



# STRATEGIES FOR Success

## POLICY MANUALS

*Creating a detailed policy manual allows your employees to have a clear understanding of your company.*

Every business should have a policy manual for employees to help them understand the company's rules, procedures and guidelines.

A policy manual accomplishes several objectives. First, it sets the standards of performance, service and integrity of the company. Second, it acts as a reference guide, which summarizes the company's policies and benefits. Finally, it keeps misunderstandings to a minimum.

Your manual may be more or less complex depending on such factors as geographic location, number of employees and nature of your business. If you have specific questions on what needs to be included in your manual or how to word it, seek the advice of an attorney or business consultant. The following discusses some of the basic information that should be included in all manuals.

The "Acknowledgement of Receipt of the Manual" statement is a required item for any manual. This statement, which the employee signs, certifies that the employee has received the manual and is familiar with its contents. The original is kept in the personnel file while a copy is given to the employee. This action may seem extreme or impersonal, but it does give some legal protection to the business owner.

All manuals must contain statements that neither harassment in general, and sexual and racial harassment in particular, nor discrimination will be tolerated. We also

recommend that your manual contain a statement that "any alleged incidents must be reported to senior management for investigation and possible disciplinary action."

The next section can list serious offenses that will not be tolerated by management and which could lead to dismissal. These offenses include theft, fraud, any other criminal activity or poor performance. Other less severe offenses or customary guidelines also can be included in this section, such as no smoking or profanity restrictions, dress code regulations or performing personal work on company time.

General company policy should be outlined in the next section discussing items such as illness, scheduling hours, tardiness, lunch and breaks, handling customer problems, safety and security, vacation, compensation, benefits and training.

While it's not mandatory to add a copy of the employee's job description in the manual, it certainly would be a good idea. Employees then would have a written benchmark of what is expected of them and how their performance will be judged.

You should review the policy manual once a year and make any necessary updates to comply with government rulings or changes in your business.

**To obtain more information on training and policy manuals, consult your Fiducial Business Services representative.**

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