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A Message from a Director

By: **Benn Buys**

Director of Finance, Compensation, and Benefits

Over the past week, most state agencies have met with their Legislative appropriations subcommittees to discuss their base budgets. Base budgets are the starting point for what agencies are funded for the next fiscal year.

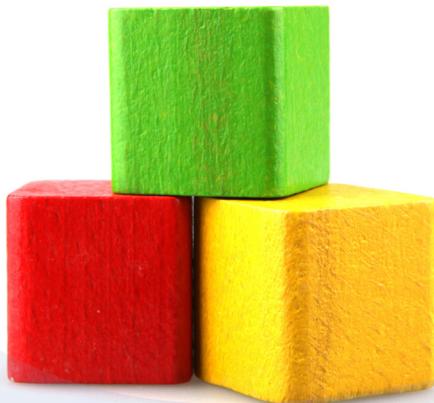
In the next week, agencies will be presenting Building Block requests to the subcommittees. There are two types of Building Blocks: One-time and ongoing.



One-time requests are just what the name suggests- money that is given to the agency once. They can be given for short-term needs or programs or as funding for a big project that an agency is planning.

Ongoing Building Blocks are given to the agency every year and become part of the agency's base budget. If an agency is asking for new positions, starting a new program, or otherwise expanding they will probably need ongoing funding.

All Building Blocks go through the same process. First, agencies identify needs that they cannot cover within their existing budgets. Business cases for each request are submitted to the Governor's Office of Management and Budget (GOMB). GOMB's role is to analyze each building block against the available revenues available. GOMB helps prioritize the requests for the Governor's Budget.



If a Building Block is included in the governor's budget, the agency will present it to the appropriations subcommittee. Each subcommittee will prioritize the different building blocks presented and submit that list to the Executive Appropriations Committee (EAC). This is the most important appropriations committee, as they set the final budgets for agencies. EAC will weigh the prioritized list they receive from each appropriations subcommittee and make the final decision on what gets funding. It is quite the process for a building block to make it all the way through to an agency's budget!

I encourage you to listen to the upcoming appropriations subcommittees. For agencies presenting building blocks this is one of the most important meetings for the session and can have a lot of impact on the direction of the agency.



What About Bob?



By: Bob Thompson
Labor Relations
Director

While watching one of the many news conferences leading up to this year's Super Bowl, I noticed several New England Patriot players wearing beanies that said "DO YOUR JOB." Although this is obviously good advice, this statement alone would normally have had little impact on me. Except, that while I was watching this press conference, I was also reading a recent case involving "unlawful harassment investigations." (Footnote 1: I understand I need to find a better way to spend my time, but that is an issue that can be addressed in a different forum.)

In *Finley v. Florida Parish Juvenile Detention Center*, the 5th Circuit followed the lead of numerous prior cases concluding that courts will not "second guess" an employer's disciplinary decision in substantiated unlawful harassment cases when the employer shows that it took "prompt effective remedial action." The court further reiterated that an employer is not required to impose the severest penalties upon an offending worker to satisfy the "prompt, remedial action" standard. The only requirement is that the remedial action be timely and reasonably calculated to end the unlawful or offensive behavior. In essence, courts are reminding us that as long as we "DO OUR JOB" by conducting prompt and, importantly, thorough investigations they are not going to try to run our agencies by second guessing what action was appropriate or what action should have been taken. They are simply in no hurry to substitute their judgment for that of the employer's.

These court decisions are in complete harmony with EEOC guidance regarding unlawful harassment investigations. Specifically addressing remedial actions taken

in consequence of substantiated unlawful harassment findings, the EEOC has stated:

When an employer receives a complaint of or otherwise learns of alleged ... harassment in the workplace, the employer should investigate promptly and thoroughly. The employer should take immediate and appropriate corrective action by doing whatever is necessary to END the harassment, make the victim whole by restoring last employment benefits or opportunities, and prevent the misconduct from recurring. Disciplinary action against the offending supervisor or employee, ranging from reprimand to discharge, may be necessary. GENERALLY, THE CORRECTIVE ACTION SHOULD REFLECT THE SEVERITY OF THE MISCONDUCT.

With this background, I would like to take just a moment to review the basic anatomy of an unlawful harassment complaint and the appropriate actions to be taken in response to such a complaint. To begin, after a complaint has been made, an investigation should promptly follow. The assigned investigator(s) will usually need to interview the essential witnesses and make factual findings. This often requires that the investigator(s) use their discretion to make credibility determinations. As long as objectively reasonable, courts are not likely to judge an investigators' determination regarding credibility.

After making their factual determinations, the investigator(s) must determine if the substantiated conduct was in violation of policy. This finding should not be framed in terms of whether an individual engaged in unlawful harassment, but rather, did the individual violate policy. The findings should be in writing.

What About Bob? continued...

If a determination is made that unlawful harassment occurred, the employer, with assistance from HR must take prompt and effective remedial action. As set forth above, the discipline imposed should be commensurate with the severity of the established misconduct. This usually requires the HR represent-

ative to provide the agency with all the necessary information regarding the supported findings, and importantly, comparable discipline for consistency purposes. In all discipline of state employees, consistency to prior discipline should always be reviewed. ■

The Governor's Award for Excellence 2015



Don't forget that internal submissions for DHRM are due to Sherry Saracino by Friday, March 6. Nominations can be made by anyone in the following categories:

- Leadership
- Innovation and Efficiency
- Heroism
- Humanitarianism
- Outstanding Public Service
- Energy and Environment

The achievement for honor must have taken place in the calendar year 2014 with the exception of acknowledgment in outstanding public service. For this category, the principle achievement(s) may have been a culmination of accomplishments over a number of years.





Travelwise Agency Challenge

By: Angela Kula
HR Communication Coordinator

Show other agencies that DHRM is in it to win it!

The Travelwise Challenge was kicked off to state agencies on January 26, 2015 to get employees motivated in their efforts to clear the air during the worst weeks for inversion. The challenge is only one month, but it does require some work on your part (it won't be in vain, I promise). First what you need to do is log into or get registered in the tracking system to track your trips. Then view your dashboard to make sure you are a part of the "Utah Department of Human Resource Management" team.

As most of us experienced from July's Clear the Air Challenge, logging trips can be less than intuitive.

So, here are some tricks: if you have a travel routine that occurs most every day, select multiple days on the calendar to log them all at once. You can also save yourself some trouble and log your future trips. If it doesn't end up happening, simply remove the trip later on. In addition, if you haven't been tracking, fret not; you can retroactively log to the beginning of the challenge.



The biggest question of the last challenge was, "What counts as a trip?" These are the available modes of travel you may track: bike, carpool, transit, van-pool, walk, telework, trip chaining, and skip the trip. You can track a trip biked or walked even if it is a non-destination commute; so make sure you track the evening walk around the block. Use "trip chaining" in your log if you stop at the grocery store or your child's school on the way home from work. If you drive with your family on the weekends, count that as carpooling. And, if you decide to eat lunch at work instead of driving to eat, that is considered a "skip the trip."

Many of you, if not all of you, do these things on a daily basis. Therefore, you might as well get credit for it. After all, there is OA available for the person who logs the most non-SOV (non-single occupancy vehicle) trips as well as a drawing for 25 incentive points just for trip tracking!

Best of luck and let's go DHRM!

News YOU can USE

On **February 10 at 9am**, there will be a webinar to review the Case Management Utilization project. Registration will begin soon, and all of DHRM is encouraged to attend.

Presented by **Bart Olsen** and **Bryan Embley**



A day in the life of a HR Team...

By: Newsletter Staff

Department of Public Safety

Mission

Our mission is to provide a safe and secure environment for all people in Utah.

Dan Brentel

Dan Thompson

Kelly Chinn

Shawn Feguson

Melanie Butters

Dora Collier

Bryan Embley

HR2HR: What is unique about working in this office?

HR DPS: We work with such diverse groups here. We support four different agencies that included, Department of Public Safety (DPS), Utah National Guard, Department of Veterans Affairs, and the Board of Pardons and Parole.

Each of these agencies are very visible to the public, so we have to pay attention to how we handle things. It's not infrequent that the Public Information Officer (PIO) comes by and asks, "Okay, what can we say and what can't we say?" They need to know certain information so they can relay accurate information. There are times that we write or provide information to the PIO for news organizations. For example, the PIOs aren't experts on discipline, so they will ask us to write up appropriate statements for them.

A unique aspect of the National Guard is that most supervisors are federal/military employees who manage state employees. We're balancing federal rules with state rules and military rules, and they are all different. Adding to that challenge is the supervisors tend to be reassigned every few years, then someone else is brought in. So they heavily rely on the HR office to manage everything that has to do with the state employees. Another interesting aspect unique to the National Guard is the federal/military employees have to be "hired" by the state, even though we're not really paying them, in order for them to have access to SAP payroll and other systems.

HR2HR: What are the particulars of running a successful field office at DPS, National Guard, Board of Pardon and Parole, and Department of Veterans Affairs?

HR DPS: Customer service is vital and critical. We have customers spread out from one end of the state to the other. We have veterans nursing homes, Utah Highway Patrol, drivers license offices, dispatch offices, military installations, crime labs, fire marshal (just to name a few) located from one end of the state to the other.

That is a real challenge that requires lots of communication, especially with liability issues. Our specialists are on a first name basis with lieutenants, captains, majors, commissioner, generals. From a liability standpoint, at DPS we have captains meeting, where Dan B. and the specialist meet to review liability issues. It's just constant communication – either face-to-face, telecommuting, or over the phone.

We constantly recruit and the process is very involved. We do scheduling, administer physical fitness tests, and we assist in the interviewing process. Certain positions are very hard to fill. Recently, we've been spending a lot of time in Vernal testing potential applicants for dispatcher positions. We have trouble hiring and retaining people in the Uintah Basin because workers can make significant more money than what we pay dispatchers. Also, the cost of living in the basin is extremely expensive, which is a real challenge to



A Day in the Life of a HR Team Continued...

recruit and retain employees. In conjunction with UHP/ Communications we are exploring a number of options in an effort to minimize this problem.

HR2HR: Please describe a day in the life.

HR DPS: Busy. Between telephone calls, people coming in, answering questions, recruitments going on, it's super busy. For the specialist, there is always something. With over 1,700 employees, there's a constant flow of FMLA requests and injuries. We only have one HR person located at the National Guard to support the HR work for BOP and the DVA, who handles everything from A to Z. One thing many people may not realize about working HR in the field is that you don't put on just one hat. You're putting on a different hat every five seconds. You're not going to put on a hat to only recruit or a hat only to do liability. They're all interrelated. Sometimes you're doing analyst work; sometimes you're doing specialist work; sometimes you're just being friendly so our customers like and trust HR; and sometimes you're someone's therapist.

Another unique aspect in regards to recruitment in DPS and the Utah National Guard is that we do extensive review of each applicant's background. While we have the intent to hire quickly, it takes about a month to do a background investigation. So, we have to hope the applicant is still available for hire by the time we're ready to make a job offer. Sometimes they say, "Sorry, but I found another job," or their background check and unacceptable. DPS spends a lot of time reviewing those background checks.

HR2HR: Are there seasonal aspects of your work?

HR DPS: There are some things that typically come up at certain seasons. You see a lot of FMLA and Workers Comp in December. Winter is a dangerous time for our troopers out there on the road, which can lead to injuries, crashed vehicles, and discipline. Already in this year, we've gone through 10 or 12 vehicles.

It used to be in December and January, people burned off annual leave. But now, while other people are away, we're still busy throughout the holidays. From a recruitment perspective, we're always busy. There are so many steps and the margin for efficiency is more narrow. There is more of a demand for us to do things immediately. Also, with a 24/7 operation, we need to be available to support the DPS operations from an HR standpoint.

HR2HR: What is the most rewarding part of working for these agencies?

HR DPS: The mission of DPS is to "provide a safe and secure environment for all people in Utah." We are able to see the things that employees do to go out of their way to accomplish this mission, and we have the opportunity to stand behind them in their efforts. For example the story that made the news about the shuttle of the woman across the state – that kind of stuff happens way more often than you hear about. Even as large as this agency is, there are maybe 16-20 people that are just there because it's a job. But the bulk mostly care about what they are doing, and that they are doing it well. It's those employees who are making good things happen for people in the state of Utah to help provide that safe and secure environment.

At the National Guard, most of the employees are military and they are constantly being called on missions. Many people don't realize how active the Utah National Guard really is for national defense such as deployments to Afghanistan, Iraq and other locations throughout the world. Also the National Guard is available for emergency at a moments notice. We've really learned to respect the military and veterans. It's a proud and rewarding place to work.

One of the rewards is when supervisors—majors, colonels, generals, or the commissioner comes to your office and says "thank you." There is a lot of trust and respect for HR with our assigned agencies. We are intertwined and they rely on us to make the right decisions. ■



Print Smart

By: Chris Whipple, HR Technician

The price of printer ink is high. It is ridiculously high. It ranges from \$13 to \$75 per ounce. Think about that...per ounce. Gas is around \$1.90 a gallon, which is the lowest it has been in years. The cheapest ink is close to \$1,664 a gallon. That amount of money can buy thousands of gallons of milk. The price of ink is so outrageous that last year New Jersey introduced a bill requiring ink manufactures to display on their ink packages the average cost to print 1,000 pages.



Often doing things that are beneficial for the environment can also be beneficial for your wallet. I recently started shaving with a single blade safety razor. This is not because I am a hipster or because I want to follow in the footsteps of great men the caliber of Teddy Roosevelt who used them. It is because it saves money. Razor companies make money through the mark-up on the blades. A pack of 8 razor heads for a Mach 3 costs about \$30.00. A pack of 10 blades for a safety razor costs about \$10.00. The company makes money off the blades. The same works for ink. The price of printers has gone down but the price for ink continues to rise.

Three years ago a middle school student named Suvir Mirchandani did a science experiment that caught some media attention. He suggested that by changing the font style for documents printed within his school district the district could reduce their ink usage by 24%, for a net savings of approximately \$21,000 per year. Expanding the scope of his experiment lead Suvir to believe that the US government could save close to \$400 million a year. The numbers may not have been exact, but his heart and his mind were in the right place. By adjusting little things that we do, we can save in major ways. The two fonts suggested by Suvir are Garmond and Times New Roman. For even further savings the font size can be reduced to 10 point. Another suggestion is printing in draft mode.

By making these simple changes we can all reduce the amount of ink we use and in turn save money. Also, make sure you are printing only what you need. If you want to share an article with a co-worker then send an e-mail. Documents can also be sent in PDF form instead of printed and placed on a desk. These simple steps can go a long way to reducing budgets and helping reduce our impact on the environment.

Go
Green
with
Garmond
and

Times New Roman



What Do You Do on the Weekends? By: Tami Hart, HR Analyst II

My mother-in-law started teaching me to quilt about 13 years ago. I have loved it since the first stitch. There is something very satisfying to me about being able to take a stack of material and turn it into something useful. My favorite things to create are table runners, because they go together quickly. I just joined a 'Table-Topper-of-the-Month' club, so now I'll be making a new one every month. My favorite past project was a quilt I made for my son, where I stitched Crown Royal bags together. (You can't ever go wrong with purple and gold.) A couple of times a year my friends and I go on "Shop Hops" where we go to a lot of different quilt stores and get ideas for new projects. My favorite new project is always my next one.



If you are doing something interesting on the weekends, we want to hear about it.

CARE to SHARE?

Email your weekend adventures to Angela Kula

PEHP

Let Us Help with Your New Year's Resolution

Want to be healthier and make more money in 2015? PEHP's wellness programs can help with both goals!

Our Healthy Utah rebate program offers cash rewards for good health and health improvements – including an easy \$50 just for taking an initial health assessment.

Go to www.pehp.org/pehp-healthy-utah for details.



DHRM Employee Spotlight



Bryan Embley has been instrumental in the case management project by testing it, providing feedback, and selling the idea to his co-workers at DPS, the Specialists within DHRM, and his supervisor. His attitude with respect to this initiative have been invaluable in promoting the idea and getting it off the ground.



Ashley Nelsen has been talking with GOED and USTAR leadership to re-classify 14 Program Specialists at GOED to more appropriate positions including ensuring that they are in the correct FLSA status as well as to reclassify at

least two other positions in USTAR to positions that are more fitting to the duties they perform. She has been working closely with both agencies to ensure they are onboard with the recommendations we are giving them.



The BIS and Total Comp Team for the development and implementation of the ACA reports. Specifically recognize Debra Valentine and Michael Jenson for their work to make this happen as well as Jeremy Marsh and Lowe Rudd from BIS.



Winston Inoway is recognized for the amazing job he did creating the abusive conduct prevention training for UDOT. He expertly crafted supporting visual elements and coordinated and integrated the audio component; and he successfully integrated a welcome and ending message to the training by Carlos Braceras. The final

product is exceptional and will serve as a great starting point for statewide abusive conduct prevention training if we are required to produce such training.

DHRM Staff changes

Check out the Water Cooler to see all the staffing that took place over the last two months.

WATER COOLER

Newsletter staff

Editor in Chief: Debbie Cragun

Newsletter Staff:

Tammy Magee
Sue Recupero
Winston Inoway
April Nicholls
Chris Whipple
Angela Kula