

# Company Bulletin Boards

**Communicating Policies,  
Procedures, and Practices**



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# Employee Bulletin Boards: Employers Communicating with Employees

The employee bulletin board should be an official site where the employer communicates policies and procedures to employees. Most employers intend to maintain their employee bulletin boards, posting new information and

## Is This Your Bulletin Board?



dutifully displaying labor and employment law posters. As businesses grow, however, there is increased pressure on employers to attract new customers, become more competitive, deal with daily crises, and find quality employees in a tight labor market. Unfortunately, the bulletin board often is relegated to the back burner and good intentions turn to neglect. Posters become outdated, employee policies turn yellow with age, information is passed on verbally instead of in writing, and employees begin using the board as a place to post for-sale items and party notices!

It is no wonder that employees do not look to bulletin boards for the latest information. If postings have not changed in years, or if the board is so disorganized that important information is lost in the clutter, why bother? Many employers feel that their employees would not read a bulletin board faithfully, anyway, so what is the big deal? Well, it IS a big deal.

It is relatively easy to change an outdated, ineffective employee bulletin board into one that improves workplace performance, increases job safety awareness, instills employee respect, and builds a better relationship between management and the work force. This publication provides guidance for employers looking to revitalize their employee bulletin board to ensure that

- it is up-to-date.
- it provides job-related information for employees.
- it displays mandatory (regulatory) postings.
- it contains information that could insulate their company against certain legal liabilities.

## Long-Lasting Benefits

There are numerous benefits to be realized by devoting time and staff to the development and maintenance of an employee bulletin board.

## Benefit 1: Effective Line of Communication

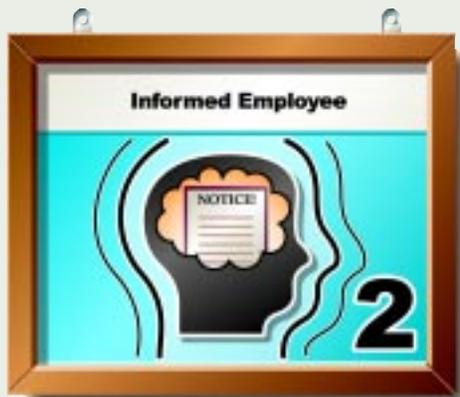
Posting information on the bulletin board is an efficient way to communicate information to your employees. It effectively reinforces company memos distributed to each employee, notices enclosed with employees' paychecks, and word of mouth down the chain of command.



## Benefit 2: Informed Employees

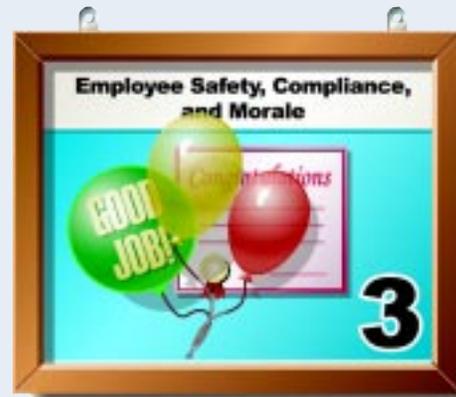
Your bulletin board should keep employees informed about the company, their jobs, and technological advances. It can be used as a teaching tool, reinforcing employees' awareness of

- the company's expectations.
- state and federal employment regulations and employee responsibility.
- opportunities for advancement, continuing education available, and company events.
- whom to contact with questions, comments, and complaints.
- the proper procedures to deal with grievances.
- company policy on day-to-day issues.
- what to do in case of an emergency.
- changes in employee handbooks, manuals, and safety policies.



### Benefit 3: Employee Safety, Compliance, and Morale

There is no doubt that safety in the workplace, legal compliance, and a friendly working environment are key elements that employers must continually work to improve. An attractive, well-organized bulletin board can help promote safety in the workplace. Safety notices and information reminding employees to put safety first are more effective than you may realize, and posters and notices that instill the company's position on infractions such as discrimination and sexual harassment in the work place do impact employee behavior. The bulletin board also provides a forum for recognizing employee accomplishments—a deed that is often neglected but which boosts employees' morale and strengthens their sense of worth to the company.

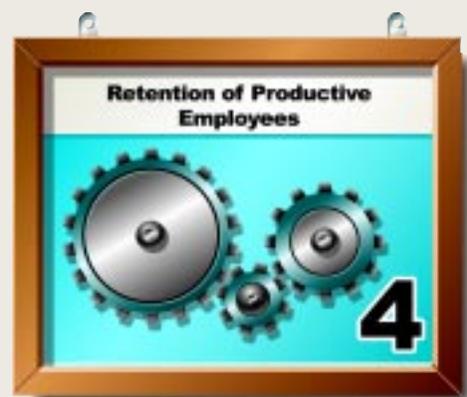


### Benefit 4: Retention of Productive Employees

Most employers are familiar with the nearly impossible task of finding a qualified substitute for an injured employee or a replacement for an experienced employee who leaves the company. You simply cannot afford to lose talented, experienced employees to competitors due to lack of information or communication.

Keeping safety at the forefront reduces the likelihood of injury on the job; and a bulletin board where safety information and policies and procedures are posted provides a continuous point of reference that employees come to depend on.

Posting job listings on the bulletin board before they are advertised publicly gives your employees first chance at openings and new positions, reinforcing the company's policy to promote from within, where applicable. Some companies also post the minutes of management meetings to keep employees informed on what is going on with the company, financially and otherwise. Such communication demonstrates the employer's intent to be open and direct.



## Benefit 5: Limited Regulatory Liability

The employee bulletin board is not just for large companies with human resource specialists, health and safety professionals, and hundreds of employees. Small retail and service outlets are also obligated to display employment, right-to-know, and other compliance posters.

Many state and federal agencies conduct periodic inspections to ensure that your company displays required posters in a conspicuous area accessible to all employees. As far as the inspector is concerned, you either do or you don't. If you do, you are in compliance. But if you do not, fines and penalties may be assessed even if failure to post is simply an oversight.

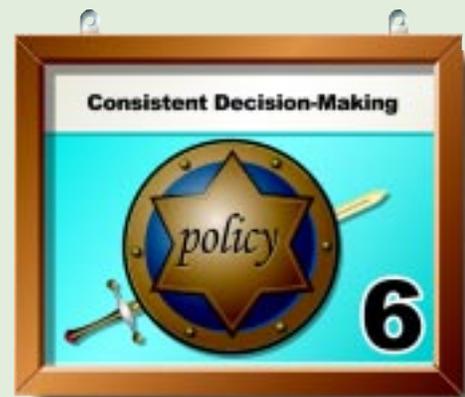


## Benefit 6: Consistent Decision-Making

Well-organized bulletin boards offer protection from vengeful employees such as those who sue for wrongful termination or those who file complaints with state or federal agencies alleging that they were forced to do dangerous work without adequate training or appropriate safety equipment.

An employer may be able to use bulletin board postings, employee handbooks, company manuals, safety policies, and training documentation to demonstrate that

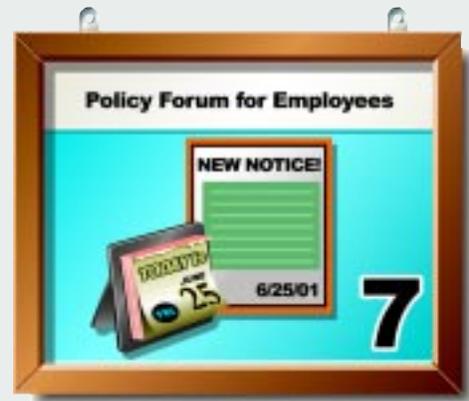
- policies were in effect prior to disciplinary action.
- the employee received the appropriate training.
- applicable steps were taken to inform/train all employees.
- company policies and procedures were consistent with state and federal laws during the time frame in question.
- the employee's grievance was appropriately and thoroughly investigated.
- the course of action taken to address the complaint was fair, consistent, and warranted.



## Benefit 7: Policy Forum for Employees

In many companies, new employees are given an employee handbook and told to read it cover to cover, then asked to sign a document stating that they have read it. In other situations, employees are informed of new policies through enclosures with their paychecks and asked to sign a form stating that they understand the content. For many, this is the first and only time that the employee handbook or policy will be read—if indeed it is read at all. Policies and procedures are often relegated to long-term memory; however, the out-of-sight, out-of-mind attitude does little for employee relations and good communication.

The employee bulletin board (and an adjoining shelf or other surface) should serve as the focal point where policies, handbooks, and safety plans are posted conspicuously for the benefit of all employees. Documents that are important enough to develop and update are likewise important enough to be made accessible to employees on a continuous basis.



## Designing an Effective Employee Bulletin Board

### Size and Location

Your employee bulletin board should measure approximately 4 by 8 feet. The actual size may vary, depending on the space available and the emphasis you place on the board as a primary forum for communicating with employees. Compute the area needed to post required information, then add enough space to allow for miscellaneous additional postings.

The location of the employee bulletin board is critical. Do not install it in a narrow hallway where the tendency is to walk past without seeing it. Position your bulletin board where it is most likely to catch employees' attention, that is, in a location where employees are likely to stop and visit. The employee break room and the cafeteria are good spots. Remember: Government agencies require that posters be displayed in a location where they can be easily seen by all employees.

The employee bulletin board should be constructed with a sliding glass or Plexiglass™ door that can be locked. Access to the employee bulletin board should be limited to specified company personnel to ensure that materials are not removed or displaced.

Allow space below the employee bulletin board for a shelf or other surface approximately 2 to 3 feet long to accommodate policy manuals, health and safety plans, etc. An emergency medical kit and a fire extinguisher should be located nearby.

## Appearance

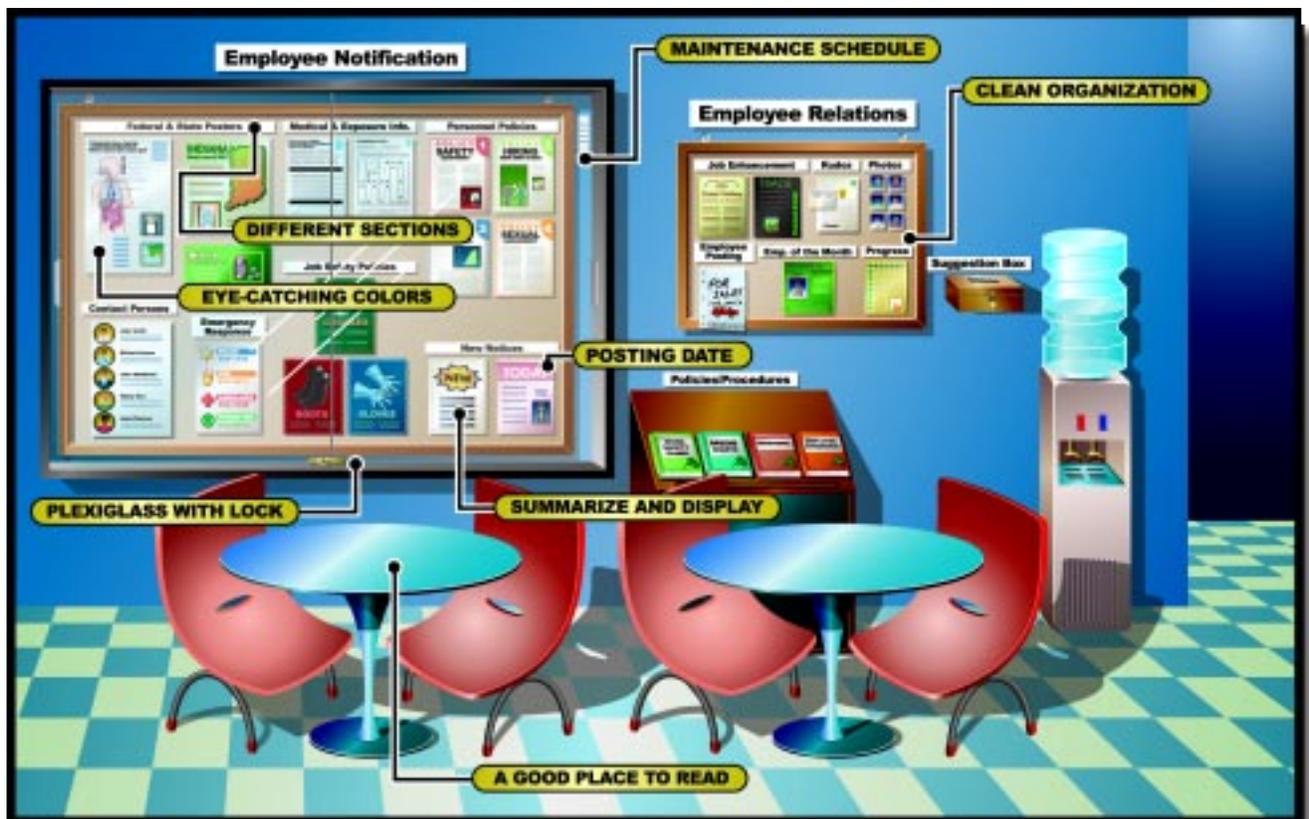
The employee bulletin board needs to capture employees' attention. Make it attractive and interesting. Be creative! Consider breaking it into sections, each with a large heading differentiating it from the others. Use illustrations and colored backgrounds, which typically draw more attention than standard text in black and white. Allow open or "white" space between sections so that each stands out.

## Dates

There are four dates that apply to bulletin board postings:

- Document date: the date on which the posted item was written
- Effective date: the date on which the policy, procedure, etc., goes into effect
- Posting date: the date on which the article is posted on the bulletin board
- Removal date: the date on which the posting is removed from the bulletin board

It is important that every item on the bulletin board bear a *document date*; and the *posting date* should be written in red ink in the upper right-hand corner. Highlight the *effective date* of the provision if it is not otherwise noted conspicuously on the document. When removing or replacing an item on the bulletin board, record the *removal date* and note the



**Designing an Effective Bulletin Board**

authorized person responsible for conveying the information it contains. Both could be helpful if the content later becomes the subject of litigation. File items removed from the bulletin board under Previous Postings.

## Number of Items Posted

Limit the number of postings on the employee bulletin board so that the eye is drawn to the most important documents. Make a concerted effort to emphasize postings that are critical to the safe and efficient operation of the company.

Items such as state and federal employment posters must be displayed in their entirety. But lengthy materials such as work safety rules and company policy may be summarized: state the main points and inform employees where to access the complete document.

## Readability

Bulletin board documents must be written clearly and concisely. Vague postings and those too lengthy to read quickly simply defeat the purpose of the employee bulletin board.

## Maintenance

Setting up an employee bulletin board is easy enough, but keeping it updated can be a challenge. Management personnel should be assigned to maintain the integrity of company postings, revising and replacing them as necessary. Some items may need replacing due to missing, torn, ripped, or illegible pages even though they are still up-to-date. Federal and state posters are dated, and the burden is on the employer to ensure that those posted are the most recent.

# Employee Bulletin Board Content

## Labeling Sections

Distinguish your bulletin boards, one from the other, by labeling them in large letters across the top. A heading such as “Employee Policies, Procedures, and Practices” could be used for the employee bulletin board.

Also label each section to make it easy to find. Below are some examples of headings you might use on the employee bulletin board:

- State and Federal Posters
- Emergency Response
- Medical and Exposure Information
- Job Safety Policies
- Personnel Policies
- Contact Persons
- New Notices
- If You Don't Understand . . .

## Building Each Section

These guidelines are intended to help you in formatting your employee bulletin board. Postings *required* by law are so noted, as are *optional* items.

### State and Federal Posters (Required)

Using an employee bulletin board to display state and federal posters brings continuity to the posting requirement; that is, employees learn that it is *the* place to look for information on policies and procedures.

Purchase posters only from companies that have attorneys who review state and federal requirements. It is wise to work with a company that will notify you when new posters are developed and when there are updates available for those you have. Search the Internet for “federal posters.”

Some posters can be downloaded from corresponding agencies’ websites, but be certain that they meet each agency’s legal posting requirements. Most do, but some may not download in appropriate posting format. Check them out, just to be sure. Use information on your current poster to search the Internet.

Remember that it is your responsibility to obtain and display all required posters, but you should not have to provide your name and business information to a government agency whose job it is to investigate or regulate your business. If your source asks for that information, you might want to consider obtaining your posters from a professional consultant or a trade association.

### Emergency Response

When a facility is evacuated due to an emergency, it is critical that employees leave the facility as quickly as possible and proceed to a designated meeting place away from the building. This allows management to determine if there is anyone missing, which in turn dictates what course of action emergency personnel should take.

An *evacuation map* is a legal requirement for businesses with more than 10 employees. Therefore it is important to post evacuation information, including the map, on the employee bulletin board. The evacuation map should identify the location of the following items:

- Emergency exits
- Evacuation routes (each route in a different color)
- Primary and alternate meeting places
- Fire extinguishers
- Fire alarms
- Sprinkler controls
- First aid kits
- Bloodborne pathogen kits
- Biohazard containers
- Eye wash areas
- Emergency showers
- Circuit breaker boxes
- Gas and water shutoffs
- Spill control equipment
- Tornado shelters



*Emergency Telephone Numbers* (legally required for most businesses). Examples of phone numbers that may be posted are included in the publication entitled *The Quick Response Emergency Plan* (PPP-45).

*Emergency Response* (may be optional or required). Following are examples of items to be posted under this section:

- Alarm system is by voice.
- Unless otherwise instructed, evacuate the premises in the event of an accident.
- Do not use a fire extinguisher unless you have received training.
- Remember the acronym PASS when using a fire extinguisher:
  - P stands for *Pull the pin*.
  - A stands for *Aim the extinguisher nozzle at the base of the fire*.
  - S stands for *Squeeze the handle*.
  - S stands for *Sweep the hose from side-to-side at the base of the fire*.
- Do not administer first aid if you have not been trained and authorized to do so. In the event of an accident, contact the individuals whose names are listed on the emergency medical kit near this bulletin board.
- When responding to an accident,
  - call 911.
  - have someone else call designated company personnel.
  - care for injured victims until trained company personnel or emergency responders arrive.
- When working with victims, remember A-B-C:
  - A, make sure the *Airway* is clear.
  - B, make sure the person is *Breathing*.
  - C, make sure the blood is *Circulating* (check pulse).

## Medical, Exposure, and Illness/Injury Information (Required)

Post the following right-to-know information: *You have the right to access your medical and exposure records on file with this company. Contact (name of person) for more information.*

Post your OSHA No. 300 log from February 1 through April 30 of each year. This is an injury and illness log that employers must complete based on the types and number of accidents that occurred within the company during the preceding year. It is a legal requirement for most companies and must be posted even when there are no accidents or injuries to report.

## Job Safety Policies

Posting bulletin board information on general safety, although voluntary in most cases, is vitally important for most companies. List work practices that are critical to running a safe business, that is, summarize the major points from written policy. Postings may vary from company to company, depending on what employees must know to operate safely in their respective work environments.

Following are examples of wording that may be used under the Job Safety Policies section of your employee bulletin board.



- These are only brief excerpts from company policies and employee handbooks. They are not meant to replace complete documents. Please review all written policies and procedures in full.
- Management's number one priority is safety. Be aware that your commitment to safety is a condition of employment, and that your compliance with safety requirements is evaluated along with job performance. Employees who violate safety standards, cause dangerous situations, or fail to correct or report unsafe conditions are subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.
- Employees are to report to management any occupational safety and health risk—in fact, *any* unsafe condition—that they observe. There shall be no reprisal for disclosing the information, but employees may report anonymously if they so choose.
- If you need additional equipment or instructions in order to perform your job safely, notify your supervisor immediately.
- The *certified* pesticide applicators at this facility are (fill in the names). If you are a pesticide applicator, direct questions relating to your job to these individuals.
- Never use application equipment or personal protective equipment that you have not been trained to use.
- Never use a respirator unless you have been properly trained and fitted and have the approval of management.
- Nonfunctional or damaged equipment must be marked “Broken—Do Not Use” or “Out of Service” and turned in for replacement.
- Never use machinery or equipment that is broken or damaged, and never operate equipment that has damaged (or missing) guards or shields.
- Material Safety Data Sheets for chemicals that you use on the job are always available for review at (list the location).

## Personnel Policies

Civil lawsuits and government actions against employers have reached record highs, emphasizing the importance of posting key personnel issues that inform employees of the company's expectations in various areas: drugs and alcohol in the workplace, employee relationships, discrimination, and sexual and other forms of harassment. This information also should be included in the employee handbook.

Consider the following language for employee bulletin board posting:

- Following are some brief excerpts from company policies. For the complete text, see the personnel notebook located at (fill in location).
- *Hiring.* We comply with immigration regulations by only hiring individuals who are legally authorized to work in the United States.
- *Employment-at-Will.* This company has an employment-at-will relationship with all employees. This means that any employee can terminate his or her employment at any time, with or without cause. Likewise, the company has the right to terminate the employment of any employee at any time, with or without cause. Usually, only the CEO or company president has the authority to implement an employment agreement contrary to the employment-at-will policy. Post that individual's name under Personnel Policies.



- *Harassment.* Sexual harassment, workplace violence, and any other forms of harassment (e.g., foul language, the display of sexually suggestive materials, dirty jokes) will not be tolerated.
- *Equal Opportunity and Antidiscrimination.* This company is an equal opportunity employer. As such, we are committed to providing equal opportunity in all employment practices and maintaining a workplace free of discrimination against applicants and employees based on race, color, religion, gender, age, disability, national origin, marital status, and other protected classes according to local, state, and federal requirements.

This policy extends to all terms, conditions, and privileges of employment, including but not limited to recruiting and hiring, working conditions, training programs, and use of company facilities. If you feel you have been discriminated against, report the incident promptly to (name of person) at (phone number). All allegations will be thoroughly investigated. We strictly prohibit retaliation of any type for filing such a complaint.

- *Traffic Violations.* All employees who drive company vehicles on the job must notify their supervisor (before the start of the next working day) of any moving traffic violation they have been assessed. This requirement extends to violations received while driving personal vehicles on the job, as well.
- *Weapons Policy.* All employees and visitors on company premises are prohibited from carrying a concealed weapon of any sort. Employees who are personally licensed to carry a concealed weapon may do so in their own vehicle, but not in a company vehicle. Any employee found in violation of this policy shall be subject to immediate disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. This company reserves the right to grant complete or partial exemption from this policy if warranted.
- *Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco.* This facility and all company vehicles are considered part of our drug-, alcohol-, and tobacco-free workplace. We are committed to providing a safe work environment and fostering good health among our employees, and this commitment is jeopardized when any employee uses drugs illegally on the job; comes to work under the influence of drugs or alcohol; or possesses, distributes, or sells drugs in the workplace.



## Policies, Plans, and Procedures

Companies spend thousands of dollars developing written health and safety plans and countless hours training employees accordingly. Examples: Hazard Communication Standard; Respirator Plan; Bloodborne Pathogen Plan; Emergency Response Plan; Lockout/Tagout Plan; Confined Space Plan.

It is important to display all of these materials on or near the employee bulletin board (i.e., on a nearby shelf or table). You should maintain four notebooks: Personnel Policies; Employee Handbook; Product Labels and Material Safety Data Sheets; and Work Safety Plans. Clearly label each notebook and secure it next to the employee bulletin board so that it can be read but not removed. Include in this area of the employee bulletin board a section for training programs and outlines or minutes of meetings.

## Contact Persons

Whom to list as a contact depends largely on the size of the company and the structure of the organization. For example, the contact may be a department head, a supervisor, a safety manager, an office manager, a financial director, a general manager, the president, etc., but in any case the individual's name and phone number should be posted.

Contacts must have the authority to handle complaints, suggestions, and questions. List at least one alternate next to the primary contact, and provide alternate avenues for reporting concerns, ideas, or complaints. This becomes very important when the primary contact is the person who is creating the problem. It is also a good idea to list both male and female contacts to afford employees the choice; it is important that they feel at ease discussing sensitive matters with the individual. Employees should be encouraged to approach the President or CEO if they do not feel comfortable addressing their concerns with the designated contact person.

## Other Suggestions

*New Notices.* When new or revised employee policies are being introduced, post them conspicuously on the employee bulletin board so that all employees are clearly aware of the changes. Leave them on the board long enough to counter absences due to vacations, medical or family leave, etc. When a posting announcing a change is removed, replace it with instructions where to locate the revised document in its entirety.

*For Those Who Don't Understand (Optional).* In any given work force there may be employees with poor reading skills or whose primary language is something other than English; either way, their understanding of the material presented may be compromised. If that is the case with your company, consider posting the following message in English and in other languages represented among your employees.



### Employees Please Note

If you have questions about company policies, training, safety issues, or other information posted on this bulletin board, please contact

\_\_\_\_\_ (Name of Person)

You could further accommodate employees for whom English is a second language by translating all documents and providing a second employee bulletin board. Perhaps your bilingual employees would be willing to assist, and getting them involved might serve a second purpose: generating self esteem and a sense of worth to the company. If legal or otherwise technical language is used in your policies, consider hiring a certified translator.

## Using the Employee Bulletin Board for Training

The employee bulletin board provides an organized way to disseminate company policies and information required by local, state, and federal agencies. However, you should *train* employees on the information in addition to posting it. It takes only minutes at a time to review key concepts on a continual basis. The person designated by management to conduct the training should stress that it is the responsibility of each employee to read the postings, review policies and handbooks as advised, and direct any questions to the appropriate contact person. Employees should be asked to sign off on training received and on their reading of complete documents as directed by the trainer.

It may also prove useful to videotape your training programs. The tapes can be useful in training new employees, although you must ensure that the tapes address required regulatory poster content as well as company policies and procedures.

Remember: As the employer, you are obligated to communicate regulatory information to your entire work force. If you employ individuals who cannot read well or cannot speak or read English, you may have the information read aloud for them or translated (verbally and/or in writing). If you have employees with learning disabilities, you must accommodate their needs.

## Employee Relations Bulletin Board: Where Employees Communicate with the Employer and Other Employees

The employee relations bulletin board provides a forum where employees may communicate with the company and with other employees. Information on special events, items for sale, interesting photographs, and noteworthy occasions are typical examples of items posted.

Set aside a portion of the employee relations bulletin board for company postings such as kudos to the work force or specific individuals, employee of the month recognition, and job enhancement opportunities. Use employee photos, when possible, to accentuate positive reinforcement.

### Suggestion Box

Place a suggestion box near your employee relations bulletin board and encourage employees to offer suggestions and constructive criticism, emphasizing that the company will not allow reprimands of any nature in response to employee input. Provide comment forms that do not require contributors to identify themselves unless they choose to do so, and keep the suggestion box locked at all times.

Employees often comment on how their jobs might be made easier or safer or accomplished quicker or cheaper; but about 10 percent of all comments are complaints, and complaints are very important. They afford the



employer an opportunity to solve little problems before they become big ones and before a third party such as a union or federal agency gets involved.

## Comment Forms

Employees should be given the option to sign their comment forms or remain anonymous. However, employees must understand that management may not be able to react appropriately to their comments without knowing the source. Encourage employees to sign their names, and reassure them that every comment will be handled as confidentially as possible. Advise them to provide as many details as they can, particularly if they choose to remain anonymous.

### Comment Form

Name (optional) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Department (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Type of work \_\_\_\_\_

**Comments: Please share any questions, comments, or suggestions on how we can make our company the best it can be. Please be very specific to enable management to effectively address your concerns.**

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**May we post your comments and management's response on the Employee Relations Bulletin Board?      Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_**

**Thank you for taking the time to share your opinions. Please provide your name only if you want to be contacted.**

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**Company Response** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date Reviewed** \_\_\_\_\_

**Action Taken** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Manner in Which Employee was Notified** \_\_\_\_\_

## Follow-Up Action

Making the suggestion box accessible to all employees is only part one of a good idea: follow-up is critical to your credibility and to the integrity of your company. Employees need to know that management will read their comments, take them seriously, and act on them appropriately.

Posting an unsigned comment and management's response on the employee relations bulletin board is an effective way to communicate your actions to all employees. But only those comments pre-approved by the employees who submitted them should be posted; note the space included on the sample comment form for employee consent.



## Employee Posting

Outline and enforce specific guidelines for employees to follow in posting items on the employee relations bulletin board. For instance, inform them that attacks on the rights of others and postings that offend specific groups are illegal and therefore not allowed. Monitor bulletin board content by conducting periodic inspections.

Posting rules may include (but are not necessarily limited to) the following:

- The posting date must appear in the upper right-hand corner.
- The name of the person posting the item must be indicated directly beneath the date.
- Items must be removed within 30 days of posting.
- The company has the right to remove any item that is perceived to be in poor taste, offensive, illegal, or otherwise detrimental. Examples may include information related to religion, race, and sexual matters; material that is or may be perceived to be discriminatory or otherwise inflammatory; solicitation materials; and political documents.



## Management Posting

*Kudos.* It is important that you post correspondence from customers expressing their appreciation for an employee's hard work and dedication and for delivering quality service. It gives the employee a sense of personal accomplishment and pride.

*Job Enhancement.* Opportunities for outside training, announcements of classes to improve language skills, and notices of upcoming company-related events should be posted in the management section of the employee relations bulletin board.



*Employee of the Month.* An employee of the month award can boost job performance and employee morale; and seeking nominations from the workers, themselves, fosters cooperation and teamwork. Consider using the form on page 18 and offering incentives such as gift certificates or time off with pay.

## You Did a Great Job and We Noticed!

Employee \_\_\_\_\_

Department \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Details \_\_\_\_\_

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**Keep Up the Good Work!**

Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
(Printed name and title of company representative awarding recognition.)

*Progress.* Management's "progress" section on the employee relations bulletin board is used to inform employees of projects, special jobs, new clientele, budget details, etc.



*Employee Photos.* Depending on the size of your organization and the space you have, you might post photos of all employees, those who have been in the news, or recipients of merit or other in-house awards. Also consider a section solely for welcoming new employees.



## Beware: Bulletin Boards Can Become a Liability

In addition to all the good they do, bulletin boards also can work against you. Never consider your obligation to enforce regulatory requirements met by merely posting the information on a bulletin board. You are obligated to ensure that employees understand what is required of them; likewise, you are obligated to ensure their compliance. Even the best bulletin board cannot do that for you: the responsibility for enforcement lies squarely with management.



## Your Bulletin Board Can Testify Against You

Once the company has stipulated that certain practices are disallowed, tolerance poses significant legal liability and compromises the company's credibility. For example, the company may have a written policy requiring employees to wear chemical-resistant gloves when using pesticides; but if supervisors knowingly allow employees to work without gloves, the company is liable. Management must enforce policies and regulations consistently to assure that their postings do not become "Exhibit A" in a lawsuit against the company.

Obviously, management cannot monitor every employee, every moment on the job; but appropriate training, written materials, and enforcement consistency can deter liability.

## Getting Additional Help

When it comes to state and federal employment regulations, the burden to comply lies with the employer; and ignorance of the law does not excuse non-compliance. Many companies do not have human resource departments or health and safety specialists to help them interpret personnel and labor issues; however, there are numerous outside sources available to assist even the smallest company. Consider the sources on page 20 when looking for advice on dealing with issues addressed in this publication.

### Where to Turn for Help



## Human Resource Consultant

Consultants who specialize in human resources, employment, or labor relations can provide accurate and sound management advice on a wide variety of topics. They can provide timely assistance by fax, telephone, or on-site consultation, or via the Internet. They can assist overworked human resource departments in large companies as well as even the smallest companies. Contact the Forum of the Society for Human Resource Management ([www.shrm.org](http://www.shrm.org)) for a listing of consultants in your area. Always check references before hiring a consultant.

## Labor and Employment Attorney

When hiring a labor or employment law attorney to handle a problem that has arisen in your company, consider the following:

- Does the attorney have expertise in your specific industry, particularly in the area in which you are having problems? If you have a potential American with Disabilities Act lawsuit looming, has the attorney handled this type of case in the past? Was he/she successful? If so, why? If not, why not?
- Has the attorney actually represented other companies or competitors in your industry? Contact your local attorney referral service for the name of a reputable employment law attorney.
- What are the attorney's rates? Are they comparable to other attorneys' rates in your area?
- Many employment/labor law attorneys have free checklists and seminar materials to assist employers in complying with applicable laws. Legal seminars offered by these professionals lend valuable instruction at minimal cost. Call local labor and employment attorneys to inquire about the seminars they offer.

## Chamber of Commerce

Many chambers of commerce have general labor law check sheets to assist employers in understanding what is required of them. But you also must be familiar with specific requirements that may affect your industry, only.

## Employer Advisory Council

Employer advisory councils typically offer fee-based or membership-based assistance; their staff typically is composed of legal, human resources, and/or management professionals. Consult your local yellow pages or the Internet for employer advisory councils in your area.

## Additional Resources

Other resources that can provide valuable assistance:

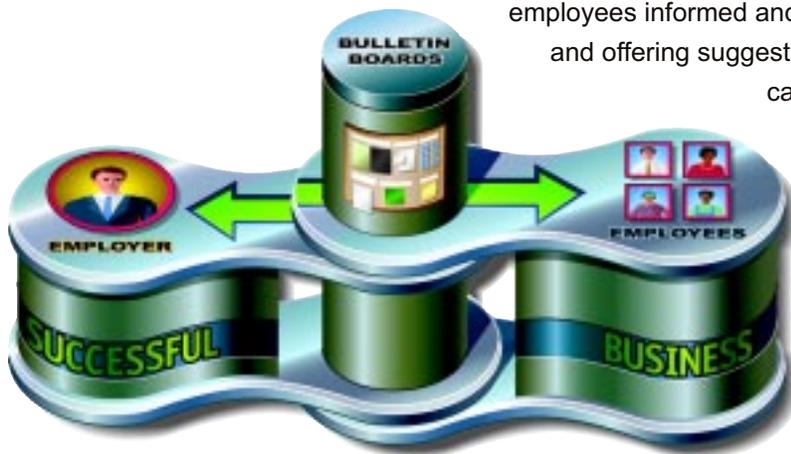
- Industry trade associations
- Printed and/or web-based materials on regulatory/compliance/safety issues

- Insurance or workers' compensation loss control representatives on safety-related issues
- Government websites
- OSHA consultation services
- Land Grant University Cooperative Extension Service

## Conclusion

Make your bulletin board the central communications focal point of your company: an efficient and readily available source for regulatory information and company policy. Properly designed, a well-organized bulletin board fosters communication between employers and employees. It keeps employees informed and offers an avenue for asking questions and offering suggestions in a constructive manner. Communication between management and the work

force is the key to running a successful business, and the bulletin board is a very efficient and convenient method toward that end.



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# Publications Relating to Businesses

## Book

The Complete Federal and State Compliance Guide for Hoosier Businesses. 2001. Whitford, F. Purdue University Press. Details on the book can be found at <http://www.btny.purdue.edu/PPP/>.

## Extension Publications

- Pesticides and Personal Safety (PPP-20)
- Pesticides and Container Management (PPP-21)
- Pesticides and the Label (PPP-24)
- Pesticides and Application Certification (PPP-25)
- Pesticides and Their Proper Storage (PPP-26)
- Pesticides and Commercial Vehicle Maintenance (PPP-27)
- Pesticides and Spill Management (PPP-28)
- Pesticides and Formulation Technology (PPP-31)
- Pesticides and Community Right-to-Know (PPP-32)
- Pesticides and the Law (PPP-36)
- Pesticides and Material Safety Data Sheets (PPP-37)
- Pesticides and Personal Protective Equipment (PPP-38)
- Pesticides & Environmental Site Assessment (PPP-42)
- Pesticides & Planning for Emergencies (PPP-44)
- Pesticides & Emergencies (PPP-45)
- The Insurance Policy (PPP-49)
- Pesticides and Risk Communication (PPP-52)

Extension publications can be obtained by calling your local extension educator or by calling the toll free extension number, (888) 398-4636, and asking for "Media Distribution." Once you have been transferred to media distribution, ask for the publication by name and number. The publications also may be downloaded from our Purdue Pesticide Programs website: <http://www.btny.purdue.edu/PPP/>.

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