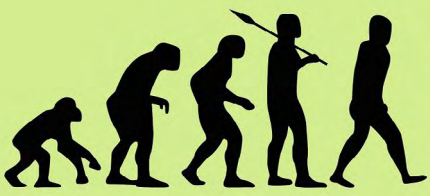
# *Developing an Employee Handbook*

Conversations with *Wandy*

# Table of Contents


Introduction ..... 3
The Employee Handbook..... 3
Information about the handbook.....3
Scope..... 4
Current version..... 4
Authority..... 4
Other operating policy document.....4
General Rules and obligations of employees..... 4
Organization code of conduct.....4
Business Principles..... 4
Employee obligations..... 5
Recruitment and onboarding practises..... 5
Equal employment opportunity.....5
Recruitment process..... 5
Contractual policy.....6
Onboarding practises.....6
Guidelines for organization workplace.....6
Staff performance and learning.....6
Compensation and benefits..... 6
Staff absences..... 7
Harassment and bullying policies.....7
Disciplinary and grievance procedures.....7
Separation..... 8

An employee handbook should at the very minimum touch on the following matters for any organization.

## Introduction

Give an introduction of who you are as an organization. The story of the organization's journey will be useful here. Few pointers include;

- Where it started from
- How long it has been in existence
- What its core business is

## The Employee Handbook

Give the general statement of the organization's right to change and or make amendments to the handbook from time to time.

Provide an avenue for employees who need to seek clarification e.g. line managers or HR office should be the areas questions with relation to the manuals will be directed to.

Explain how the employees will have access to their individual copies of the handbook and how they will acknowledge their understanding. This can be online or through physical signatures.

Should your organization have offsite offices, state where the handbook can be made available for reference.

## Information about the handbook

Give a statement on the use of the handbook. For example, the purpose of the handbook can be to set out all polices and procedures in relation to Human Resources and administration.

## Scope
Explain the scope of the manual for example whether or not it is applicable to all employees.

## Current version
State where the most current version of the handbook will be located.

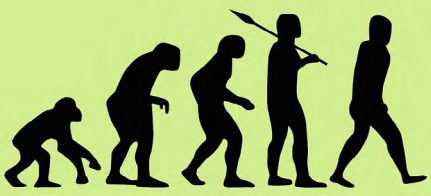
## Authority
Give a statement to show where the manual draws its authority in the organizational governance and leadership.
Give a statement that expressly states who within the organization has the authority of administration and the interpretation of the handbook.

## Other operating policy document
State any other operating policy documents or manuals that should be read together with the Employee Handbook. Specify where the said policy documents and manuals are made available to staff.

# General Rules and obligations of employees

## Organization code of conduct
The organization's code of conduct should be included here in full. The code of conduct sets the tone on what is acceptable conduct within the organization both internally and externally.

## Business Principles
In the event that there are some principles that the organization has that have not been dealt with exhaustively within the code of conduct, those can be stated here.
They include but are not limited to conflict of interest, dealing with the press and other media, contractual authority and or pledging money on behalf of the company.



## Employee obligations

Give a statement of obligation for employee on important matters like upholding the law, confidentiality, handling of gifts and favours, drug and alcohol, smoking, absenteeism and punctuality, appearance and sincerity of declaration of documents submitted to the organization. This list is however not exhaustive.

The principle here is to be clear with what an employee is expected to uphold when it comes to matters raised above.

## Recruitment and onboarding practises

Give an overview of the policy and the areas it regulates.

## Equal employment opportunity

Provide your equal employment opportunity statement. If your organization has a more elaborate policy on this matter, it is recommended to include it here or refer to it.

## Recruitment process

Detail the recruitment process of the organization. It is advisable to make a summary of the following step.

- Vacancy identification and authorisation procedure
- Sourcing for candidates
- Selection process
- Interview process
- Reference checking and document verification
- Offer
- Pre-boarding practises
- Regulation on recruitment of persons related to others within the organization

## Contractual policy

Provide an overall statement on how your organization contracts with its human capital. It is recommended to include the organizations approach to contracting where an individual's age is concerned, the contract types available in the organization and the categories of staff within the organization.

## Onboarding practises

Give an overview of how new employees are received and inculcated into the organization. It is recommended to have the expected outcomes of onboarding practises stated here.

## Guidelines for organization workplace

Provide clear guidelines on how work is organized.
The recommendation is to provide clarity on the following matters,

- Hours of work
- Assigned rest days or procedure for rest days
- Overtime management

## Staff performance and learning

Provide clear guidelines on how performance is managed within the organization. Guidelines on learning and development for staff should be included here.

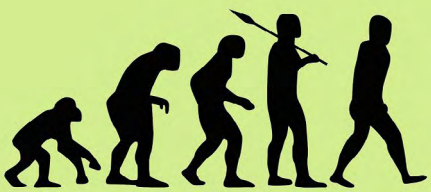
The following areas are important to be addressed.

- Performance management policies and procedures
- Study management policies and procedures
- Staff training and development policies and procedures
- Promotion practises
- Career development practises

## Compensation and benefits

Provide clear guidelines on the following matters that relate to compensation and benefits. Be advised however that this list is not exhaustive.

- Salary
- Tax obligations



- When payment is due
- Itemised pay statement
- Salary review practises
- All allowances within the organization
- Benefits accruing from insurance plans
- Retirement benefits
- Benefits accruing from death and incapacitation of employee

## Staff absences

Provide clear guidelines on the management of all allowable staff absences. This include but are not limited to;

- Leave management (Annual, Parental, Sick leave etc)
- Public and gazetted holidays

## Harassment and bullying policies

Provide a clear guideline on the organizational practises with regards to harassment and bullying. It is advised to include the following areas among the other areas specific to your organization;

- General policy statement
- Definitions of harassment and bullying
- Sexual harassment policy
- General harassment and bullying policy
- Procedures for reporting and dealing with complaints

## Disciplinary and grievance procedures

Provide guidelines on discipline and grievance management within your organization. The following key areas are important to include;

- General policy statement
- Definition of terms
- Purpose of discipline management
- The disciplinary procedure
- Sanctions management (warnings, termination)
- Suspension procedures
- Summary dismissal

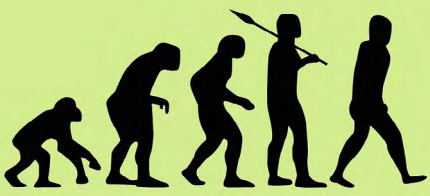
- Appeals procedure
- Purpose of grievance management
- Grievance process

## Separation

Provide clear guidelines on how separation occurs and is managed in your organization. The key separation reasons to be included are as listed below;

- Retirement
- Disability or Medical Grounds
- Death
- Involuntary termination with notice
- Summary dismissal
- Redundancy
- Voluntary separation i.e. resignation
- Expiry of Contract

***It is advisable that an employee handbook concludes with a declaration page that will signify that the employee has read and understood the contents of the handbook.***



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## A Sample guide to

# Developing an Employee Handbook