



HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE

VOL 7, ISSUE 5



Photo by Michael Popowski

**HAPPY HOLIDAYS AND A PROSPEROUS
NEW YEAR TO EVERYONE,
THE HOPKINS GROUP**

TIPS FOR THE ROAD WARRIOR

Here are some travel websites to check out, hopefully making your trip planning and trips a little easier and less expensive.

Farecast.com – Based on 250 factors, this website will give you a prediction about a proposed itinerary. If fares are on the upswing, you're advised to buy. If it predicts a drop, it suggests you wait.

FareCompare.com – Check out the “First Class Search” button that scours its database of airfares for little-known Y class tickets. These are coded for coach, but you are seated in first-class. While not cheap, they are less than a full-fare first class ticket and sometimes beat last-minute full-fare coach tickets.

Yapta.com – This is an acronym for “your amazing personal travel assistant.” Use this site to make use of the guaranteed airfare rules. If the price drops on the exact class of fare that you purchased, the airline owes you either a refund for the difference or a voucher for future use.

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BUDGETING FOR 2008? MERCER HR CONSULTING IS PROJECTING THAT PAY INCREASES WILL REMAIN AT 3.8% FOR 2008.

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**HUMAN RESOURCES
BUSINESS SOLUTIONS**

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PRESENTATION QUICK TIPS

Here are some quick tips for that next presentation:

- Be strategic – tie your presentation to company goals and objectives.
- Be clear and minimize the visuals.
- Minimize what's on the visuals – remember no more than 7 words per 7 lines.
- Practice, practice, practice.
- Remember your audience.
- Be ready for anything – don't let unexpected questions throw you. Let the person know you'll get back to them with an answer instead of guessing.

JOB DESCRIPTION NO-NO'S

Does anyone truly enjoy writing job descriptions? Probably not, but even if you don't enjoy the task, it is crucial to have up-to-date job descriptions for all positions in your company. Please note that "positions" and not "employees" was used.

Job descriptions are needed for recruiting, retention, management, and compliance.

There are a number of common mistakes made when writing job descriptions. The list below gives you the no-no's and how to's.

1. *Writing a job description that describes the incumbent, not the job.* It's easy to think about the individual in the job, and write about how he or she has chosen to do the work. A good job description focuses purely on job expectations and outcomes, not how the job is handled by the person who happens to be in it.

2. *Using vague wording.* It is tempting to rocket through writing job descriptions by inserting vague language like "takes care of employment." Does that mean routine recordkeeping, labor negotiations, or executive recruiting? Does that entail responsibility for employment or just participation in the process? Spell it out.

3. *Glossing over essential vs. nonessential functions.* With the advent of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), it became "essential" to separate essential functions of a job from those less so. This allows persons with disabilities to still be hired if they can carry out those key tasks (sometimes with reasonable accommodation), even if they can't do lesser tasks. Every job-description must make this separation to be ADA-compliant. If your job descriptions are fuzzy about essential functions, things won't go your way in court.

4. *Failing to update.* Change happens. There aren't many jobs that haven't changed significantly in the past few years. If job descriptions haven't kept up, confusion and legal challenges are headed your way.

5. *Writing a job description after the fact.* Courts pay little attention to job descriptions written after lawsuits are filed. That's why the time to write them - or update them if needed - is now.

While it's quiet over the holidays, sit down and write up those job descriptions. There is a lot of information on the web to help get you started and after you finish the first one, the rest won't be so tough.