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Elevating Employee Relations:
Insights from the 2023 Roundtable

Talk about being in the room where it happened. We recently gathered with 100 smart, savvy ER professionals for our 2023 ER Roundtable in Nashville to discuss exactly how they elevate the Employee Relations function. Our biggest take away? This community is a treasure trove of insights. Our biggest regret? We couldn't squeeze everyone into the room. **Here's a glimpse of practical insights from three of our most popular sessions.**

KEY LEADERS SHAPING EMPLOYEE RELATIONS AT THIS YEAR'S ROUNDTABLE

Qualcomm   DOORDASH   ADP   abbvie   Adobe

KPMG   sanofi   HERSHEY THE HERSHEY COMPANY   indeed   KeyBank

1   Transform the Profile of Employee Relations: How To Build, Market and Promote Your Internal Brand

The savviest ER teams are establishing their brand by clearly stating their purpose, demystifying their processes and focusing on excellent communication. They are also clearly defining their scope, so everyone understands what they do. These insights have helped employees and business leaders understand the value of ER on company culture and its impact on employee experience.

Establish your presence and build credibility. Be known for getting things done. Securing a few quick wins, such as an impactful training session, is a great way to do this.

Identify ways to measure success. It was unanimous. If you can measure success, you can prove value. Clearly define what success looks like, then make sure you know what metrics you need to track in order to measure it. You can use measured outcomes to continually drive processes.

Clearly define your scope. Make sure your business partners understand ER's responsibilities, boundaries and handoff points to HR. This starts with a defined mission and vision within your team and extends to clear communications to business partners through resources such as RACI's, training, playbooks and frequent meetings.

2 The Art of Meaningful Employee Relations Insights

When it comes to utilizing employee relations data, the best teams know that storytelling and simplicity reign supreme. Simplifying their analytics approach also means making what they share hyper relevant to their multiple audiences. The data stories they share with executives and business partners look different than the stories they share with managers and employees.

Establish a global baseline. Settle on a set of metrics. It streamlines the reporting process and helps set data expectations across the business - from HRBPs to leadership. Ultimately this will increase their understanding and lead to more meaningful conversations about what the data means and how success can be replicated.

Make ER data dashboard friendly. Monthly, quarterly and year to date dashboards help ER run like other businesses in the organization. Some suggested dashboard items included litigation hot spots, cases per associate, response time and operations health.

Use forecasting projections. Think about sales forecasting, but with an ER lens to project future cases based on current cases. Feed the projection assumptions with metrics to predict successes, opportunities and the consequences of poor case outcomes.

Simplify the data. In this case less is more. Use data to tell relatable stories that demonstrate what the issues are, what you're doing about them and the value ER brings to the organization.

3 Adapting Employee Relations Processes in 2024: Mental Health

Organizations everywhere are experiencing a significant uptick in mental health concerns. Whether mental health issues show up after a bad performance review or surface during an accommodation request, it's clear that ER will have to find new ways to address and support mental health at work - even on a limited budget. The resounding feedback we heard was that addressing these concerns requires dedication, resources, headcount and commitment.

Think ally over counselor. Most ER pros are not mental health professionals. Partner with your EAP to create and pilot mental health first aid programs - then refer them often.

Empower employees. The first signs of distress are often caught by coworkers. Offer employees mental health training programs so they can look out for one another. Make sure to educate them on how/who to ask for help.

Have an emergency plan. One of the best ideas we heard was the Blue Envelope Program. It provides physical information (what to do, where to go, who to call) in a blue envelope so that if or when an employee expresses suicidal information or actions, all the information is at your fingertips.

Get your business case started. Most budgets don't have a line item for a mental health professional. Yet for 67% of the organizations we surveyed, mental health issues were the most significant driver of increased case volumes in 2022 (another 15% indicated they just didn't know.) It's well past time to start tracking mental health related data to support staffing needs.
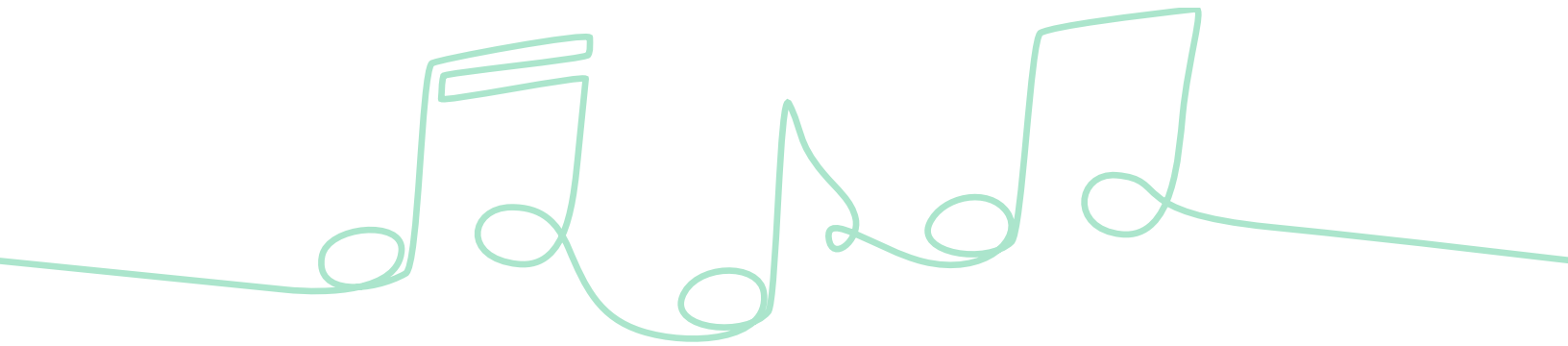
Elevate your function.

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While you can't prevent every employee relations issue, you can change how you respond. HR Acuity is the only technology platform specifically built for employee relations and investigations management. HR Acuity's SaaS technology empowers you with built-in intelligence, templates and reporting so you can conduct best practice, fair investigations; uncover trends and patterns through forward-looking data and analytics; and provide trusted, consistent experiences for your people.

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