership competencies.

Learning Objectives:
• Adopt the qualities of a great leader
• Change/adjust leadership styles to meet the needs of team members
• Apply motivational techniques
• Avoid communication "gaffes" that plague group leaders
• Improve skill training: techniques to get new employees trained better and faster
• Improve communication by overcoming aggressiveness (active and passive) and submissiveness
• Utilize a six-step coaching method for performance improvement

About your instructor...
Jessica Coleman, Learning and Development Consultant, will lead this practical and information-packed program for the Association. Jessica comes to the Association with extensive training experience in both the public and private sector, including the financial services industry, and state and local government.

Jessica Coleman

Date:
Tuesdays, February 8, 15 & 15, 2011
Time:
Time: 8:30 am - 4:00 pm
Lunch is included
Location:
ERA Columbus Office
PHR/SPHR/GPHR
Recertification Credits: 21
CEUs: 2.1
CPEs: Not available
Member Fee: $380.00
*Non-member Fee: $530.00
Member Discount
Register three or more people at least 14 business days prior to the program to qualify for a 5% Group Discount. Members who are paying 14 business days prior to the program may also take a 5% Earlybird Discount.
*Pre-payment is required for non-members.
To register, e-mail training@hrxperts.org or call 614.538.9410
Who Should Attend?
Current or potential hourly group leaders.

CANCELLATION POLICY:
Substitutions may be made at any time prior to the first class session. No-shows or cancellations in writing within 2 full business days will be charged.
The Importance of Sexual Harassment Training

Recent court cases have made it very clear: The quality and duration of sexual harassment prevention training is critical in providing an affirmative defense against claims of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment prevention training is under attack like never before. Thus, as training programs have become increasingly important, the quality of these programs has developed into the newest battlefield in the employment litigation wars.

As reported in the National Law Journal, in harassment lawsuits: "Plaintiff’s attorneys and the EEOC have begun to question employers aggressively as to how much money they spend on training, the expertise of the trainers, the curriculum, and employee response to the training."

What should be covered? According to an article recently written in the Legal Report, published by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), your training should meet each of the following requirements:

- Be at least two hours in length for employees and three hours for supervisors.
- Be effective and interactive.
- Provide information and practical guidance to learners.
- Cover relevant federal and state law.
- Cover other forms of unlawful harassment/discrimination.
- Explain prohibitions against and the prevention and correction of sexual harassment.
- Include practical examples to instruct learners (employee and supervisors) in the prevention of harassment, discrimination, and retaliation.
- Describe remedies available to targets of sexual harassment.

Furthermore, the expertise of the trainer is coming into question. In Cadena v. Pacesetter Corp. (US Court of Appeals, 2000) the jury awarded $300,000 in punitive damages to the plaintiff and was upheld under appeal because the employer could not show that the trainer was qualified to provide the training. When questioned during her deposition, the trainer incorrectly answered questions about what types of conduct could be considered sexual harassment. The court ruled that given the "trainer’s ignorance about sexual harassment, a jury could reasonably infer that Pacesetter failed to make good faith efforts to adequately educate employees about its non-discrimination policy and Title VII."

Employers who fail to provide quality sexual harassment prevention training to all employees may be unable to establish an affirmative defense in response to a harassment lawsuit.

If you have any questions about these points or other training questions, please contact Ralph Neal VP, Educational Services at rNeal@hrxperts.org or 513-679-4120.
You may find the following statement discouraging: "There is no template for your sales program!" While some generic data is helpful (such as 60%/40% and 70%/30% still are the most popular mixes of base pay to incentive pay), your sales program needs are based upon several items that are unique to your company and will not work in or for other companies, just as other company programs will not work in your company. Developing a Sales Compensation Program is much more complex than merely establishing sales goals and assigning dollar values to meeting those goals. As Chad Albrecht, a sales compensation consultant says: "The upside is that incentives work. The downside is that incentives work – just not always as you intend them… incentive plans (often) drive every element of the salesperson’s behavior."

The first step is “understanding what (your) business needs are, where gaps exist and what needs to be driven to get (your) business from point A to point B – that’s the key,” says Bob Cartwright, SPHR, who advises companies on sales strategies. After understanding your needs, creating incentive pay programs involves such items as calculating an appropriate ratio of base pay, commissions and bonuses; timing of rewards; maintaining internal collaboration; ensuring open communications from top to bottom; and making optimal use of technology. Incentives may include: quota bonuses; straight commissions; management-by objectives programs that pay on the basis of specific metrics; or ranking plans that reward high performers but not those performing at the lowest levels. Whatever the approach used, it must be specific to your organization, your culture, your industry, your market, your sales force, your specific needs/goals, and your finances. It also requires that the program does not motivate behavior that is unwanted (the “other elements” of a salesperson’s behavior referenced above). For example, measuring only sales volume can be a disaster if that approach results in salespeople pursuing “easier” sales that are quick, but less profitable for the company, or that are not consistent with an emphasis on newer product sales that are necessary to the company’s future. It also is critical that you have the capability to accurately capture all data that affects the incentive and that the data is available to be communicated to your sales force in very specific, very simple language. They must know, with some reasonable precision, and in a timely manner, exactly where they stand versus their goals. The rewards also need to be paid in a fashion that is motivating and keeps a clear line of sight between the goal and reward (e.g., monthly, quarterly, or semi-annual pay-outs vs. annual). An incentive is defined as “something that incites one to action, or greater effort, as a reward offered for greater productivity.” If you expect your sales staff to be “incented”, they must have clear, understandable goals, the opportunity to see how they are doing against those goals, and some degree of immediacy in the rewards.

Should you need assistance in reviewing existing Sales Incentive programs or need ERA to create a program that meets your organization’s unique needs, please contact Terry Henley, CCP, SPHR, Director of Compensation Services, at thenley@hrxperts.org or 513-679-4120.
Affirmative Action Update

Members currently obligated by the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) to file Affirmative Action plans should note the following items:

**Discontinuance of Active Case Management**

The OFCCP recently issued a notice to discontinue use of Active Case Management (ACM) Procedures. Established in 2003, ACM was designed to help the agency identify and remedy cases of systemic discrimination (affecting 10 or more potential victims).

An abbreviated desk audit, ACM allowed reviews to close quicker where there was no indicator of systemic discrimination. The result for most was that audits were closed more quickly with fewer onsite audits. The agency stated, "While ACM has identified a number of systemic cases since its implementation, it has also caused OFCCP to narrow the focus of its enforcement efforts and has eroded OFCCP’s enforcement authority."

As a result of this change, we expect audits to take longer and there will be more in-depth reviews of the outcome of the analyses. We also anticipate more in-depth scrutiny of recordkeeping, outreach efforts, disability related issues, and more onsite audits. The cancellation of this process and the hiring of over 200 new employees continues to reaffirm the aggressive stance of the OFCCP. In fact, we have already seen a different approach to audits within the last few months. Compliance Officers have been doing a more detailed review and follow-up with questions and requests for additional information.

There is also a new focus on compensation issues. If you have not recently analyzed your compensation, you should do so. In addition, if you have any adverse impact indicators for hiring and terminations you should be prepared to provide the background information demonstrating there was no discrimination. Applicant tracking and good record keeping are extremely important, particularly if you have adverse impact for hiring and/or placement goals. If you need assistance with applicant tracking, ERA has partnered with iApplicants, a web-based applicant tracking system.

**Corporate Scheduling Announcement Letters**

Recently Corporate Scheduling Announcement Letters (CSAL) were sent to employers. These letters are sent to employers with multiple locations that may receive an OFCCP audit of their Affirmative Action Plans during 2011. As noted in an earlier article, the CSAL does not initiate the audit; it is simply an advance notification of locations that may be audited.

If you received a CSAL, you will have the opportunity to review your plan to make sure that it is ready for audit. Should you receive a scheduling letter for an audit (which is the notice of actual audit), you will have up to 30 days to respond to the request for information.

If Employers Resource Association completes your plan, please let us know if you receive a CSAL. We can assist you in audit preparation.

If you have questions about these or other AAP issues, please contact Lori Hall in Columbus, lhall@hrxperts.org, 614-538-9410 or in Cincinnati, Carol Reubel, creubel@hrxperts.org or Carolyn Potter, cpotter@hrxperts.org, 513-679-4120.
Member Highlights

**Devcior Medical Products, Inc.**

In 1995, Mammotome was introduced as the first vacuum-assisted biopsy system. The company was acquired by Ethicon Endo-Surgery (Johnson & Johnson) two years later. In July 2010, Devicor Medical Products, Inc. acquired Mammotome from Johnson & Johnson. The Mammotome brand is the global market leader in breast biopsy systems.

**Bellefontaine Physical Therapy Ltd.**

Bellefontaine Physical Therapy, LTD offers a variety of programs and services tailored to the needs of each individual patient. Their facility contains a wide range of equipment and modalities that can be utilized in developing an individualized plan of care for each of their patients.

**Over The Rhine Community Housing**

Over-the-Rhine Community Housing is a non-profit organization that works to build and sustain a diverse neighborhood that values and benefits low-income residents. They focus on developing and managing resident-centered, affordable housing in an effort to promote inclusive community.

**Monti, Inc.**

Monti Inc. was founded in 1971. Their first building was 52,000 sq. ft. and had 8 employees. As years past, Monti has opened two branches in Sumter and Greenwood, S.C. They currently are located in Carthage, in a 162,000 sq. ft. building and employ over 100 people. For 40 years, Monti Inc. has specialized in manufacturing conductors, insulators and steel parts for the electrical industry. Monti Inc. offers a broad selection of products and services, allowing their customers to drastically reduce their vendor base.

**CostQuest Associates, Inc.**

CostQuest Associates, Inc. was founded in 1999. They specialize in the development of Economic Cost Models used by private companies, trade associations and governments around the world.

**Roeding Group Companies**

Roeding Group Companies was established in 1921. For over 80 years Roeding Group Companies (RGC) has met the insurance needs of their clients in a fast, fair and efficient manner. Their main office is in Crestview Hills in Northern Kentucky.

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**Welcome new members to ERA!**
New Members

Awesome Restaurant Group, Inc. is located in West Chester, Ohio. Bryan Jones is the President.

Bellefontaine Physical Therapy Ltd. is located in Bellefontaine, Ohio. Rodney Kerns is the owner.

CostQuest Associates, Inc. is located in Cincinnati, Ohio. James Stegeman is the President & CEO.

Devicor Medical Products, Inc. is located in Sharonville, Ohio. Tom Daudton is the CEO.

Joyland Preschool is located in Dublin, Ohio. Amanda Kulesza is the owner.

Monti, Inc. is located in Cincinnati, Ohio. Gavin Narburgh is the President.

Over The Rhine Community Housing is located in Cincinnati, Ohio. Mary Rivers is the Executive Director.

PLK Communities LLC is located in Cincinnati, Ohio. Peter Klekamp is the President.

Riverhills Healthcare is located in Cincinnati, Ohio. Barb Dechering is the CEO/CPA.

Roeding Group Companies is located in Crestview Hills, Kentucky. Steve Roeding is the President.

Employment Law Update and Review
See Ohio’s Top Attorneys in Action

This valuable day with the legal experts provides tremendous insight into the latest laws, rulings and practical interpretations to allow the executive or HR professional to perform a difficult job confidently, avoid expensive litigation and keep personal knowledge up-to-date.

Tuesday, March 2
Cincinnati

To Register...

Wednesday, March 9
Columbus

To Register...
There will be a new Safety Roundtable starting in Columbus on February 9, and continuing the second Wednesday of every other month for the 2011 calendar year. We will be partnering with Brad Hunt at RiskControl 360 to bring some great safety topics to the group, such as the ones listed below.

### Safety Enforcement
- What Do You Do When Injuries Are Not Reported in 24 Hours?
- How Are You Checking To See That Rules Are Followed?
- How Do You Document Safety Enforcement?

### Determine the True Causes of Injuries
- Is It Always the Employees Fault?
- Environment, Equipment & Education - The True Causes
- Injury Data - Is the True Cause Identified and Tracked?
- Are Employees Involved In Injury Analysis?

### Safety Training Practices
- Orientation & Annual Training Plans
- Classroom vs. Online
- Recordkeeping Practices
- Job-Specific Training
- How Do You Make It Interesting?

### Employee Involvement & Recognition in Safety
- Do Safety Committees Really Work?
- Other Methods to Involve Employees
- Incentive Plans That Work / Don't Work
- Recognizing/Celebrating Good Safety

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<th>New Safety Roundtable in Columbus</th>
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### Financial Justification for Safety Improvements
- Budgeting for Safety
- Calculating What Safety Has Saved/Cost You
- What the CFO Needs to See
- Departmental Charge Backs

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<th>Ohio BWC Safety &amp; Hygiene Training Center Classes for Ohio Workers</th>
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Dozens of training courses are available through BWC's Division of Safety & Hygiene. These courses are offered through the training center in Pickerington at the Ohio Center for Occupational Safety and Health (OCOSH) and at branch sites and BWC service offices across the state, including Toledo, Cincinnati, Canton, Cambridge, Portsmouth, Youngstown, and Cleveland. Employers may enroll any number of employees at no additional cost.

To enroll or learn more about the courses available January - March 2011, call 1.800.OHIOBWC, or visit the BWC Learning Center, click here.
ERA Special Events

Legal Breakfast Briefing
Cincinnati
“Health Care Reform—In Plain English”

William M. Freedman
Dinsmore & Schohl, LLC

Tuesday, February 15
8:30 am - 9:30 am
ERA Cincinnati Office

Member Fee: $25.00

To Register...

Legal Breakfast Briefing
Columbus
“Unemployment Compensation: How It Works”

Patricia Anderson Pryor
Taft, Stettinius & Hollister LLP

Wednesday, February 23
8:30 am - 9:30 am
ERA Columbus Office

Member Fee: $25.00

To Register...

PhR/SPHR Certification Preparation Program

This 11 week program is designed to prepare participants for passing the PHR or SPHR national certification examination.

Tuesdays, February 8 - April 19
6:00 pm - 9:00 pm
ERA Cincinnati Office

To Register...

Thursdays, February 10 - April 21
6:00 pm - 9:00 pm
ERA Columbus Office

To Register...

Issues Forum

“Mental Health in the Workplace—Strategies to Protect Your Bottom Line”

Deborah Dutton Lambert and Dr. Daina Dennis from Encompass Workplace Solutions will present a preview of a cutting-edge, four-module training program on mental health literacy. Included will be an overview of the prevalence and real costs of untreated mental health conditions in the workplace as well as stigmas and other costly barriers to early recognition, intervention and treatment. They will then introduce practical and effective strategies to create a mental health responsive workplace that will improve the health of employees and the financial strength of companies.

Thursday, February 24,
8:00 am - 9:30 am
ERA Cincinnati Office

To Register...
One of the many services we provide ERA members with is our HR On-Site service offering. This allows you to lease one of our experienced and well-qualified HR professionals for assistance at your facility for whatever time period makes sense for your operations. One of the advantages is that you get a high-quality HR professional for as much or as little as you need them.

Sometimes the duration of our HR On-Site projects is short, and can be completed within a few days or weeks. These short-term projects might include conducting an HR Audit, implementing a Performance Management process, or conducting Focus Groups after an Employee Opinion Survey. Our Project Consultants are also available for long term projects as well.

One example of a longer-term project is with USPG, Inc. in Gahanna, OH. Donn Davids, a management team member at USPG says he was looking for HR assistance because “in a small company it is not feasible or practical to have the high levels of HR experience and expertise on a full-time basis. ERA was recommended to us by a local attorney. The depth and availability of HR resources was very important to us, and ERA has provided both.”

Barbara England, an HR Consultant with the Columbus ERA office, provided professional HR assistance to USPG for more than two years, spending an average of 15-20 hours per week on site. Barbara would handle employee relations issues, and major projects like developing and implementing an employee handbook. Donn explains, “Barbara guided us through the creation of our personnel manual, and was great at guiding us through crisis intervention. One of the best things she did was to calm our fearful workforce with her professional and personable demeanor following an office incident.”

Donn says he would absolutely recommend ERA for any company looking to outsource part or all of their HR function. He says “ERA has been our sole source of HR provided services and we could not be more happy.”

If you think your company could use ERA’s professional HR On-site services, please contact either Lori Hall in Columbus, lhall@hrxperts.org, 614-538-9410 or in Cincinnati, Carol Reubel, creubel@hrxperts.org, 513-679-4120.

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**Hiring Incentive for Ohio Employers**

Did you know that your company might be eligible for reimbursement of up to 90% of a new employee’s wages for 3 to 6 months under an Ohio job-training program? In an effort to assist the long-term unemployed (defined as 180 days or more) in obtaining employment Ohio has a jobs training grant that reimburses employers for hiring and training new employees. The reimbursement rate is on a sliding scale based upon the number of employees of the hiring company. Employers should carefully review all the terms and conditions for participation in the program.

In Hamilton County contact Chuck Walters, Business Service Manager, SuperJobs Center 513-458-6599. Contacts for other Ohio counties can be found at the following link: [http://www.hrxperts.org/emailUpdates/20110112/ojtcontacts.pdf](http://www.hrxperts.org/emailUpdates/20110112/ojtcontacts.pdf).

A description of the Job Training grant and the Ohio Jobs Training Program can be found at the following links to ERA’s website: [http://www.hrxperts.org/emailUpdates/20110112/OJT_at_A_Glance.pdf](http://www.hrxperts.org/emailUpdates/20110112/OJT_at_A_Glance.pdf) and [http://www.hrxperts.org/emailUpdates/20110112/OJT_brochure.pdf](http://www.hrxperts.org/emailUpdates/20110112/OJT_brochure.pdf).

If you are unable to access the information please contact Carolyn Potter at 513-679-4120 or cpotter@hrxperts.org.
Economic Trends Survey

Last month, many of our members participated in the 2010 National Economic Trends Survey which covered predictions on hiring, sales, and compensation issues. Nearly 2,800 companies responded to the survey nationwide, reporting data on over 6,000 locations in all 50 states. This includes 334 participants from Ohio, 137 from Indiana, and 99 from Kentucky.

Results from the survey show that there is some cautious optimism for 2011. While close to 60% of the respondents believe the overall economy will be about the same in 2011 as it was in mid-2010, 65% of those responding expect the outlook for their own business to be more promising in 2011 with increases in sales / revenue. This self-confidence is tempered by 23% of respondents that anticipate flat sales / revenue and 11% that expect a decrease in sales/revenue.

Local data is generally in line with the national data, although it seems that more local employers are planning on hiring in the first quarter.

Hiring and Sales predictions for 2011

Companies that Plan to Hire in the First Quarter

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Compensation & Benefits Strategies:

Employers’ optimism tinged with conservatism is clear to see in their approach to pay. Nearly 60% of the respondents report that they plan on giving pay increases in 2011. Balancing out this optimism, are 20% of respondents that were uncertain at the time or delaying the decision as well as the remaining 20% that plan to freeze or reduce pay.

In the past two years, many organizations froze or reduced pay as cost cutting measures. Over half of these organizations plan to improve their employees’ pay. Of the organizations that froze pay in 2009 or 2010, 53% plan to give most or select employees increases in 2011. These increases are in the form of merit, general or COLA. 18% report a continuation of the pay freeze and 29% of respondents are uncertain.

Similarly, more than half of the organizations that reduced pay in 2009 or 2010 already restored pay to pre-reduction levels or plan to do so for most or selected employees. 20% will continue at the reduced pay and 22% of respondents are uncertain.

Company matches to 401(k) contributions have remained relatively consistent in the past two years. Of the respondents with a 401(k), 71% kept intact matching contributions for all employees in the past, and will match again in 2011. 13% of respondents with a 401(k) plan reduced, suspended or eliminated matching contributions for some or all employees in 2009 or 2010, but will partially or fully restore the match in 2011.

The full copy of the survey report can be downloaded here. Please contact the survey department at 513-679-4120 or contact dmatthews@hrxperts.org if you have any questions.
Sales Leader Roundtable

2010 was a great year for the Sales Leader Roundtable. In addition to great conversations that offered valuable insights on a variety of topics, each session allowed for open discussion covering various topics which were mentioned by the participants. We also began holding the meetings at round-table member companies that included plant tours. We permitted participants to bring other employees from their companies as appropriate.

We expect 2011 to be even better. Our goal for 2011 is to increase attendance over 2010 and continue to offer developmental topics that are value added as determined by the participants.

This roundtable is intended for sales leaders within our member organizations and is held on the 1st Friday of every month from 8:00 am - 10:00 am at our facility in Cincinnati. For those in Columbus, the tentative dates are the 2nd Monday of each month. Once responses have been received from those that are interested, I will send out additional details about the meetings.

This roundtable provides a forum for our member sales leaders to meet with other sales leaders in order to share sales tactics, strategies, and leads. Each session offers a one hour training/developmental exercise. The remaining hour is devoted to discussing issues of the day (as determined by the participants).

If you would like to be a part of this exciting developmental opportunity, please contact Jerry Yingling at jyingling@hrxperts.org, or register here.

If you are not a sales leader within your respective organization, please forward this to the appropriate person within your sales organization.

Good Selling,
Jerry Yingling

Telecommuting Gains More Attention

Telecommuting has gained renewed national attention since President Obama announced in July that the federal government will encourage and support telecommuting throughout its various agencies in an attempt to reduce greenhouse gas pollution from employee travel and commuting. Technological advances in data security for remote workers have eased some resistance to telecommuting on the part of federal agencies and the private sector.

Now, both private and public sector organizations are realizing that there is a reduced in the need for real estate to support employees as telecommuting continues to grow in popularity. By reducing their contribution to pollution, companies can also take advantage of incentives for becoming more green.

The option to work from home, either part-time or full-time can give an employer a competitive edge when recruiting candidates. In fact, even the various federal agencies are competing with each other for candidates on this one benefit. Telecommuting provides employees with the opportunity to achieve a better work/life balance and can increase productivity as most telecommuting employees are at their home desks earlier in the morning and later in the afternoons, when compared to workers who regularly commute.
In my October, 2010 article, where I recapped what I had learned when I attended the 47th Annual Midwest Labor and Employment Law Seminar, I touched on ADAAA. Does anybody still remember what that acronym was all about?

Perhaps it’s time for a refresher and an update. On September 25, 2008, then President Bush signed a law that Congress passed as an amendment to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which had been originally enacted in 1990. The stated purpose of the 2008 legislation, called the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA), was to legislatively restore the initial purpose of the ADA in light of a number of federal court rulings that in the opinion of Congress, had improperly limited worker protections offered under the original ADA.

Since the effective date of the ADAAA was January 1, 2009, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), which is responsible for the administration of both the ADA and the newly enacted ADAAA, was required to develop and issue regulations within one year of enactment, to guide everyone in complying with the statute in a way that Congress had intended. To this end, the proposed regulations were published in the Federal Register on September 23, 2009, and the comment period for these proposed rules ended 60 days later, during November, 2009. During the comment period, business groups and employers expressed some considerable concerns that the EEOC’s vision of the statute in the proposed regulations went well beyond the intent of Congress. In some aspects, it was even contrary to the law. It was anticipated that after receiving the comments, as required, that the final regulations would be issued in time for the January, 2010 “one year from enactment deadline.” That deadline came and went without final regulations. There was comment from the EEOC shortly after the beginning of 2010 that because multiple new commissioners needed to be appointed to the EEOC, it was not possible to meet the timetable on final regulations. Then at the end of March, 2010, in response to questions raised at a conference, an associate counsel for the EEOC told the audience that the newly appointed EEOC commissioners were reviewing more than 650 comments and the agency was keeping its “fingers crossed” that it could meet a July, 2010 target date for the final regulations. That target date came and went also.

But there is a light at the end of the tunnel. During the first week of January, 2011, the EEOC announced that a final set of regulations for the ADAAA had been and unanimously approved by the EEOC commissioners in a series of private but separate votes. Soon the long awaited final regulations will be revealed to all, right? According to EEOC officials, these final regulations, as required by standard
procedures, were released to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and other federal agencies for review and comment. When asked about sharing the final regulations with the public in the meantime, an EEOC representative reportedly responded, “Once OMB approves the regulations, they will be published in the Federal Register. Until that time, we cannot make them public.” A Society for Human Resource Management article on these events claims that sources familiar with the issue said that a thorough review by the OMB could take several months. We will keep you updated as this situation progresses.

New Cincinnati Library Resources Courtesy of General Cable

We want to say “Thank you!” to General Cable, who donated hard copies of valuable HR resources to Employers Resource Association for use by all members. We now have information such as the entire BNA series—including Fair Employment Practices, Labor Relations, Policies & Practices, Wage & Hour, and case law—in hard copy in our Cincinnati library. This is in addition to the online BNA service that is also available. We also have books on various HR topics, as well as weekly publications such as the Cincinnati Business Courier, Northern Kentucky Business Journal and Columbus Business First. If you need to do research and would like to use the library, please contact Dan Chaney at 513-679-4120 to arrange a time. We hope you will take advantage of this valuable resource and visit soon!

We are proud to have General Cable as a member. The Fortune 500 company is headquartered in Highland Heights, Kentucky, and is a global leader in the development, design, manufacture, marketing and distribution of copper, aluminum and fiber optic wire and cable products for the energy, industrial, specialty and communications markets. Once again, many thanks to General Cable for their generosity.
Do you need more information about a service or program offered by ERA? Would you like to talk to one of our experts in a particular speciality? Here’s a list of some of our most popular services, and the main contact person for each of them.

**In Cincinnati, please call: 513.679.4120 | In Columbus, please call: 614.538.9410**

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