

# Employee and Labor Relations in HRM

## 1. What are Employee and Labor Relations?

Employee and Labor Relations describe the relationship between employees, and between the employer and the employees. They include the contractual, practical, and emotional connection between the managers and their workforce. It also refers to an organization's efforts to create and maintain a positive relationship with its employees to keep them loyal and more engaged in their work.

## 2. Why is employee relations important?

To maintain positive employee relations, an organization must first view employees as stakeholders and contributors in the company rather than simply as paid laborers. This perspective encourages those in management and executive roles to seek employee feedback, to value their input more highly, and to consider the employee experience when making decisions that affect the entire company.

## 3. Examples of Employee Relations:

- **Workplace Conflicts** - Disagreements and disputes between employees happen all the time. Often, these are the results of ineffective communication. An HR department or employee relations manager will never please everyone, but if frequent conflicts come up, low morale is building and the issues will only get worse unless resolved.
- **Workplace Bullying** - When a simple conflict escalates into bullying, you've got a big problem. The consequences of letting this take place on the job are low employee performance, increased absenteeism, and bad brand reputation (not to mention legal action).
- **Workplace Safety** - If accidents are happening in the workplace, an employer may be held responsible for any injuries, medical leave, and lost wages. On top of that, the company will suffer from the high cost of lowered production.
- **Hour Issues** - When employees constantly complain that their hours are not getting counted correctly (or if managers suspect dishonest hour tracking from employees), it's time to get into the details of what is going on.
- **Pay Raise Requests** - Declining or ignoring pay raise requests is just asking for disgruntled employees and high turnover rates. Even if you do offer fair wages, fully consider each request to see if there is room to offer a raise (or other perks instead).

**STARTER**

Here are some word partnerships that apply to employee relations. Some of the letters are missing. Complete the words and then match them with the definitions on the right.

s□□ dis□□□ m□□□ t□□ n<sup>1</sup>

con□□□ ct of em□□□□ m□□ t<sup>2</sup>

□ qu□□ pay<sup>3</sup>

pa□□ n□□□ l□□ ve<sup>4</sup>

workp□□□□ inj□□□ es<sup>5</sup>

s□ ort-t□ m□ w□ rk□□ g<sup>6</sup>

disc□ pl□ n□□ y and gr□□ van□ e procedure<sup>7</sup>

w□□ k-re□□ ted st□ ess<sup>8</sup>

- a reduced working hours, usually when a company has a decrease in production
- b accidents that happen at work
- c to treat someone of either sex unfairly
- d the right for parents to take time off work to look after a child
- e the same salary for men and women
- f stress caused by negative factors in the job
- g procedure when an employee breaks the rules and what the employee can do if unhappy with a decision
- h written details given to an employee to confirm terms and conditions

- Number the following workplace stress factors in order of importance ( 1 most stressful, 10 least stressful)

- interpersonal relationships at work (problems with co-workers)
- tight deadlines (pressure to get work done in time)
- intimidation from supervisors
- work environment/equipment (unsatisfactory working conditions)
- workload
- job security (fear of losing one's job)
- working hours
- low autonomy (working under constant supervision)
- repetitive work
- work/life balance (finding time for responsibilities at home)