



The Lynx Link

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Employer Lynx, Inc.

Private Investigation
Pre-Employment Screening

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Holidays Noted

For your convenience, we have listed the holidays in 2005 that we will be closed.

- November 11th - Veterans' Day
- November 24th & 25th - Thanksgiving
- December 25th - Christmas
- And to start the new year of 2006...
- January 2nd - New Years

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Background checking is our only business.

The Holiday Season is Here & Seasonal Hiring is On

There are about 50 days left before Christmas. That means you had better stop looking and start hiring that seasonal help. Soon, holiday shoppers will be out in force, and they'll be expecting prompt and courteous service. Will you hire the right employees for both your operation and customers? If you prepare in advance and take advantage of pre-employment screening, it can help you make the right choices.

Your Hiring Tools

Do you have all the tools in place to start hiring now? Do you know what questions you can legally ask? Have you protected yourself by creating employee manuals that outline what you expect of an employee and what they can expect of you?

The first step to take is to define what you want in an employee. What kind of personality best suits your company culture? If your store wants to attract college students, that requires one type, while a store trying to appeal to moms and dads of small children will have a different set of requirements.

Do you have a policy manual and employee handbook in place? Yes, this is a must for even the seasonal employee. It doesn't matter whether

an employee works 10 hours a week or 40, the company handbook protects you. That, along with pre-employment screening, shows that you've done due diligence should a problem occur.

To avoid certain pitfalls in Nevada, policies should be written in clear, straightforward language that doesn't constitute a contract between the employee and the employer that will alter the at-will status of Nevada law. Employers must have each employee sign an acknowledgement that they received the policies and handbook and clearly understand them. (Employers must keep this information in the employee file and dispose of it properly when it is time to delete the file.)

Does He or She Check Out?

Once you've determined the personality needs of your store environment, assessed the practical needs of the position—good customer relations, using a cash register, self-motivated, etc.—prepared your policies and handbook and have your job descriptions in place, you can start the search. Whether you advertise in the newspaper, in your store or through the Internet, the end result is that you

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Seasonal Hiring

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will have to determine if a person fills the needs of your company.

You've done all the above and have several candidates to fill your positions. Now it's on to the next step of due diligence—checking references.

Checking references of prospective new hires can feel like getting caught in a spider web. If you don't make the right move, it could hurt your business. Using a prescreening company is one of the tools available to you to ease the job of seasonal hiring.

A company's best interest is served when it obtains a comprehensive look at a potential employee's background. Pre-employment

screening is the step that helps you verify the information on the application. Do you know what questions you can legally ask? Do you ask all the questions you should ask? Do you know what kind of permission you need from the applicant to conduct a background check? A pre-screening company's only business is helping you find the most qualified applicants for the jobs you're offering, and they do know the right questions to ask. Companies like Employer Lynx have a full menu of pre-screening products for you to choose from and are on-hand to

guide you through the pre-screening process that will best suit your needs.

It's estimated that employee theft and dishonesty contributes to between a \$60 and \$120 billion loss for businesses every year. Statistics show that 10 to 20 percent of applicants lie on their applications and 8.3 percent of those screened have a criminal history.

Yes, it's time to hire those seasonal employees. Help make the holiday season successful for both your customers and your company. Hire the best employees you can using all the tools available to you.



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Questions for the staff are invited.

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Destroying Personnel Documents

Throwing out documents may seem like a great way to find some space in those filing cabinets, but there are laws that not only require that you shred some documents but that you shred them in a particular way.

Specific document destruction rules for employers went into effect on June 1, 2005, under the Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act of 2003 (FACTA). It requires that any person or company that "maintains or otherwise possesses consumer information or any compilation of consumer information, derived from consumer reports for a business purpose" dispose of the documents by "taking reasonable measures to protect against unauthorized access to or use of the information in connection with its disposal."

So how does FACTA apply to you? If you've received any information about a potential employee through a credit report, you're affected. And all forms of the document must be destroyed, not just thrown into the trashcan. Most businesses store employees' personal information in a number of formats, including paper, CDs, and on the computer. All must be shredded or disposed of so that the information cannot be retrieved. For instance, just throwing a document on the computer into the trash and hitting the delete button doesn't erase the information from the hard drive.

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Handling Conflict in the Workplace

By Peggy Morrow

Why can't everybody get along? Why does there have to be such conflict between people in the workplace? I can't answer that question, but I do know that there is a lot of conflict. There is that coworker who never offers to help no matter how busy you are, the one who comes in late all the time leaving you to do your work and his too, or the colleague who is forever borrowing stuff out of your desk or hogs the copy machine all the time.

I'm sure you have some additions. Conflict is a fact of life in the workplace of today. Only if the people went away would the conflict do likewise. There are some things you can do, though. And they all involve communicating with the person about his or her behavior. Here are a few tips to help you do that.

First of all, always preserve dignity and self-respect. Concentrate on the issues involved, not personalities. If the problem is that they are always late with deadlines, don't tell them they are unorganized or lazy. Those are personality issues. Concentrate on finding out why they are late for deadlines, and then help them to make an action plan to get better.

Keep the conflict private. Don't complain to everyone in the office. You will gain a reputation as a complainer and whiner.

Decide whether you have a misunderstanding or a true

disagreement. Determine whether the problem you are facing would persist no matter how well you understand each other. Emphasize that you are presenting your perception of the problem. Be as specific as possible in the facts of the situation.

Listen; really listen. Don't just wait for your turn to talk. Remember, you don't have to accept what is being said, but do listen to it. You will learn more about the person, and that will help you to resolve the conflict. Clarify what is being said through asking questions and paraphrasing. Be sure that you are not adding any meaning that is not there. Probe for what is being communicated through body language or the avoidance of important issues.

Don't get angry or defensive. Remain calm no matter how difficult the other person may become about the situation. Remember that everyone feels justification for his or her position. Don't waste time and frustrate yourself by thinking, "How could this person be so irresponsible?"

When the other person says something that makes you angry, don't reply immediately. Pause, and in that pause do two things: don't say anything, and ask yourself, "If I say what I'm planning to say, how will this person respond?" Remember that



he who angers you, conquers you.

You cannot control someone else's behavior, but you can control your reaction to that behavior. Learn to keep yourself focused on your objective: constructive resolution of the conflict.

Communicate your position clearly and thoroughly. Let the other person go first; it will put you at an advantage. As you state your position, look for evidence that you are being listened to and understood. People who are upset or are being confronted don't usually listen well. Describe how the problem is affecting performance of the organization or the person.

Discuss the present. Don't talk about all the things they have done in the past. That is dumping. Highlight what they are doing now. It keeps the conversation on a more focused plane. You can change the present not the past.

Peggy Morrow, CSP, is a professional speaker and seminar leader. To have her work with your group, call 281-280-8190 or send an email to peggy@peggymorrow.com.

Final Thoughts

Destroying Personnel Documents

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FACTA rules apply to all businesses and anyone who acts as an employer. You may have hundreds of employees in your business or one nanny or yardman working at your home. The law still applies.

The health industry has yet another set of rules to deal with regarding personal information. The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1966 (HIPAA) spells out that health care providers, health plans and health care clearinghouses must have “reasonable and appropriate, technical and physical safeguards” in place to protect patient information.

The Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act (GLB), which affects check-cashing businesses, banks, insurance companies,

real estate appraisers, tax preparers, accountants and more, also requires that such businesses protect their customers’ information by properly storing and disposing of any information that the company has obtained.

Businesses must also take into account exactly what information they can and must destroy and how long they must keep information before eliminating it. Find out more information on how these laws affect your business by going to these websites:

FACTA – Federal Trade Commission, <http://www.ftc.gov>

GLB – Federal Trade Commission, www.ftc.gov/privacy

HIPAA – Human and Health Services, www.hhs.gov/ocr/hipaa

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