

Peopletalk

December 2011



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Welcome to the December issue of Peopletalk

Welcome to the last edition of Peopletalk this year, and what a year it's been. As we prepare for the final push towards Christmas and start thinking about our New Year's resolutions, we'd like to share some important advice with you to make sure you're fully covered against many a festive faux pas. We'd also like to remind you that if you're planning a review of your Human Resource policies at the start of 2012, contact us as soon as possible so that we can help you get off to the best possible start next year.

London 2012



Don't forget that London hosts the 2012 Olympics – and we want to make sure you don't find yourself with staff playing games. If you don't already have one, you need a policy on absence and plan for access to work. It is going to happen and you need to "Olympic-proof" your business. For help and advice, give us a call or email enquiries@dohr.co.uk

Planning for Christmas shut down

For those of you who are still in denial, Christmas is less than three weeks away!!! Have you identified which days you will be open and when you're closed? Have you communicated this to your staff in writing? Monday and Tuesday 26th and 27th are both Bank Holidays, so is Monday 2nd January. Make sure you are clear with staff which days they are working and where appropriate, confirm their rates of pay. While we are on the issue of holidays, the public and bank holidays for 2012 are as follows:

2nd January (Monday)	Public Holiday (in lieu of New Years Day)
6th April (Friday)	Good Friday
9th April (Monday)	Easter Monday
7th May (Monday)	May Day
4th June (Monday)	Bank Holiday (in lieu of Whit Monday)
5th June (Tuesday)	Diamond Jubilee Public Holiday
27th August (Monday)	Late Summer Public Holiday
25th December (Tuesday)	Christmas Day
26th December (Wednesday)	Boxing Day

If you need assistance calculating annual leave for part time or zero hour staff, please get in touch email enquiries@dohr.co.uk.



DOHR Christmas cover

The DOHR offices will be shut from
15th December 2011 – 3rd January 2012

Carry forward holiday

In line with the Working Time Directive, employees must take all their statutory annual leave within the correct year and can not roll it forward or borrow from the following year (as that will leave them short). If you provide your employees with more than 28 days per year, you have the flexibility to allow them to roll some days forward, as long as they have had 28



In case of emergency you can call **01923 504100** and leave a message. Someone will get back to you as soon as possible. We would like to take this opportunity to wish our readers all the very best for the festive season and a happy, healthy and prosperous 2012.



Snow days

In the UK, we're not very good at planning for bad weather. It seems to catch us unprepared every year! With weather forecasters claiming the mildest autumn and predicting the coldest winter, many people, animals and plants are completely confused.

Employers are no exception and need to put in place plans to ensure their businesses can stay open whatever the weather throws at them. It is not always possible for staff to work from home, but modern technology certainly makes it easier. Where staff are in retail outlets, manufacturing sites or service centres such as hospitals, it is essential to ensure that staff come to work only when it is safe for them to do so. Alternatively, your business continuity planning process can include: Putting staff up in local hotels or B&Bs; arranging group travel; ensuring roads, entrances and pathways are clear; and having your boiler serviced now to ensure it will cope with a long hard winter.

Make sure you have ample supplies in case staff get stranded at work and ensure you heed the advice of local news and weather alerts.

days, including public and bank holidays within the current year.

If your holiday years runs from January to December, you need to be reminding employees to book and use outstanding holidays. It is your responsibility to ensure they use their entitlement.

Christmas parties

Even when companies are spending less and everyone is cutting back, many companies still holding an office Christmas party. They may cut some of the costs by not inviting partners, by having a buffet rather than a sit down dinner or having a small catered onsite party rather than a venue or restaurant, but Christmas parties are still seen as a good thing to do for morale and team building.

Christmas parties can however lead to problems, especially when people start drinking. If you are organising a Christmas party, you may want to think about some the following aspects:

What sort of party is appropriate?

- If you are cutting salaries, hours, pensions etc. is it appropriate to hold an extravagant Christmas party? Probably not, but it doesn't mean don't hold one.
- If you are a charity, should employees fund their own tickets rather than taking from charity funds?

Who to invite?

- Employers need to ensure that everyone feels included. Don't leave people out assuming its 'not their thing', invite them and let them decide
- Decide whether partners will be included?
- Some companies hold activities for the children of employees – just think about how to include those without children and perhaps allow grandchildren, nieces and nephews

If you are on company premises, what are the implications?

- Will you serve alcohol?
- Do you need to continue to offer a service to customers during your party?
- Who will clear up?

How will people get home safely after the party?

- This could be due to alcohol, the time the party finishes or even the location
- Will the company provide taxis or access to taxis?
- Would a coach be appropriate?

However you decide to organise your Christmas party and whatever form it takes, keep it inclusive and plan every aspect in detail.

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