



Human Resource Leadership for Improved Profitability

STRATEGIC WORKPLACE SOLUTIONS, LLC

# The Lighthouse Report

MARCH 2008

## Legal Requirement: Safety Report

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires employers to post a summary of the total number of job-related injuries and illnesses that occurred in 2007 using OSHA Form 300A. The summary should *be posted in areas where other required employee notices are usually displayed and remain posted from February 1 to April 30, 2008*. Employers that do not have recordable injuries or illnesses in 2007 are still required to post the summary with

zeros on the total line.

Small businesses with 10 or fewer employees throughout the year are exempt from most of the requirements of the OSHA recordkeeping rules, as are a number of specific industries in the retail, service, finance, insurance and real estate sectors that are classified as low-hazard. Detailed information about OSHA recordkeeping rules can be found at OSHA's website: [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov).

## Getting OSHA Information & Assistance

OSHA offers an extensive website at [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov) that includes a special section devoted to small businesses as well as interactive eTools to help employers and employees address specific hazards and prevent injuries. The OSHA hotline remains open 24 hours a day for fatality and accident reporting during non-business hours – 1-800-321-OSHA.

OSHA has a long-established policy that information inquiries received by the agency regarding safety and health regulations or other safety-related subjects shall not trigger an inspection.

There are a few rare exceptions to the policy, such as the employer notifying OSHA of the presence of an imminent danger or the occurrence of a fatality. However, OSHA policy is to provide assistance to help employers prevent and reduce workplace fatalities, illnesses and injuries.

Free workplace consultations are available in every state to small businesses

that want on-site help establishing safety and health programs and identifying and correcting workplace hazards. In addition, OSHA has a network of more than 70 Compliance Assistance Specialists in local offices available to provide employers and employees with tailored information and training.

OSHA strives to reach all employers and employees, including those who do not speak English as a first language. The agency maintains a Spanish Web page, and Spanish-speaking operators can be reached at the OSHA national call center during business hours. Various publications, training materials and videos are available in Spanish, and OSHA continues to issue new publications. Many regional and area offices also offer information in other languages such as Japanese, Korean and Polish.

Order OSHA posters/publications online:

[www.osha.gov/pls/publications/publication.html](http://www.osha.gov/pls/publications/publication.html)

### FIND THESE LINKS ON OUR WEBSITE:

US Dept. of Labor

EEOC

NC Dept. of Labor

IRS

WNC HRA

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## Meet SWS Team Member Cheryl Johnson

With over 34 years of HR/OD-related leadership experience, Cheryl helps organizations to improve business processes and fully utilize human resources in order to attain their strategic goals. She joined Strategic Workplace Solutions as a Consultant in February 2008.

Prior to retiring from U.S. Department of Justice, she consulted with five assigned business units to manage large change initiatives in support of their strategic plans. In this role, she facilitated business process mapping to identify and streamline operations for information technology conversion initiatives. In addition, she worked with managers to develop a model mentoring program and launch an electronic learning system.

Cheryl has worked with small business, government, and non-profit organizations in the areas of strategic planning, facilitation, dialogue, organization assessment, feedback, and action planning. She has been a faculty member for Strayer University for the

past eleven years, teaching *Introduction to Human Resources, Principles of Management, Organizational Behavior, and Introduction to Business.*



Cheryl earned a Master's Degree in Public Administration from California State University at Haywood and a Master's Degree in Organization Development from Fielding Graduate University-Santa Barbara. She is trained in the transformative mediation model and has worked as a community mediator with the DC Office of Police Complaints and Pathways for Peace youth program. She is currently enrolled in the Leadership Asheville Program.

## Proposed Changes to ADA of Concern to Employers

The ADA Restoration Act would redefine the term "disability" to simply mean "a mental or physical impairment." By doing so, the bill would change the Americans with Disabilities Act to mandate employers to provide accommodations to virtually the entire workforce, including employees who have minor or temporary impairments that do not substantially affect one's daily life, such as headaches and skin irritations. With more covered individuals competing for the same employer resources, the bill would dilute an em-

ployer's ability to provide accommodations to individuals with the most severe disabilities.

In determining whether an individual is covered under the ADA, the legislation would forbid employers from considering the effects of medication or other mitigating measures (such as eyeglasses for near-sighted vision) that an individual uses to manage his or her impairment. This change would effectively strike the ADA's requirement that an impairment must sub-

stantially limit an individual in performing daily activities.

The ADA Restoration Act would take the unprecedented step in employment law of shifting the burden of proof in disability discrimination cases to the employer from the employee.

You can contact your representative to provide input regarding this or any other proposed legislation.

**"The Americans with Disabilities Act applies to employers with at least 15 employees."**

Source: SHRM

# Developing a Results-Oriented Training Program

Have you ever been in a training program and wondered if there was a point? You may have even sat there, calculating the costs and wishing you had spent that money for something that would contribute more directly to the bottom line.

Your professional development programs **should** be aligned with your business strategy so they can help you improve the profitability/stability of your organization. It **is** possible to design or redesign training programs so that they directly contribute your company's success. By following the basic steps of training design, you can help your organization get a better return on its training investment.

Whether you are orienting new employees, helping employees to improve performance deficiencies, or preparing seasoned employees for upcoming changes, you can identify basic competencies (knowledge and skills) that will help these employees to be successful. Some employees come to you fully prepared to meet all work challenges. For the other employees who are willing and able, there is training.

To develop a results-oriented training program, follow these basic steps:

**1. Conduct an Organizational Assessment** (What factors will impact your company's success in the upcoming year—or longer?)

Evaluate your organization's internal and external environments to identify static and changing conditions and how they will impact the work of your company. Review your company's performance indicators and evaluate the results to determine what areas need improvement. You probably already evaluate the attainment of performance goals, but you may not have thought of this information as a key ingredient for your training design.

**2. Conduct an Employee Needs Assessment** (What do your employees need to improve in order to positively impact organizational performance?)

Compare the desired competencies (required knowledge and skills) against your employees' ac-

tual competencies to determine their training needs. Evaluate previous training programs to identify the ones that had the best results and determine what made them successful.

**3. Establish your Professional Development Goals and Create a Plan** (Why should you spend valuable resources taking your employees off of the job?)

Use the information you gathered in steps 1 & 2 to identify your overall professional development goals. These goals should be quantified so that you can measure their attainment. Create a broad plan that identifies the different strategies that your organization will employ to address its professional development needs.

**4. Develop a Training Plan for Each Program** (What approach will best help your employees to learn the needed information and skills?)

The training plan should include the participant objectives. These are the measurable outcomes that will result from participation in the training.

For each major training topic, identify the basic information and/or skills to be learned, the training method(s), the materials/media to be used, and the amount of time needed. Training methods can include presentation, experiential activities, small group discussion, hands-on activities/practice, viewing of a video, etc.

Thorough planning helps you to make the best use of everyone's time and company resources. As part of planning, think about how you will evaluate the success of the training program and create your evaluation/assessment tool.

After planning, of course, comes implementation. Refer to the October Lighthouse Report to learn more about the basic principles of learning.

***"Your professional development programs should be aligned with your business strategy."***



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**The right human resource decision today  
improves your profitability tomorrow.**

### **SWS helps organizations to:**

- Improve individual and organizational performance
- Identify and resolve HR/OD challenges
- Build effective leaders and teams across differences
- Enhance employee relations/communications



## Strategic Workplace Solutions News

SWS continues to offer HR/OD leadership for small business owners and HR leaders across industries. With the addition of two Certified Compensation Professionals (CCP), we are now able to support your compensation projects. We can help you to:

- Create/update job descriptions, align performance management with compensation, and evaluate FLSA classifications (exempt/non-exempt)
- Identify your compensation philosophy, the external organizations with which you compete for HR talent, and your desired compensation position relative to the market
- Identify your benchmark positions, conduct analyses using current market data, and provide a detailed summary (i.e. min/mid/max and/or median) for your compensation planning
- Provide specific recommendations for your compensation structure(s) and employee/executive pay ranges, determine what pay adjustments are needed to meet your desired position in the market, calculate the financial impact of these adjustments, and develop an implementation plan to make the adjustments over a period of time, if needed
- If you have an incentive compensation program, conduct analyses and provide recommendations regarding this structure and the associated pay-outs
- Conduct senior leadership training and prepare employee communication documents