

***Examining practical HR issues business owners and managers encounter every day***

***"Put off until tomorrow what you hate doing today " is a common mantra. Hopefully my comments below will help you select a better path.***

**June 2005**

**More Din  
Din Din Tips**

- If you see negativity in an employee's attitude, conversation, relationship with employees or clients, DIN. Tell them immediately that there's no room for that approach in your company. Hold them accountable.
  
- If you've been making up company policies and

**Din Din Din**

I'm paying close attention to the wisdom of my clients and friends for practical, applicable advice I can share with you from an HR perspective. The other day a client telephoned and asked if I was available at that moment to assist her. Since we were already connecting, I figured, "Why reschedule?" Let's do it now.

She was excited by my response and called it a "DIN DIN DIN" moment! Do it now! Do it now! Do it now!

I can procrastinate with the best of them. I'm sure I'm not alone in putting some things off to the last moment. But

procedures because you think you're too small or too relaxed an environment for an employee handbook, DIN. It's easier to create a handbook and tell employees you're following policy, than to handle every issue on a case-by-case basis. Your decisions will be more business-like and less personal.

- If your employee's appraisal is due on their anniversary of hire, DIN. Do not delay giving the employee his or her review. This is one of the most demoralizing things a manager can do. Celebrate their annual contribution to your company and give them feedback to help them succeed!

today's question is what HR, personnel, employee relations, activities, practicalities and legalities are you putting off that should be DIN DIN DIN? I've picked some of my favorites below and in the sidebar:

**DIN #1 - FEEDBACK:** Do you speak to your employees on a regular basis? Are all your conversations general or are they performance oriented? The social part is good for developing relationships with your people. But it is pivotal for the success of the individual and the organization that you give your employees regular feedback on how they're performing their job.

This can be as simple as "good job" comments when you see them doing something right. Or it can be as simple as "I'd prefer if you performed task A in this manner." These routine discussions need not be formal and they need not be in writing but they must occur.

Many of you who have heard me speak on this subject are familiar with my "No Surprise Theory of Feedback." In a nutshell, when we give annual reviews of our employees' performance, there should be no surprises in the discussion. The employee should have received all the feedback throughout the year, and the appraisal should merely repeat the year's discussions. So, Do It Now.

**DIN #2 - DOCUMENTATION:** Sometimes the feedback

## How Arlene Can Help

You don't have to do it alone. Arlene can help you minimize your procrastination by:

- Write or review your disciplinary documentation for you
- Develop easy-to-use performance tools
- Read and edit performance appraisals
- Provide 3rd party support during difficult performance discussions
- Write your response to difficult unemployment claims

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conversations must go deeper than everyday feedback. For example, when problem performance or behavior mysteriously appears in an employee. That's when our tendency to procrastinate increases and our need to document skyrockets.

DIN really applies here. As soon as you see a potentially or actually serious problem, it's time to start taking notes and documenting. What day did the event happen? Describe the incident. Who was involved? What discussion did you have with the employee? What was the employee's response? How is the situation going to be rectified? What assistance do you or others need to provide to improve the employee's performance or understanding of the problem? In what time frame must the issue be resolved?

These are only some of the questions that need to be answered in your documentation. Most important is that you don't try to leave an employee's work history to memory. If the employee's performance continues to go south, your communication and documentation can serve as evidence for terminating an employee and winning an unemployment decision. If the employee's performance improves, you can add a note to the employee's file that congratulates the employee for resolving the issue and succeeding in their job. However, do not destroy any documentation (good, bad, or ugly). Even if the employee turns out to be the best employee you've ever had, that paper trail should

always exist.

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## About Arlene Vernon

Arlene Vernon, PHR, partners with small businesses as their Human Resource Xpert to create their HR systems and solve their HR problems.

If you have gaps in your HR operation, have an employee problem to solve, or want to enhance your managers' skills, call Arlene today. Learn how HRx can save you time and help you avoid costly HR mistakes. HRx, Inc., 574 Prairie Center Drive #135/285, Eden Prairie, MN 55344, 952-996-0975, [www.HRxcellence.com](http://www.HRxcellence.com).

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