



THE TOP 5 HR MISTAKES MOST BUSINESSES MAKE

*And the Simply Strategy to Address
them All*

YOU WANT TO BE A PREMIER EMPLOYER - BUILD A TEAM THAT CAN PROPEL YOUR BUSINESS FORWARD.

It's clear - if you run a business you have a skill. You provide a product or service that someone is willing to PAY their hard-earned money for. While you may have varying levels of experience, you've made it this far. How did you get here? It was likely for a technical skill that you are extremely good at.

I've seen the process happen repeatedly - A business owner is great at what he or she does, they increase demand, and as a result, hire employees to support. Everyone wants to believe they are a good manager of others. Since he or she is a "good person", business owners often believe they are full of integrity and will do the right thing to lead their team.

Here's the truth - few business owners have the time and expertise to effectively develop their team.

The myth of the good and benevolent leader makes us want to hide this fact. Because if you admit that you don't have the skills to grow your team, it means you are a "bad" leader. Team building isn't always intuitive, it is a skill, just like any other.

This guide is a compilation of common HR mistakes that we have seen over the years. All of them come out of the best of intentions, but can lead to dev. I've included the simple (not easy) fix to all of them. With this information, you'll be prepared to

1. BUSINESS OWNERS BELIEVE THAT PEOPLE PROBLEMS WILL "TAKE CARE OF THEMSELVES".

When I consult with businesses, they sometimes state that because they have hired good people that have integrity, people problems will sort themselves out. This is a myth that will not only sabotage your productivity, but could END your business. As a specialist in organizational psychology I can tell you this with certainty - People are not rational. You may have a good and loyal person that you have hired and entrust with pieces of your business.

Even the BEST people in the world intent on doing the RIGHT THING can do some nonsensical things when put in a team. Their behavior may not align with their integrity. This is especially the case when put in a team with some sort of power dynamic. Take for example you hire two new employees over the course of 6 months. Both have integrity and the best interest of your business in mind.

However, a problem will eventually arise that they have have different perspectives on how to solve.

This is great! Two minds are better than one. Except it is not - someone has to be "right" and take the initiative to fix the problem. Which can cause hard feelings or even lead to blame. If you've created an open environment where problems are solved collaboratively, this may not be the case.

But what happens when you have 5 employees? 10? What sort of interpersonal dynamics will come in to play on a daily basis? Sitting back and letting employees "work it out" can be detrimental to your organization in the long run (and you will likely lose some great employees who won't stand for it).

2. THERE ARE NO JOB DESCRIPTIONS.

This is a common error that comes from an understandable place - when you initially are building a business, everyone is doing everything to serve the customer. And while this can be true for the “young” years of a business, if you want to mature, time and intention needs to be spent to define the job skills and expectations for a specific role. This clarifies expectations on an individual basis with your team, but it also helps you HIRE the right person for an available job.

Someone may be a good person with integrity, but that does NOT mean they would be good for a job. Each person brings their own strengths, and there is certainly a place that would be best suited in your organization.

As a leader, your job is to place someone where they are most effective, helping to move your organization and the individual forward as the end result.

In my experience, job descriptions are not put in place because 1) they feel impersonal 2) we just don't believe that the current employee would ever leave us. I

often describe it to business owners this way - if one of your employees got hit by a bus on the way to work, would you be able to keep your business running? In reality, your employees may love where they work and never want to leave you, but a sudden loss is a possibility. Why leave your processes (and customer satisfaction) at risk?

3. NORMS ARE STATED BUT NOT ENFORCED.

Many businesses have a company handbook to ensure they are “legal”. I see many of the same copy and paste phrases that are very good for a business to have. Often, when I start talking with the team, I realize that these handbooks are not used or even enforced.

Every business (whether you have a handbook or not) has norms - the acceptable ways to act and behave within a business.

What time do people show up? What is considered “late”? How are customers greeted? These are “norms”. What I often find is that the rules and norms are not aligned. Don’t get me wrong - I’m a big believer in having written policies and handbooks. As someone with over a decade in HR, I heavily rely on them. But from my perspective, a handbook that is written but not enforced causes a bigger problem than having no written policies at all.

4. PERFORMANCE CONVERSATIONS ONLY OCCUR WHEN SOMETHING "BAD" HAPPENS

If your employee gets called into your office, it is because they have stepped out of line. The walk to their door feels something akin to being sent to the principal's office as a child. I get it - as a business owner you are busy keeping the business afloat. The only time that you have to have these types of conversations you're squeezing it between a vendor call and a client meeting.

Say you have a problem with your employee John repeatedly fulfilling orders incorrectly. You bring John in and he sits directly across from you. He knows something is up because he has never been called to your office before. Strike one - he is in a defensive position and will likely not hear what you are saying. John may have awesome potential but needs some coaching. The brief conversation you have with him may leave John feeling confused, angry and looking for another job. Performance conversations should NOT be like this.

Regular and targeted feedback for all performance (good and bad) should be high on your list.

Why? Because telling an employee what they have done well reinforces and repeats that behavior. Which means more productivity and less rework. Which creates more time in your schedule in the long run. See what we did there?

5. GOOD PEOPLE DON'T NEED TRAINING

It's not just the small businesses that need to hear this - corporate America is entrenched with this myth as well. It's coming for a new employee to be handed a laptop, shown to a desk, and be told "good luck"!

My first day on the job in a major corporate company, I left earlier than planned because I couldn't find the bathrooms and I was too intimidated to ask (I was also young and very green, but that's another story). Later in my career, I worked with the onboarding team and we made a revision to include bathroom locations in the new hire packet based on my incident.

Managers mistake job-relevant training for specific training.

This mistake can be dangerous AND leave the new employee confused, frustrated and looking for a new job.

THE ONE SIMPLE APPROACH

There's a simple way to fix all of these common mistakes - be intentional of the behaviors you want to see from your team. Drive for those behaviors in the design of your business. Create systems and processes that reinforce the positive behaviors and discourage negative behaviors.

Notice I said the approach is simple - NOT EASY.

Not sure where to start on developing your team? **At J Prater Consulting we believe every business deserves the resources to develop their team.** If you need a partner in your growth journey, give us a call.

Schedule your fee discovery call today!

BOOK CALL



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BUILD SKILLS



EXECUTE VISION

Jessica was a delight to work with. She was detailed, thorough, and kept us on track with her timeline. I would highly recommend working with Jessica and her team.... we were very pleased with the process and it was well worth the financial investment.

Beth Duffield, Vice President of Workforce Development, Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce