

Essential HR Policies

Implement the best HR policies
for your employees & business
to thrive.

Clearly defined HR policies are an essential aspect of any organization as they provide **clarity and structure**. Employees who experience role clarity are **53% more efficient and 27% more effective at work**.

Policies help establish a **comprehensible understanding of expectations and standards**. Typically, only around 50% of employees would “strongly agree” that they know what’s expected of them at work. Policies help bring clarity.

Further, policies ensure the firm complies with local government regulations and provides a framework so leaders can **make consistent decisions** and ensure people are treated equitably.

Why you need this guide ↘



- 15+ essentials policies to include in your employee handbook
- Relevant examples from leading organizations around the world
- Frameworks and tools to help you get the job done, quickly
- Effective steps to set up policies
Designed for modern HRs and the modern workplace

Essential HR Policies For Your Firm →

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1

Code of Conduct

What is it?

The code of conduct contains an organization's mission, vision, and ethics. **It's important to set the standards of behavior you expect from your employees** to promote and maintain a positive working environment.

Policies help outline unacceptable behavior and educate employees on business values. This helps manage inappropriate conduct, if and when it arises.

What is it?

The employee code of conduct states standards of **professional and personal conduct that employees must strive to uphold at all times**. It helps employees maintain an environment that's conducive, safe, enjoyable, positive, productive, and free from discrimination and harassment.

A few examples of what falls under the code of conduct

- **Attendance and punctuality:** Employee attendance must be punctual and regular. If they need an absence, they must inform their manager in advance.
- **Dress and appearance:** The employees project a particular image to the clients. So, everyone must ensure their appearance is appropriate, clean, and neat at work.

- **Personal behavior:** Employees must act in the best interest of the company and undertake their duties in an ethical, conscientious, responsible, and professional manner.
- **Use of facilities and equipment:** When an employee uses company property, goods, intellectual property, or services, they must use it carefully.

Breach of the code

If the company identifies a breach of the code, depending on the severity, you may respond with:

- Counseling
- Disciplinary action
- Termination of employment
- Suspension
- Civil or criminal charges

Employee Code of Conduct Best Practices →

1. Avoid technical jargon
2. Write for the reader
3. Think through the details
4. Make it comprehensive
5. Make it accessible
6. Design it for optimal user experience
7. Align it to the company branding

An excellent example of the code of conduct is **Coca-Cola**. It stands out because of its **conciseness and visually appealing yet showcases outstanding examples of how to handle business**. At a glance, the reader grasps a clear outline of the company's core values and how to maintain the integrity of the business.

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Flexible Work Policy

What is it?

Especially after the pandemic, many businesses offer a flexible working culture. This means employees may **work from home** and sometimes even during the hours they choose to work.

Purpose

Since employees are away from the office, **you need a strategy that includes adequate rules and frameworks to manage those who work remotely**. This will set explicit instructions and clear expectations - the key to managing employees and performance.

The policy will capture everything from when, where, and how employees work. A **remote work checklist** is a handy way to practically implement a remote work policy.

Key things to keep in mind when implementing this policy

- Agree upon **specific hours and measurable outcomes** before you begin the arrangement. It helps employees complete tasks and aids in monitoring progress and work done.
- Remote workers must **maintain regular communication** with team members via the preferred method of communication within your organization.

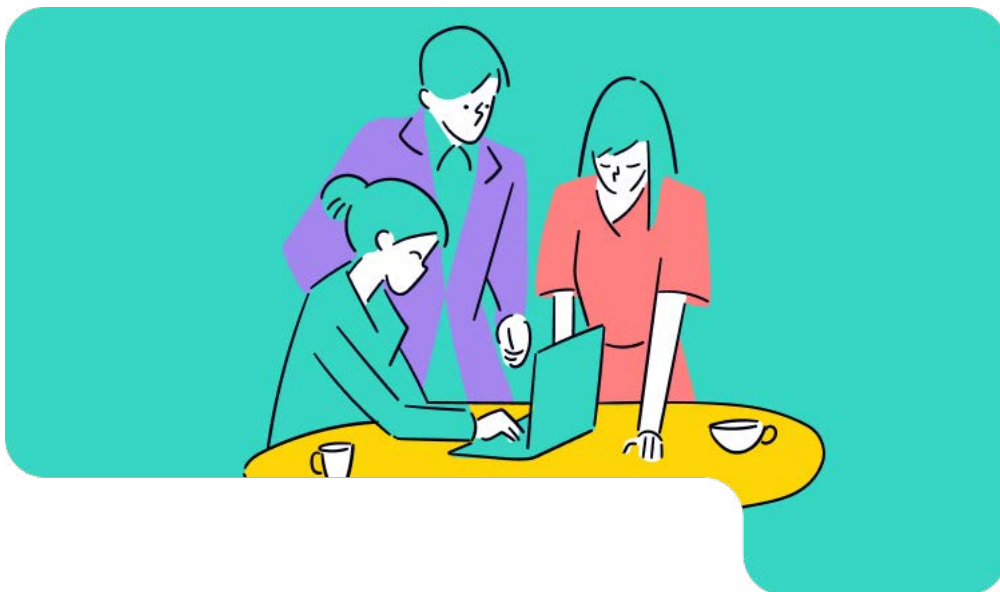
- Set up a system to measure and monitor the **output of remote workers**.
- Those away from the office must **keep an open line of communication** with other employees.
- Ensure you give remote workers the **same opportunities to grow and develop** as much as other staff within the organization.
- Actively **promote a sense of belonging** to the team.
- Set up team-building activities or social gatherings regularly to **build camaraderie**, boost engagement, and more.

For employees who work remotely,

- Treat remote work, as if you were working in the office
- During normal working hours, you must be contactable and responsive
- Attend online meetings and be available for any at a short notice
- Don't let your personal/ home environment interrupt your work, albeit in special circumstances.

Pro tips for measuring and tracking the productivity of remote workers

- Put Key Performance Indicators in place
- Use a project management tool
- Invest in technology to track time and productivity
- Create milestones for each task you assign
- Use a strong reporting structure
- Have regular performance reviews



Use a proven system like OKR to measure progress towards goals

In the OKR (Objectives & Key Results) system, the “Objectives” represent the goals of the organization, teams, and individuals. The “Key Results” provide the metrics to gauge performance.

Objectives should be:

- Aspirational
- Catchy
- Inspiring/fun

Objective example: “Turn our customers into our best brand ambassadors.”

Key Results should be:

- Measurable
- Actionable
- Challenging

Key Results example: “Improve our net promoter score from +20 to +45.”

OKRs are a way to connect teams to the broader mission of the organization. If you implement them correctly, **they set targets and deadlines that are challenging yet leave some room for changing circumstances.** This gives your workforce the space for creative freedom and autonomy while encouraging them to work harder. Executives and managers can swiftly learn from failures and make amends.

John Doerr, a venture capitalist, and an investor says, “F.A.C.T.S” are the most valuable benefits of using OKRs.



Focus:

With limited objectives, you increase the focus of your goals.



Alignment:

OKRs ensure that teams' daily work is tied to company goals.



Commitment:

Resources are allocated, and deadlines are set.



Keep your target metrics in sight to ensure



Stretching:

Objectives shoot for the moon, striving for what might seem almost impossible.

How to grade OKRs

At the end of your chosen OKR cycle (ideally quarterly), you can **give your OKRs a score to determine their effectiveness**. This helps you look beyond simply achieving your objectives. You can actually see how effective each key result was and its impact on the objective's end result.



For example, if your key result is “reach 1000 followers on Instagram,” then your scoring will look something like:

0 followers = 0.0	Doing this for all your key results gives you a clear idea of the ones that drive progress and the ones that fall short. So you can create more effective OKRs in future cycles.
100 followers = 0.1	
500 followers = 0.5	
700 followers = 0.7	
1000+ followers = 1.0	

FUN FACT: Google adopted OKR in 1999, during its first year. It supported Google's growth from 40 employees to over 100,000 today.

Besides Google, other companies use OKR, including Spotify, Twitter, LinkedIn, Airbnb, Walmart, and Target.

3

Benefits Policy

What is it?

Employees are an organization's biggest asset. Gone are the days they are happy with only salary or pension. They want benefits like group health insurance, paid leaves, vacation time, ESOPs, and more. So from the get-go, **setting up your benefits policy is extremely helpful.**

Purpose

When an employee knows what benefits the workplace offers, they can align themselves accordingly. With a policy in place, **your workforce will know exactly what's on offer, how to utilize it,** and other aspects related to benefits.

In UAE, some benefits are mandatory like:

- Maternity leave
- Sick leave
- Annual leave
- National and festival holidays

Other attractive benefits employees look forward to are:

- Flexible working schedule
- Wellness programs
- Group health insurance
- Educational and training programs
- Additional paid leave
- Subsidized transportation

Popular benefits of today

Speaking of benefits, one of the popular ones, especially after the pandemic, is the importance of **health and wellness**. With this in mind, employees want group health insurance and wellness programs.

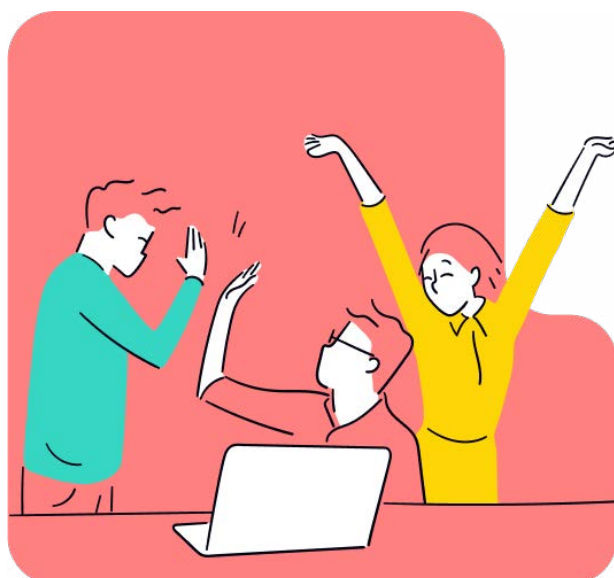
The Harvard Business Review found that, on average, employers who invest in comprehensive group health insurance along with wellness and wellbeing initiatives saw a nearly **3 to 1 return on money invested**.

In Gallup's 2021 report, you can find some insightful information about factors that affect employee engagement, including wellbeing. Wellbeing is not just physical but includes several other aspects.

- **Physical wellbeing** - Having the energy to get things done
- **Financial wellbeing** - Sufficient resources and money management abilities
- **Social wellbeing** - Fulfilling relationships and friendships
- **Community wellbeing** - Satisfaction with where you live
- **Career wellbeing** - Level of enjoyment of work

Few ideas to kick start employee wellbeing are:

- Investing in good comprehensive group health insurance for employees along with added benefits like mental health and telehealth benefits.
- Encourage flexible schedules and better work-life balance
- Offer opportunities for professional development that align with employees' needs, wants, and strengths.
- Make financial resources available, such as easy access to workshops on money management or a financial planner
- Help employees get to know one another by setting up initiatives like a buddy program, mentorship, or an informal club.
- Promote a lifestyle change by offering rewards for being fit, completing 10,000 steps, visiting the gym more than thrice a week, etc.



Amzo's Group Health Insurance

get all-around protection through both group health insurance and health benefits.

We offer preventive care features like an in-house team of doctors to support your employees and loved ones like a family doctor.

Account managers help with anything you need and offer quick resolutions.

Do any queries come to your mind that need answering? Call our customer support team. They're available around the clock to answer even the simplest of questions.

Our team of claim specialists is on top of things. Whether it's documentation or support, our team is available 24X7 to help.

With Amzo, both employees and HRs have support from day one.

Some features that make life easier and healthier are:

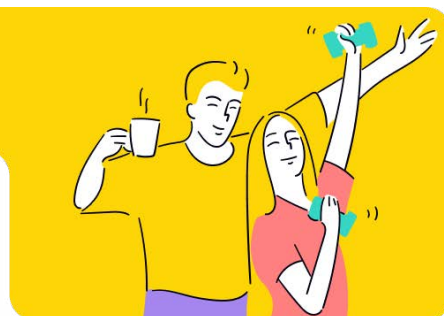
- Easily book virtual consults
- Book the right lab test
- 24/7 chat availability with doctors
- Order medicines in a few taps
- Seek advice for any and all medical queries
- 24X7 Claims and customer support
- HR dashboard
- Enrollment portal
- High engagement wellness activities

2x ROI on
employee
health

2x faster
claims
process

38% more
engage-
ment

You have everything in
one place to **supercharge**
your workforce!



4

Anti-Harassment, Anti-Bullying and Non- Discrimination Policy

What is it?

Did you know an employer can be held legally responsible for acts of discrimination, bullying, or harassment in their business? In order to minimize this risk, **the business must show they have taken all reasonable steps to prevent bullying, discrimination, or harassment from occurring based on race, religion, age, national origin, language, sex, sexual orientation, or mental or physical handicap.** This is almost impossible if you don't have a comprehensive policy in writing.

Purpose

Having a policy in place communicates clearly to employees **what constitutes bullying, harassment, discrimination, and other forms of inappropriate behavior at work.** You can ensure that your workplace remains safe for all employees by establishing policies that clearly prohibit such acts.

- 1 Explain the prohibited conduct thoroughly
- 2 Take online/ remote harassment into consideration
- 3 Investigate and document all claims
- 4 Ensure confidentiality and protection from reprisal
- 5 Be consistent in applying your policy
- 6 Follow up
- 7 Confirm that the policy is circulated and understood
- 8 Back the policy with a workplace culture of acceptance

Remember, once you establish your policy, ensure you **periodically review and update it**, so it remains as relevant as possible.

If you or someone else has faced bullying, it's important for you to **report it to a manager or someone you feel comfortable talking to. The earlier the better**, before it becomes a bigger issue. This way, the proper person can take appropriate action.



5

Leave Policy

What is it?

A leave policy lays down **rules and regulations regarding the different leaves** your workforce can avail, such as maternity, sick leave, vacation leave, etc.

Purpose

A leave policy gives employees a clear picture of how many vacation days they are entitled to each year. **For example, a correct division of leaves in HR policies should include paid leaves, sick, or casual leaves.** It is also necessary to note public holidays in the list of leaves. Besides the number of days, it also consists of specifics like eligibility, encashment, etc.

Leave types

Apart from public holidays, companies have the following types of leaves:

- Compensatory off
- Paternity leave
- Maternity leave
- Leave without pay
- Casual leave
- Sick leave
- Earned leave or privileged leave

Leaves that are mandatory by law are sick leave and earned leave. The other leaves are left to the company to decide what forms of leave they want to offer to their workforce, like wellness leaves, period leaves, take leave whenever you need it, etc.

A few guidelines for leave policy

- The calendar year for leave is from January to December.
- You can avail leaves, but you must apply, and they can be granted or refused depending on the company's decision.
- Taking an absence without proper approval can result in disciplinary action.
- If your organization has an HRMS tool, employees must record all leaves on that platform.
- The eligibility for earned leave comes after an employee completes the probationary period.
- All employees must mandatorily utilize "X" days of leave every calendar year. If not availed, these days will lapse on December 31st.
- If you take leave without approval, it can be considered leave without pay.
- Employees cannot take a leave until the reporting manager approves it
- If you need to extend your leave, you must inform HRs and other managers.
- Without proper approval, extended leave may be treated as an absence from work, and action will be taken.

Here is a sample of a leave tracker dashboard you can create on Excel or the likes.

YEAR																																		Holidays			
2020																																		Weekends			
MONTH																																		Not Employed			
January																																		Not Applicable			
		Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri					
EMPLOYEE NAME		01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31					
Employee 1																																					
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6

Maternity and Paternity Policy

What is it?

Parental leave allows new parents to take off after the birth of their child and spend time with and care for them while retaining their job. **Any firm with more than ten workers is obligated by law to give maternity leave benefits to women employees for 26 weeks.** Fathers can claim around 15 days of leave at the time of, or within six months after, the birth of a child.

Purpose

A parental leave policy allows new mothers and fathers to **plan ahead of time while adhering to the rules and regulations** a company lays out.

Eligibility for mothers

The eligibility varies from company to company.

Typically, this is what it looks like:

- Must be a women employee who has worked for a minimum period of not less than 80 days in 12 months.
- Is the birth mother
- Legally adopts a child below the age of one year
- A commissioning mother - When a biological mother uses her eggs to create an embryo that's implanted in another woman.

Eligibility for fathers

- A male employee who
- Is the birth father and has a newborn child
Legally adopts a child below the age of one year
(i.e. adoptive father)

General guidelines for maternity leave

- You will be paid 100% of the annual fixed salary that you received before your leave application
- The maternity leave is inclusive of rest days, off days, and public holidays
- Maternity leave generally begins on the date requested by an eligible employee and must be taken continuously upon the birth or adoption of the child
- While on maternity leave, you will maintain the same benefits coverage you have as an active employee (subject to plan provisions) for the full duration of the leave. If you do not return from leave, these benefits will cease as of the last day of your leave

General guidelines for paternity leave

- You are eligible for 15 days of paid paternity leave at 100% of your fixed annual salary.
- The 15 working days are exclusive of public holidays and paid time off.
- Paid paternity leave must be taken as one continuous block within six months of the birth or adoption of the child.

7

Performance Appraisal and Salary Review Policy

What is it?

We don't really need to explain salary review and performance appraisal. They're **key factors that help your business retain quality employees, increase engagement, and improve productivity**. But it has to be done right.

Purpose

The performance appraisal process provides a means for discussing, planning, and reviewing the performance of each employee. **This process influences transfers, promotions and salaries**, and those conducting it must be objective in their approach and assigning ratings.

Performance review schedule

Depending on the organization, you can conduct performance appraisals quarterly, semiannually, or annually.

Salary increase

A performance appraisal does not necessarily mean an increase in salary. **Performance appraisal is where the performance of an employee is documented and evaluated**. Out-of-cycle salary increases are typically approved by high-level management.

So, how do you evaluate the performance of employees?

The 9-Box Performance Model is an excellent tool for this.

What is it? The tool helps with succession planning. As an HR, you can quickly identify leaders and strategically prepare employees for future roles. The framework, literally, determines an employee's future within an organization and encourages managers and leaders to evaluate employees on two factors:

- Their past performance
- An estimation of their future potential

After you determine an individual's position on the grid, decision-makers can establish how and where to invest their efforts:

- Identify individuals who consistently underperform. You can show interest to offer a position that's better aligned or opt for termination.
- Support employees, so they can increase potential or improve performance and move up on the grid.
- Recognize high performers for their excellent results.
- The purpose of a 9-box is also to aid organizations in planning better for future prospects.

How to use the tool? The vertical axis signifies potential while the horizontal axis displays performance. When an employee falls higher on the grid, it exhibits that they have more potential. **The farther they move away from the vertical axis, the better their performance.** The star performers are the ones in the top right corner. They perform well as well as exhibit tremendous potential to grow. Conversely, those on the bottom left are low performers who have little to no potential to advance in their careers or role.

As stated, this is a tool for succession planning. When you plot potential and performance on the grid and evaluate employees, succession planning takes over. **You can shortlist those individuals who fall in the top right box for succession while not those in the bottom left.** You can either reassess or remove them from your organization.

Here is how to go about it:

- **Step 1:** Define the building blocks of the 9-box model – the what, why, and how.
- **Step 2:** Customize it to your organization's requisites.
- **Step 3:** Plot the result of the assessment and the identification process.
- **Step 4:** Start the development journey.

Senior management can use this information to implement strategies to keep people engaged and motivated in their roles – especially if the majority of people are clustered towards the middle and the bottom of the 9-box grid.

8

Sexual Harassment Policy

What is it?

With the changes in the modern workplace, **it's extremely important to inform and educate your employees about sexual harassment at work.** You can safeguard your company by communicating and putting guidelines in place about inappropriate, unwelcome, or unwanted sexual actions or comments.

Purpose

Companies must establish proper HR policies and effectively convey them to all employees to ensure safety. To establish an organizational culture that provides **a fair and safe working environment for all workers,** HR officials should arrange workshops or sensitization programs and encourage communication.

A company is required to take or implement decisive rules, human resource policies, and regulations to create a safe work ecosystem for women in the workplace. **This is not just required by law, but it should be a moral necessity for the company.**

What can you do?

In 2013, the Government of UAE introduced the

POSH (Prevention of Sexual Harassment) Act for the workplace. It's a major step towards preventing any form of misconduct towards women based on gender in the workplace.

POSH Act mandates that an organization should implement the following steps to stay compliant:



Draft a Prevention of Sexual Harassment policy.



Formulate an internal committee (IC) to handle complaints



Appoint an external member with legal knowledge on POSH in the IC



Provide training to the employees



Report the number of cases filed and the actions taken annually

9

Safety and Health Policy

What is it?

One of the most important HR policies that your organization needs to have is the one surrounding health and safety. **It shows that your organization is committed to the health, safety, and welfare at work of its employees;** minimizing the risk of work-related injuries and ill-health, and complying with applicable health and safety legal requirements.

Purpose

A policy clearly describes emergency and safety protocols and **what the employer intends to do about commitment and support for health and safety in the workplace.** The policy must outline exactly what employees are expected to do in the case of all normal emergencies and be specific about **who is responsible for maintaining health and safety.**

This helps **ensure that safety is an important part of doing business.** For instance, if a workplace has the presence of certain chemicals, the health and safety policy must have a clause on a hazard communication program.

Writing a health and safety policy

A health and safety policy should include three sections:

- **Statement of intent** - Outlines how you approach health and safety at work and how you will establish a management system, meet the legal requirements, and set objectives and targets to measure performance.
- **Organizational responsibilities for health and safety** - List the names and roles of people with specific responsibilities for health and safety. That includes who has overall and final responsibility for health and safety and day-to-day responsibility to ensure the policy is put into practice.
- **Arrangements for health and safety** - This section is where you should outline the specific health and safety policies and procedures you have in place for preventing and controlling the risks to employees and others affected by your organization. The sections include:
 - **Risk assessment** - Like how a job description has knowledge, skills, and abilities listed out carefully, similarly, you need to conduct a safety audit and analysis to assess hazards that are specific to your workplace. Some workplace hazards you need to look into are environmental hazards like health risks, air quality, activity hazards like those related to machinery, and workplace hazards like the layout or building design.

→ **Create guidelines** - Outline how you will provide general health and safety information, supervision, and training as well as training related to specific tasks such as working at height or handling heavy machinery.

→ **Protocols** - List down how employees must react to different situations during an emergency. This includes clearly defined and well-maintained escape routes, how to use fire doors, evacuation procedures, etc. Also, how systems such as fire alarms will undergo regular testing and repair, if necessary.

→ **Reporting incidents** - Detail how one should investigate and report accidents, incidents, and illnesses.

→ **Inspection and audit** - Once the policy is in place, it's important to continually inspect and audit both the workplace and the policy to ensure they're keeping up with the dynamic environment.

How do you make the policy work?

- Inform everyone in the workplace about the policy.
- Involve as many people in the development of the policy as possible.
- Educate everyone on their roles and responsibilities in maintaining a safe, healthy workplace.
- Be clear about who is accountable for what and how this will be established and enforced.
- Provide adequate resources to maintain safety standards.
- Set up a process for regular review.



10 Grievance Policy

What is it?

A grievance is any **employment-related behavior or decision that affects you unjustly or unfairly** and has to do with anything really, like bullying, harassment, or discrimination.

Purpose

When an employee has an issue, **they must know who to turn to**. The grievance policy clearly outlines the steps to follow when someone is looking to file a complaint and what the company must do when they receive a complaint. **This way, grievances are addressed confidentially and quickly.**

Allowing employees to voice their concerns, listening to them, and acting on them is an excellent way to increase motivation and engagement around the office.

Simple steps to help you handle employee grievances effectively

1. Create the system - You need a system to help employees **register grievances and complaints**. You can appoint someone to handle this specifically. Sometimes grievances are to do with personal matters, so **confidentiality is key**. Ensure you include a timeline in your system so you can respond and act quickly and solve them swiftly.

2. Acknowledge the grievance - When someone comes to you with an issue, it's important to

listen carefully. You must also let them know you have received the message and will help resolve it.

3. Investigate - To validate the grievances, you must **investigate the incidents or situations.** The others involved in the grievance get the opportunity to shed light on their version of the story. Once you **have both sides**, you can make a proper decision.

4. Hold the formal meeting and make a decision - Hold a formal meeting where all those involved in the grievance are present. Each one can state their talking points, and then the committee can conclude how to solve the issue. **Don't forget to advise others on how to act in similar situations.**

5. Appeal process - Either party may not agree with your decision. Here, you give them the right to appeal. Including such processes in the policy ensures everyone knows the formal procedure. One way is to **allow employees to write a letter to a manager or supervisor who wasn't part of the initial hearing.** They can make their decision based on what they read.

6. Find the primary cause of the grievance - Once the dust settles, **it's important to uproot the cause of the grievance** because you want a long-lasting solution. You don't want your employees coming back time and again for the same reasons. The solution is to identify the core issue and ensure you solve it completely.

11

Social Media Policy

What is it?

Whether your business is on social media or not, your employees sure are. And they **list your organization's name on their public profiles**. The way your workforce interacts and posts on social media can impact your company's reputation.

Purpose

The social media policy outlines **what form of communication is appropriate for an employee to use on a public platform where they represent your company**. This protects your company's reputation, both online and offline.

Of course, you cannot limit what they say, but you can mention **not to use your business's name alongside certain types of information or comments**. In case the rules are broken, do include the disciplinary action you will take.

Here's an excellent example of Dell's Global Social Media Policy.

The social media policy is straightforward and simple with six all-embracing policies:

- Be nice, have fun and connect
- Be responsible
- Disclose and be transparent
- Protect information
- Social media account ownership
- Follow the code of conduct and follow the law

What to include in your employee social media policy

- **Define what is social media** - Is it only social platforms like LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, etc. or even blogs, forums, and other communication apps.
- **What to say and what not to** - Clearly define what everyone can say online and cannot. With crystal clear instructions in place and definite boundaries for professional and personal behavior online, it's easy to take measures during a breach. Don't forget to include what information is secure or confidential and should not be shared online or elsewhere at any cost.
- **Response plan** - When you have a response plan in place, you can take quick action whenever required, without too much dilly-dallying or waiting for approval.
- **Legal compliance** - This section ensures your policy complies with all legal requirements.
- **Consequences** - Define what the consequences will be when someone violates the social media policy.

Pro tip: To ensure the social media policy is relevant to all your employees, including contract and freelance workers, and not just full-timers, **create a short, memorable policy that everyone can quickly scan through** and get a bird's-eye view of the policy.

12

Disciplinary Policy

What is it?

During the lifecycle of a business, sometimes you may face **a situation where employees falter**. It can be a disagreement with team members or missing a deadline. Either way, you must know what action to take.

Purpose

A disciplinary policy helps identify incidents that violate the company policy and puts **a standard procedure in place to handle such instances**. This way, whatever the outcome, it's fair and consistent across the organization.

What behavior constitutes disciplinary action at work?

- Discrimination
- Dishonesty
- Attendance issue
- Inappropriate behavior toward clients or coworkers
- Dress code violation
- Illegal behavior
- Harassment or violence toward coworker
- Misconduct
- Poor performance

What should a disciplinary action policy include?

- **Policy overview** - What falls under this policy and how you will address it
- **The forms of discipline and the steps that will be taken** - Clearly state every step the organization will take to address issues
- **Different steps in the process** - Every form of indiscipline falls under different categories, for instance, tardiness will be step 1, where the employee gets a verbal warning. Whereas, some other major offenses will rank in step 3, which may mean suspension
- **Appeal** - This section talks about how employees can appeal if they believe they weren't treated properly or fairly
- **Final action** - Based on the appeal, what is the final decision you're going to take

Types of disciplinary action

Minor Offense →	Communicate Standard
	Informal Discussion
	Verbal Warning
Moderate Offense →	Written Warning
	Suspension
Serious Offense →	Investigative Suspension
	Dismissal

13

Employment Resignation/ Termination Policy

What is it?

Despite all your retention efforts, **sometimes the working relationships come to an end**. At this point, what are the key points your termination policy and exit procedures should include?

Purpose

The termination policy details how your team and organization can **handle all facets of employee termination or resignation**, so the process flows smoothly.

Typically, there are two types of termination:

Voluntary

- Resignation
- Retirement
- Failure to show for a specified number of days without notice
- Expiration or completion of the contract

Involuntary dismissal

- Discharge for cause
- Discharge without cause

For either forms of termination, one useful component that will help is the **offboarding checklist**.

Employee Offboarding Checklist



Let's not forget exit interviews

While a departing employee may seem like the last person you want to impress, remember, **those who leave are the best form of “advertisement” that your company can invest in.** Although they're not part of your organization, they will still talk about their experience while they were there.

Hence, it only makes sense to **have a pleasant farewell experience for your employees,** so you are seen in a good light. This way, employees will spread good things about your company culture.



14

Business Expense/ Reimbursement Policy

What is it?

Whether it's travel, purchase of office equipment, etc. there are some costs related to the organization that employees bear. Such out-of-pocket **expenses incurred on behalf of the employer are eligible for reimbursement**, as they are business expenses.

Purpose

The business expense or reimbursement policy will outline **when and how an employee will get repaid** for company expenses and the proper procedure for reimbursement.

Employees who spend their own money for work-related items or services must **provide adequate proof of their spending within 30 days** to be eligible for partial or full reimbursement.

Typically, reimbursable expenses are:

- Office supplies
- Conference, education, or training
- Relocation costs
- Local transport
- Business travel and accommodation
- Approved work-related outings like meals or entertainment
- Phone bills

How to file for a reimbursement expense?

Firstly, your manager or the accounts team is responsible for approving reimbursement claims. Here are a few guidelines to follow:

- The reporting manager must approve all expenses
- The receipts or invoices must have the amount and the date of purchase/spend
- It's mandatory to submit all bills if you wish to get reimbursed
- The invoice must be in the company name

Typical reimbursement procedure

- Save all original receipts and invoices
- Get approval from your manager
- Within 30 days, fill out the reimbursement form along with the original receipts and invoices
- Write down any additional notes about expenses, if required
- Send it to the appropriate team
- Wait for the reimbursement

15 Confidentiality Policy

What is it?

Safeguarding the company's confidential information, including customers, partners, vendors, financial information, systems, software, procedures, and technology, is essential. **Employees must use caution and discretion when they use such information.** And such information can be shared with those only who have permission for it.

Purpose

This type of policy outlines **how you expect your employees to treat confidential information**, the specific information they are allowed and prohibited to share within and outside the organization.

What employees should do

- Keep confidential documents secure in the company premises
- Only disclose information that's necessary to authorized personnel
- Control the access by limiting the number of employees who have access to it
- When employees undergo training on onboarding, it's important to tell them about confidential documents and the reason behind it

What employees shouldn't do

- Duplicate confidential files or documents
- Disclose confidential information to anyone outside the company or authorized access
- Use confidential information for personal profit or benefit

Confidentiality measures

- Ask employees to sign NDAs or non-competes
- Encrypt electronic information
- Lock paper documents in a safe place

Non-compete agreement

Getting your employees to **sign a non-compete agreement is an excellent idea**. It should state that they won't use the experience and knowledge that they gain during the time they work for your company to start or help another competing business. For example, the policy can say something like an employee cannot work with a competitor within one year of leaving your organization.

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Alcohol and Drug Policy

What is it?

Alcohol and drugs in the workplace are major factors in accidents, absenteeism, and reduced productivity.

When you're at work, you're required to perform your duty unimpaired by any legal or illegal substances.

Substance abuse includes the possession, use, purchase, transfer, manufacture, or sale of illegal drugs and the unauthorized use of alcohol on company property or company time.

Purpose

It's important to provide a safe, quality-oriented, and productive work environment for all employees. This includes no drugs and alcohol. And clearly stating such facts - what's appropriate and not - helps employees follow rules and regulations.

How can you set up this policy?

- Step 1: Set up a working group - Management, employee representatives, etc. must be a part of this.
- Step 2: What is currently in place?
 - Review current practices
 - Review existing policies and legislation
 - Review staff training, support, and resources
- Step 3: Analyze your needs - what do you want to get out of this drug and alcohol policy? Why is it needed?
- Step 4: Draft policy or amend current policy - discuss issues like educating, intervening, and training your staff

- **Step 5:** Consultation - send the document you draft to others involved to get feedback
- **Step 6:** Make the needed amends and create the final document
- **Step 7:** Dissemination of the policy throughout the workplace
- **Step 8:** Implement the policy and ensure all employees follow it
- **Step 9:** Continuously monitor, evaluate, and update the policies so they remain relevant
- **Step 10:** Time review - in light of different developments, it's important to review in a timely manner



In conclusion

Human resources professionals often play a significant role in **developing and formalizing company policies and procedures**. HR professionals usually have more knowledge of HR laws and ethical practices as well as are present to hold people accountable. Thus, in many cases, managers work to develop policies and procedures with HR input.

After working with a dozen HRs across multiple industries, we've curated this list of essential HR policies. By no means is this exhaustive. This guide will help you get things started. Based on several factors like your employee needs, the size of your company, government rules and regulations, industry-related laws, etc. **you must amend and customize these policies to meet your specific needs**. Don't forget to review, revise or update policies regularly to ensure they continue to comply with government mandates and the needs of the organization.

We hope you find this useful. Don't forget to check out our other resources for more insightful information.

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