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Cross-Training: Minimize “indispensable employees”

I have been at UTHSC now for over 15 years and every year I hear employees say...”I would like to learn a certain skill, task or gain knowledge that someone else has in my department, but they are unwilling to train me.” Why do organizations allow these “indispensable employees” to exist? My guess is fear that the employee will leave or they are just unaware that this is a critical issue.

It appears that the indispensable employee wants to protect the information so that they can retain an advantage and keep their job! These employees feel that their behavior is positive. Nothing can be further from the truth. The fact is, employees who are the “only ones who do a task, skill or function” are risk factors for the institution and create burdens and bottle-necks at times when they are unable to perform tasks due to annual leave, sick leave or apathy. A Forbes Magazine article titled “Cross Training: Your best defense against indispensable employees,” stated that “When only one person knows how to handle a key area of your business, your company isn’t positioned for sustainability.” But how can we force someone to teach others their function if they do not want to? The answer is ... good supervision!

There are critical tasks in every department that should have a back-up or another person who can perform these items. Although this is difficult to achieve in a short time, it is definitely something that can be achieved over time by assessing critical functions first and making certain there are multiple persons assigned to learn and masters these functions. The Forbes article recommends four things supervisors do to create a culture for cross-training: 1) Prepare the culture – Make it clear that you and the organization value your employees ability to support each other and that everyone benefits in the end. 2) Set formal expectations - Require employees to have at least one person who can step into their role at a moment’s notice. Make it mandatory, give clear instructions, and provide time for people to cross-train effectively. 3) Test your success – See if a team member’s functions are covered in their absence. If not, regroup. If so, success! 4) Develop a feedback mechanism - Give employees an opportunity to give you feedback on the impact of cross-training activities, and use this information to continuously improve your efforts.

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Deadline for **Biometric Screening** is July 15th!

Employees who are enrolled in the Cigna or BCBS Partnership PPO plans are subject to the Partnership Promise each year. The Partnership Promise for 2015 include completing a Biometric Screening by July 15th, if you or your covered spouse are contacted for health coaching. It is also important to answer or return all calls received from Partners for Health/Healthways. No response or follow up may result in the member's coverage switching to the Standard PPO the following year. If you or your covered spouse have been contacted for health coaching, please ensure that you complete your Biometric Screening by the deadline! More information and forms can be found on the Onsite Health Diagnostics website: <https://my.onsitehd.com/restricted/signup/tn>. You may also contact Onsite Health Diagnostics at 1-888-741-3390 to speak to a customer service representative.

Health Insurance Premium Increase for 2016



Tennessee's State and Higher Education employees will see a 3.5% health insurance premium increase in 2016. This revelation came shortly after being notified of a 3% across the board pay raise for eligible employees. Unfortunately, when both increases occur at the same time, employees feel less excited about a pay increase when it is accompanied by an increase in health premiums. Overall, increases in the health premiums has little impact on the 3% salary increase. The 3.5% premium increase will only require employees to pay an additional \$4—\$13 monthly for their health coverage (depending on coverage and plan). The amount of the increase can equal what it cost to eat out for lunch one day. When put into proper perspective, the detested health insurance premium increase is not as bad as one would believe!

Coming Soon!

**OPEN
ENROLLMENT
2015**

SEPT. 1 – OCT. 1

The Annual Enrollment and Transfer Period (AETP) begins **September 1, 2015** and ends **October 1, 2015!** Employees will have the opportunity to add, cancel and change their insurance plans for the new year!

What's New In Employment?

Employment is pleased to announce that the Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9 Management is available online. All newly hired paid faculty, staff, students, residents, post docs are required to complete Section 1 of the form. There are two ways new hires can locate the form on our website:

Option 1: Go to: <http://uthsc.edu/hr/employment/forms.php>

*New Hire Forms-select Online Form I-9, Employment Eligibility Verification

Option 2: Go to: <http://uthsc.edu/hr/employment/>

*Quick Links on the right and click on I-9 Processing

Employment will no longer accept the paper version of the I-9 form. However, we will continue to accept the I-9 Referral form from the department. New hires are still required to submit original documentation verifying eligibility to work in the United States to Human Resources *on or before their first day of employment*. All re-verifications must be completed using the online form as well.

If an employee does not have access to a computer, the Human Resources Employment office has three computers available for use.

Hiring/Business Managers/Supervisors, please shred or dispose of any old paper I-9 forms and forward the options above to all new hires. If you have questions, please contact Donna Lenoir at dlenoir@uthsc.edu or 448-5599.

Updated employment forms are now available online:

Non-UT Student Checklist:

<http://uthsc.edu/hr/employment/documents/non-ut-student-checklist.pdf>

Non-UT Student Request:

<http://uthsc.edu/hr/employment/documents/non-ut-student-assistant-request-form.pdf>

Non-Faculty (Staff) Volunteer Checklist:

<http://uthsc.edu/hr/employment/documents/volunteer-checklist.pdf>

Identification Badge:

<http://uthsc.edu/hr/documents/employment/badge-procedures.pdf>

WE'RE MOVING!



The Employment Team is tentatively scheduled to move to their new offices on the 1st floor of the 910 bldg. July 28-29th! More information will be provided soon!!

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By employing techniques to cross-train our employees here at UTHSC we will create an organization that is more durable, agile, flexible and efficient with teamwork as the focus. Share your cross-training ideas or experiences with us at hr@uthsc.edu. Help us build this new cultural standard of cross-training!

Reference Link: <http://www.forbes.com/sites/chrisncialosi/2014/09/15/cross-training-your-best-defense-against-indispensable-employees/>

Ask HR!



Q: What form do I use when I need to change my address? Is it a system wide update and does it update my insurance carriers?

A: In order to change your address you will need to complete the **Personal Data Form** which can be assessed on the HR [New Hire Forms](#) webpage. The address change will update the UT system as well as insurance benefits. Retirement plans including tax deferred annuities require a separate form or an online update.

The Personal Data Form can also be used to update other information such as education, marital status, etc. When completing the form, only complete the section you wish to update.

Human Resources Staff

Chandra Alston.....Associate Vice Chancellor
Damon Davis.....Compensation Manager
Debbie Jackson.....Benefits Manager
Donna Lenoir.....Employment Manager
Darnita Brassel.....Training Administrator
Barbara Patton.....Admin. Specialist II
Phyllis Hubbard.....HR Consultant
Jacqueline Anderson.....HR Consultant
Renita Mattox.....Sr. Benefits Specialist
Karen Weatherly.....Sr. Benefits Specialist
Demetriss Gilliam.....HR Assistant
Denise Griffin.....Sr. Records Specialist
Ronnie Dickerson.....Administrative Assistant
Marian Harris.....Employee Relations
Amanda Rudolph.....Benefits Specialist
Yin-Yen (Helen) Lu.....Admin. Support Asst.
Chastity Pegues.....Admin. Support Asst.