HOT SHEET

Full-Circle HR

"For those of you headed to the office, today's forecast calls for scattered frustration, followed by a brief storm of criticism and a flurry of random distractions."

HR Trends:

- Effective 7/28/2019 it is illegal in Washington State to ask salary history questions of applicants.

- Effective 1/1/2020, Washington State will enact some of the strictest limitations on employers who use noncompete agreements with employees and contractors. The changes will be retroactive to existing agreements. If you use noncompete agreements it is critical that you familiarize yourself with this new law.

- A study of diversity training effectiveness that included 3,000 employees internationally, found that, while it did positively impact attitudes towards women and minorities, it did not necessarily change the behavior or those who are empowered in the organization. It did change the behavior of women, junior employees and minorities in that after the training, they were more likely to seek mentorship and support in the organization.

- With the changes in leadership at the Department of Labor, experts are predicting that the new Overtime Rules will be issued by the end of 2019.

Punish or Celebrate Mistakes?

Recent studies suggest that how you deal with mistakes can be critical to creativity and learning in your organization. Neurological brain studies actually show that our brains grow and learn from repeated mistakes that guide us in finding the right way to approach an issue. We then take corrective action on our next steps. So, how can we support people in taking the chances that are needed to find the best course of action, while not encouraging irresponsibility?

Jonathan Keyser, a member of ChiefExecutive.net, offers the following steps in helping to establish practices that empower employees to be more bold. **1. Build a Safety Net.** Talk to your employees about whether they feel free to share their ideas and make use of their best skills and abilities. Give employees the opportunity to take the lead in meetings. Some companies take the approach of more leniency toward the first time a mistake is made. They support the process of learning from the mistake, and then offer less leniency if the mistake happens again. **2. Shine a Light on Imperfections.** When employees slip up, don't reprimand or overlook the mistake. Recognized it and turn it into a learning opportunity. Share times when you made mistakes and what you learned from the situation. For example, when an employee sends an email that does not land well, don't fix the problem for them, support them in fixing the problem themselves. It may actually build the relationship between your employee and the client (and your company) when the employee comes across with a genuine effort to face their mistake head on and correct it. **3. Open Your Book.** Let your employees know you are not flawless. In addition to talking about past mistakes, you may also bring them in on current issues you are facing. Show employees how to face mistakes, pick themselves back up and move forward. Encourage them to use the Six A's approach to their mistakes:

Admit your mistake, **Apologize** for your mistake, **Acknowledge** where you went wrong and how the mistake occurred, **Attest** to what you plan to do to fix the mistake. **Assure** that you will put the following safeguards in place to prevent the same mistake in the future. **Abstain** from repeating the same mistake again.

We all make mistakes. Overlooking or shaming employees so they don't take risks, creates the irresponsible behavior you are hoping to avoid. Facing our mistakes head-on gives us the opportunity to learn and grow from your life experience.

> *I learned the value of hard work by working hard.*
> *—Margaret Mead*

High Performing Remote Teams

Whether remote work is a way of life for your organization or the exception that arises due to geographic demands or individual employee needs, working remotely can be accomplished effectively. It is a growing trend, particularly as we face the challenges of time wasted in daily commutes, lack of mass transit, and the carbon footprint of employees driving themselves to work. Proponents of remote work see it as a way for companies to expand and diversify their talent pool, reduce overhead expenses, and respond to business demands in real time. Additionally, multiple studies show that employees who are able to skip commuting and work away from the office, whether at home, a coffee shop or somewhere in between, are happier and less likely to look for work elsewhere. Here are some approaches that have worked for companies and their managers who have learned to build and manage effective remote teams.

According to an expert in virtual team leadership, Mari Snow, the first thing for managers to master is management by objectives. Start by giving people the benefit of the doubt, being clear about expectations up front, and setting a clear understanding of roles, responsibilities and timelines.

Be clear with team members that they are responsible for their own actions and the impact of those actions on team members. Use the following guidelines to help accomplish this:
•Clearly communicate to all team members who will be held accountable for what.
•Agree on a timetable for every project and assignment. •Monitor progress by scheduling regular check-ins. •Avoid blame if a deadline is missed or other issues arise.

Create context. Team members need to understand the big picture and why their roles matter. It's important to start early with face-to-face or video conferencing meetings that connect the whole team. These initial kick-off meetings help create personal relationships and unite the team around a common purpose. Cover the topics of: The overall goals of the business and how does each person contribute; The role of each person and the team as a whole; Each person's accountability to each other and to the organization; and How and how often they want and need to communicate with each other.

Overcome virtual distance by helping them develop ways to connect socially. One team had a virtual baby shower for one of their team members. Others connect via a social networking space. Make plans for the entire team to connect in person at least once a year, or more, if practicable.

Leverage technology. Consider using project software that can facilitate team members working 'side-by-side' on the same project or separate activities relating to the project.

Most importantly set up a communication schedule and assure that it is maintained. Stay connected.