The Scary Bits… Human Resources

Owner’s Retreat, Heartland Fall Forum 2025

The Rundown

Objectives

During this session we will cover three main items under the Human Resource branch.

1. Employee Manual
2. Performance Reviews
3. Developing Leadership

Style

Our time today will be split into three sections, as to give each area its moment to resonate.

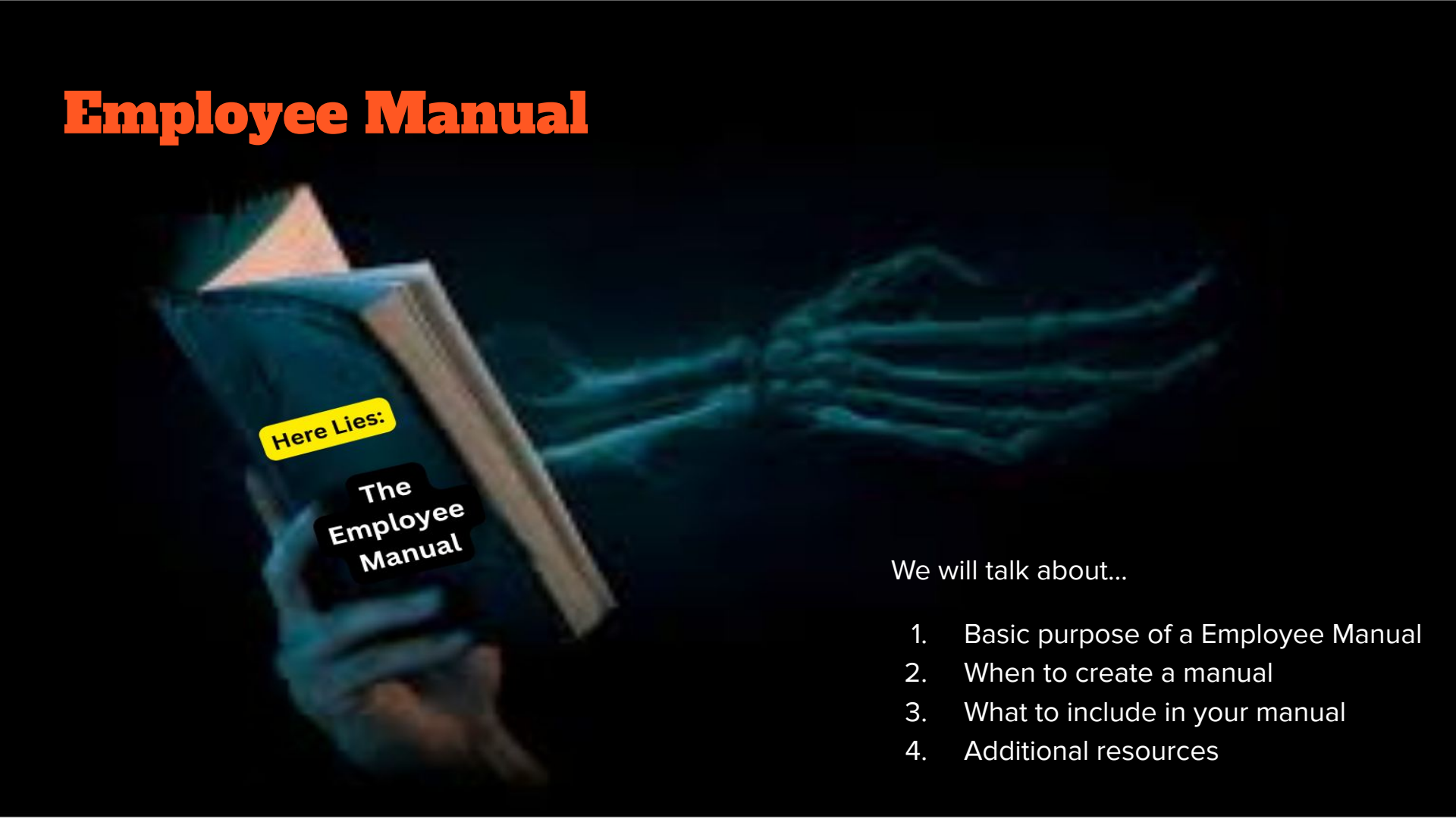
We'll begin with our offering on the subject and end with your questions for that area. You can think of it as three mini Q&As instead of having you wait until the end to talk about everything at once. So, as we go along please jot down your questions for us to answer.

The PARANORMAL

AKA...

1. EMPLOYEE MANUALS/HANDBOOKS

Employee Manual



We will talk about...

1. Basic purpose of a Employee Manual
2. When to create a manual
3. What to include in your manual
4. Additional resources

Employee Manual

Why An Employee Manual?

An Employee Manual is a resource to clarify and make explicit the items you intend to be standard/ default– from your values to your procedures such as hiring, pay scale, emergency plans.

Employee Manual: The Basics

Your handbook is more understood when information is organized and categorized together, thematically.

Table of Contents

Allows for your manual to be a genuine resource due to it's reference ability

Should include section headings and page numbers

Store Profile Section

Includes store history, purpose or vision statement, mission statement, values, etc.

Policy Section

The area where you actually start impacting your culture from the top down (for example Maternity Leave)

Broader ideas/items that operates as guidelines that are anticipated to be protected

Procedure Section

Things that are actionized. Operational items/ step-by-step instructions (SoPs). For example "How to Close the Cash Wrap at the end of a shift"

The "If you disappeared tomorrow, this is how I want things to be done" section.

Employee Manual: The Musts

Your handbook protects your organization by providing a paper trail of all items for which you must be in compliance with; and by outlining any processes that require a systemic response.

- Hiring and Firing process
- Pay process
  - Both what model of payment your organization follows (minimum wage, living wage, etc.) and what metrics/evaluations items will be considered when pay is adjusted (via raise and pay cut)
- Conflict Resolution process
  - This is often a “Disciplinary section”, however there are different forms of conflict and different levels of escalation should have an appropriate response for that degree of conflict.
  - What type of conflict will require a sit down conversation, what type of conflict requires a verbal warning, what type of conflict is an immediate fireable offense, etc.
- Team Structure/ Chain of Command/ Organization Chart
  - Make sure your handbook is clear regarding what role reports to what role, your decision making process regarding *executive* decisions, who to turn to for what, etc.
- Job Descriptions/ Role Expectations

Don’t forget to timestamp your updates

This could be a note in your footer stating: *updated: 10/6/25*

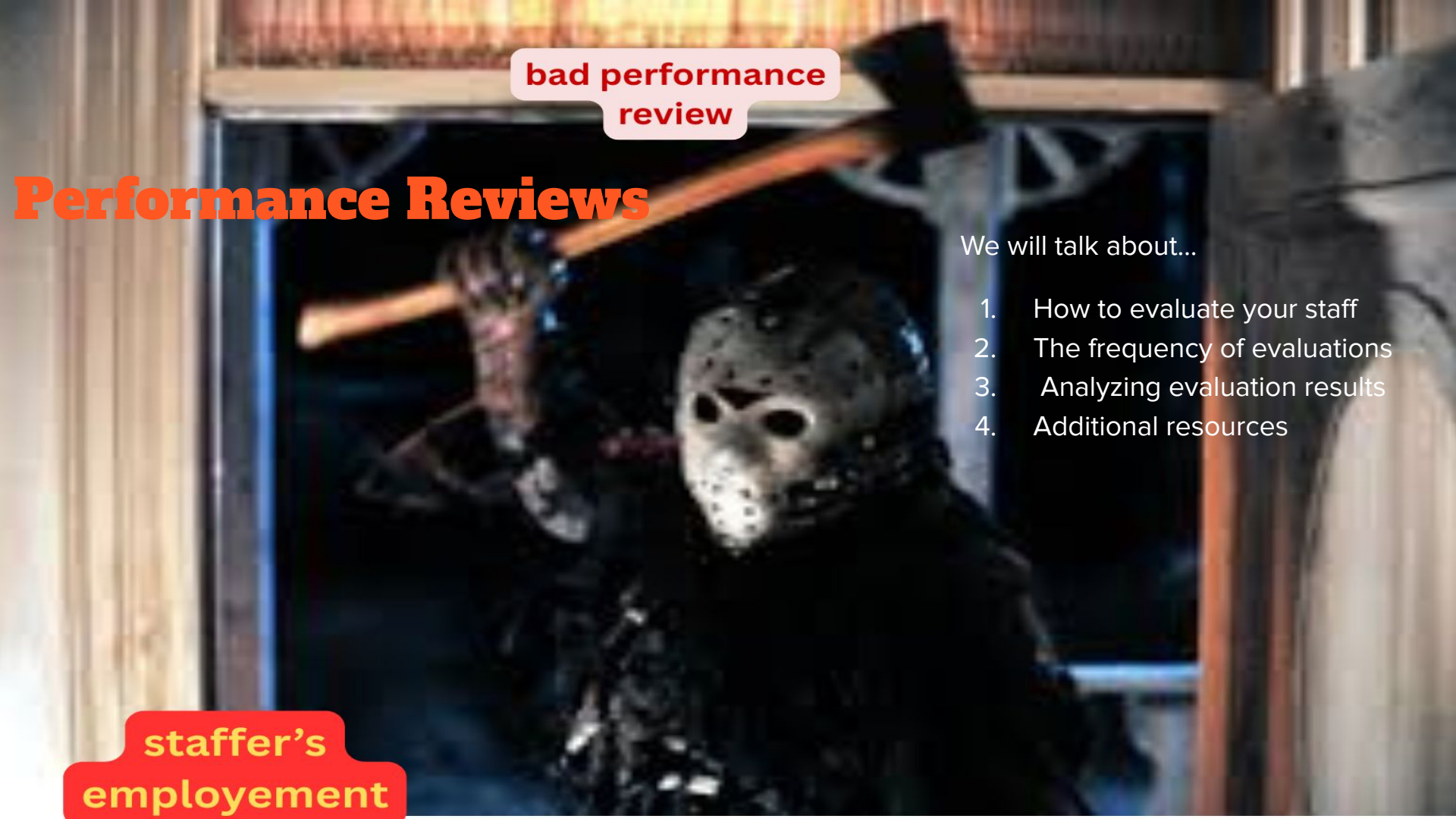
Everytime something is changed, you want to change the *updated* date. This will help you keep track of evolutions of your handbook; as well as ensure a higher probability of you having one main working document instead of several existing versions.

Questions?

The SLASHER

AKA...

2. PERFORMANCE REVIEWS



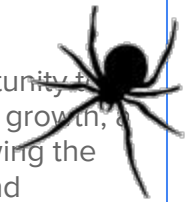
Performance Reviews

We will talk about...

1. How to evaluate your staff
2. The frequency of evaluations
3. Analyzing evaluation results
4. Additional resources

Performance Reviews

Purpose of Evaluations



- At its strongest, an evaluation is a great opportunity to provide feedback, strengthen/identify areas of growth, a chance to check-in and see how folks are viewing the work, to identify development opportunities and interests.
- At its least productive, an evaluation is a download of ways you would “fix” the employee.

What Evaluations Are and Are Not

- … Are conversations! Time should be spent exchanging input and output. It's a learning opportunity for both parties, if you check your ego and power at the door.
- … Are NOT an opportunity for you to “roast” or “finally say” things you’ve been wanting to say to an employee. YOU ARE A LEADER– YOU DON’T GET TO HOLD GRUDGES. If its performance based you also shouldn’t be holding feedback until a one-off meeting

Types of Evaluations

- Employer lead (one direction)
- Employer and employee lead (360)

Methods of Evaluations

- Grade Scale
- Narrative-based

Most Important Elements of Evaluations

Past → What observations are we centering

- Make sure you spend time reviewing the staffer's performance over the designated period of time; praising/highlighting what they've thrived at and identifying areas for improvement using specific examples.

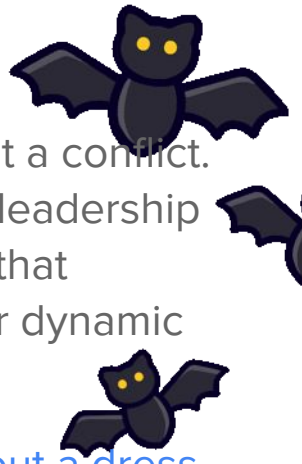
Present → Communication that builds trust

- After providing your observations, make sure to check-in with the staffer and see what sense they are making of the feedback. Do they agree with your observations, is there context that you are missing, etc.
- Identify goals. Additionally, make sure you ask the staffer what resources they feel they will need in order to make progress on identified goals.

Future → A view forward for future success

- **(1)** Identify goalposts for every goal set, **(2)** identify a check-in point for goal progress, and **(3)** identify what metric you will use to track progress ("How will be know progress has happened?"). (Yes, you do need to identify all three)

Controlling for Bias aka...
Preference vs. Standard



It is common to not like or not *meld* with every person you work with. This is not a conflict. However, when you are someone in power/ positions of authority/ positions of leadership you have to use caution transferring your personal preferences into standards that ultimately have nothing to do with satisfying the job requirements. In this power dynamic your personal preference is literally jeopardizing someone's livelihood.

For example: You pride yourself on *modesty*. You are a secular bookstore without a dress code. A staffer's shirt length has nothing to do with shelving, processing returns, or recommending a book. You adding to the performance review a metric judging clothing is inappropriate and a blatant bias.

Your metrics should be decided by what skills are needed to fulfill the role. Additionally, if the metric cannot be applied across personnel, you probably have a bias metric.

Questions?

The DARK FANTASY

AKA...

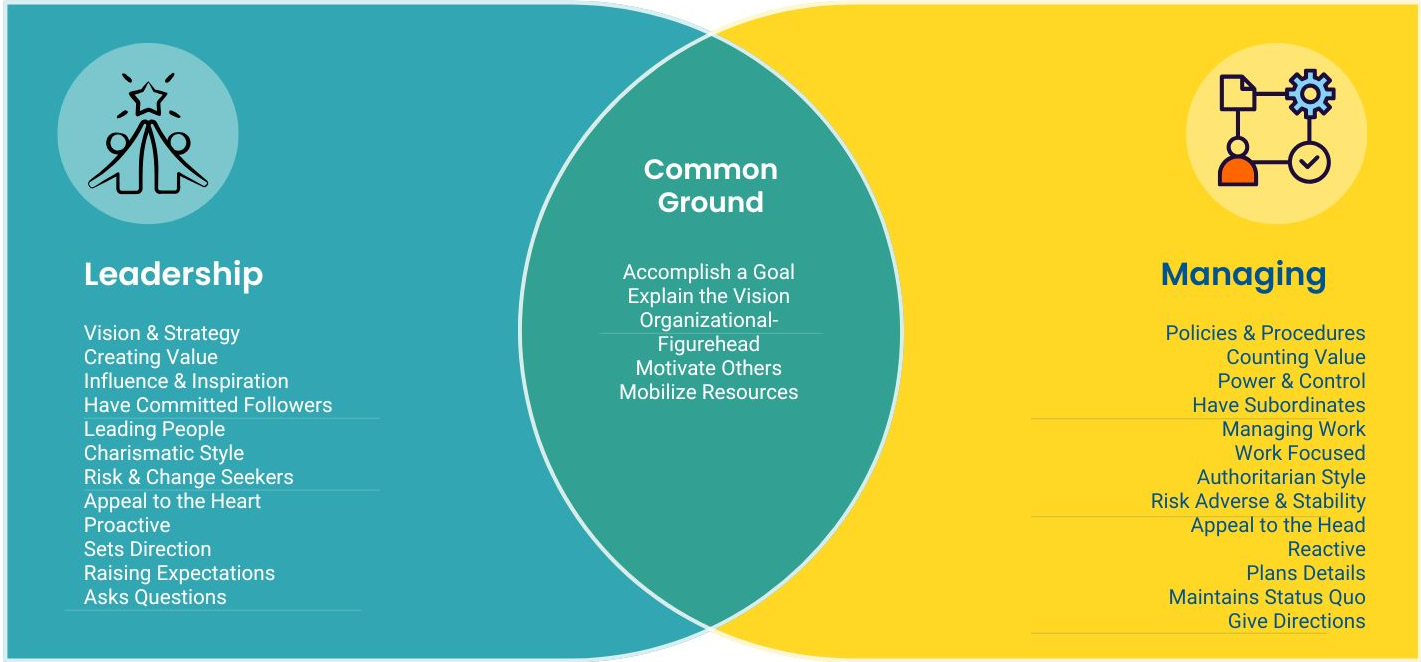
3. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Developing Leadership

We will talk about…

1. The difference between Managing and Leading
2. How to adapt a working framework of Leadership
3. How to implement practices that lead to staff leadership development
4. Conflict of Interest

Leading vs. Managing



Styles of Leadership

The six styles (according to Daniel Goleman's *Leadership that Gets Results*):

1. **Coercive**: Demands immediate compliance
    a. phrase: "**Do what I tell you.**"
    b. Works in crises but can stifle creativity.
2. **Authoritative (also known as "Visionary")**: Mobilizes people toward a vision
    a. phrase: "**Come with me.**"
    b. Inspires vision and direction.
3. **Affiliative**: Creates harmony and builds strong emotional bonds
    a. phrase: "**People come first.**"
    b. Builds harmony and teamwork.
1. **Democratic**: Forges consensus through participation
    a. phrase: "**What do you think?**"
    b. Encourages collaboration and buy-in.
2. **Pacesetting**: Sets high standards for performance
    a. phrase: "**Do as I do, now.**"
    b. Sets high standards but can overwhelm teams.
3. **Coaching**: Develops people for the future
    a. phrase: "**Try this.**"
    b. Focuses on developing individuals.

Managing is making your leadership style your personality (fixed).

Leading is taking the leadership styles and using them as tools and tactics– knowing when to pick one up and put it down.

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Questions?

El Fin.

Muahahaha