

HR ADVISOR

IN-TRAY EXERCISE

TASK:

You work as an HR Advisor as part of a busy HR team. It is 9.00am on Monday morning and you have just returned from 2 weeks holiday. You forgot to put your out of office alert on and as a result, you have 75 unopened e-mails (10 of which have a high priority flag). Your manager has popped into the office and said he wants to see you in 2 hours' time to go through the sickness statistics for a 'difficult' department which he needs to go out ready for a meeting next week. You can see from his diary that after today he is out of the office for the rest of the week. On top of this, you have a few items left to conclude on your to do list from prior to your holiday and several messages on your voicemail.

Taking account of the items listed below alongside the points above;

- What order of priority will you give the 10 actions;
- Why have you chosen the priority order;
- What are your thoughts/ solution/escalation for each item;

The 10 flagged Items (in no particular order)

1. Frank from IT has emailed you to say that he and his partner got engaged on Saturday. He tells you that they will be celebrating at the Duck and Feather on Friday and hopes that you will be able to join them at about 5.30 after work for a few drinks and then to go on for a meal. Frank says that he will need to book numbers at the restaurant, so can you let him know whether you will be able to attend.
2. Sandra in Catering is a part-time employee, she has contacted you complaining about her increased workload. Sandra says this is because her colleague, Sue has gone off sick again (this is the fourth occasion of absence in two months) and now Sandra's manager is expecting her to cover both posts in her normal hours. Sandra says she is at the end of her tether and wants to speak to someone in HR. She also says that she does not want you to tell her manager that she has contacted you.
3. One of the Library Managers, Avril has advised you that one of her most highly valued members of staff, John has sent her a letter saying that he is reluctantly having to resign and is unable to work his notice. John has told Avril that this is because he is exhausted from struggling to look after his elderly father alongside his full-time job in the library.
4. A written complaint has arrived from Glenn the cleaner. The date on the letter is nearly two weeks old. Glenn says he has been spoken to rudely by one particular member of Academic staff, on three separate occasions. You know that this particular Academic (Professor Stevenson) has a reputation for being 'testy' but this is the first time you have been made aware of Glenn's particular issue. Glenn says he is upset and is requesting to have an urgent meeting with someone to discuss his concerns.
5. HR Services have advised you that Glenn the cleaner, has today provided a fitnote for one month off work with stress.

6. You missed the fortnightly HR team meeting last week because of your holiday. There have been lots of recent internal changes in work practices and you are unsure how these will impact you.
7. You have been working with Marcia a manager for Academic Administration on reasons for poor sickness levels in her department. Marcia is due to give a talk about it to senior managers in 2 weeks' time after she returns from a conference. The presentation notes are still in draft form and Marcia has asked you to 'jazz them up' by adding in some sickness stats.
8. Darren a retail manager has asked for advice on a flexible working request he has received by post. Darren says he didn't realise that the letter had been in his pigeon hole for nearly 3 weeks and has only just opened it. The member of staff making the request, Janine is currently on maternity leave.
9. Your favourite colleague, Rebecca is retiring and having a cake and coffee leaving get-together this morning at 11.00am.
10. Richard, an Academic Manager is due to complete a final probation review tomorrow with one of his staff members, Veronica. Richard has noted in his email to you that Rebecca is doing really well in her work and is really well liked by students, but he has noticed she is often late to work in the mornings. He said he has now heard in the staff canteen that she went home early last Friday afternoon. Richard says he has always overlooked lateness by his team but is incensed she left early and now he is intending to 'bring everything up' with Veronica and unless she gives him a 'good excuse' he will be extending her probation.