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## Why an Employee Handbook?

What is an employee handbook? An employee handbook or manual defines the employer's standards paving the way for uniform and consistent treatment of employees on a long-term basis. In other words, it helps employers develop uniform employment policies.

The creation of a handbook, the hallmark of good employee relations, focuses on employer's intention to adopting across-the-board standards or employment policies. It is considered as a springboard of sophisticated human resources function.

A manual is the employer's tool to inform the workforce of the employment policies or standards. It comes in handy for the employer to note down what he expects from the employees in a format that is easily understandable, especially when there is no time to orient the newly hired.

Once the handbook is with the employees, it establishes a common understanding on performance standards and workplace behavior between them and the employer. The main purpose of a handbook or manual is to establish such an understanding. Lack of such an understanding often leads to the breakdown of employer-employee relations.

Very often disputes between the employer and employees crop up because of misunderstanding or not understanding the terms and conditions of employment and the respective obligations leading to law suits. Many a time employers are confronted with discrimination cases in the absence of a handbook.

Well-drafted manual forecloses such wasteful and time consuming law suits which are neither beneficial to the employer nor to the employees. They usually vitiate the cordial relations between the employer and employees. All these risks can be avoided by consistent application of a clear and straight forward manual.

Thus an employee handbook is useful in establishing uniform well-defined standards, creating a workable tool for disseminating the employer's standards, having a common plank of understanding, throwing light on the employer's expectations and reducing the risk of law suits.