

# THE HRTMS NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2018



## A WALK TOWARDS HOPE, ONE STEP AT A TIME

A few weeks ago, HRTMS participated in the Walk For Hope, an annual walk that helps fund life-saving research for the treatment of mental illnesses like PTSD, depression, dementia, and anxiety disorders. Like all of us, each member of our team has been affected by mental illness. We walked that day for our spouses, our children, our friends, and even ourselves who face every day with uncertainty but hope for a better tomorrow.

Before joining HRTMS, the subject of mental illness and the promotion of mental health was never really a topic spoken of at former workplaces. If anything, it was implied that you were not to talk about your mental health because your insurance rates

### IN THIS ISSUE

**A WALK TOWARDS HOPE, ONE STEP AT A TIME** 1-4

**QUICK TIP** 5

**WHAT'S NEW IN FEATURES** 5

**A SUCCESS STORY** 6-7

**UPCOMING EVENTS** 7

### WE'RE ON THE MOVE!

After December 15<sup>th</sup>, please send all mailed correspondence to our new home at:

5171 Glenwood Avenue  
Suite 105  
Raleigh, NC 27612



*All other methods of contact remain the same*

## A WALK TOWARDS HOPE, ONE STEP AT A TIME (continued)

would increase (not sure if this was actually true or not) or your employer would question your work and your employment. You were to deal with your illness silently, brushing off bad days as being sick or in a bad mood. Today, companies are becoming wise to that fact that a larger percentage of their workforce faces mental health issues, either personally or tangentially, at some point in their lifetime. According to statistics from the World Health Organization (WHO), that's one out of every four of us. Because we spend so much of our lives in the office, it's critical for employers to understand and support their employees. Offering services and educating yourself about mental illness is not only the right thing to do, but it also helps maintain production and profitability. Depression and anxiety, for example, is estimated to cost the global economy \$1 trillion per year in lost productivity. According to WHO, workplaces that promote mental health and support employees with mental disorders are more likely to reduce absenteeism, increase productivity and benefit from associated economic gains. As we learn more about mental illness and

its effect in the workplace, companies are beginning to implement programs that positively impact the mental health of their employees.

### BENEFITS

Although the Mental Health Parity And Addiction Equity Act (MHPAEA) and the Affordable Healthcare Act have helped equalize care by requiring Insurers to cover mental health and substance abuse treatment as they would any physical condition, it does not mean there aren't still barriers for employees seeking treatment. According to an article by NPR, Milliman, a risk management and health care consulting company, found that mental health services were four to six times more likely to be out-of-network when compared to medical or surgical care. Before choosing or renewing your company's medical plan this year, verify that employees can access numerous providers in-network.

Another benefit to consider is offering a Health Savings Account (HSA), particularly if your company has a high deductible plan. Employees with high deductible healthcare plans tend to not see the value in using their insurance to pay for mental health



## A WALK TOWARDS HOPE, ONE STEP AT A TIME (continued)

services. Instead they would rather forgo treatment or counseling and reserve their out-of-pocket expenses for major hospitalization or planned procedures. They might be more inclined to use their benefits if they had funds readily available to them through their HSA accounts.

More and more companies are also adding wellness to their benefits portfolio. Proper diet, exercise and relaxation techniques are all proven to help promote good mental health. Offering gym membership discounts, nutrition counseling, or even massage therapy can be highly beneficial and can be a great perk for employees.

### COMMUNICATION

A benefits package is only as good as its promotion. All too often we deem a program unsuccessful when in fact, the real culprit was the communication strategy. Set up an employee portal where employees can go to learn about and view available benefits. Provide and market lunch-and-learn events where wellness vendors can come to share information about their services. And make sure managers are aware of and share with their staff where or whom they can go to for more information.

### ENVIRONMENT

Work-related stress can affect anyone, but it can be paralyzing for those living with a mental health condition. There are, however, a number of things you can do to help alleviate stressors in your work environment. Begin by observing your culture and surroundings. How do employees react to common stressors and how does management handle those reactions? Does your company culture advance or hinder a positive work environment? Is management equipped with the knowledge and tools needed to support all employees, especially distressed employees? Fostering a positive workplace that values openness, acceptance,



understanding and compassion can go a long way. An inclusive and stigma-free environment can boost morale, productivity, overall well-being, and even company branding.

### ADVOCACY

Often, those challenged by mental illness feel alone and do not know where they can turn for support. Offer seminars or invite speakers to share their stories of how they maintain their mental health. Hearing from those who find success and lead productive, fulfilling lives while challenged with a mental illness, can show employees that they can thrive with the right support. Establish an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) that can provide direct access to confidential professionals who can assist employees with any area of concern that may be causing them distress. EAP team members can direct an employee to counseling sessions in their area or refer them to short-



### *A WALK TOWARDS HOPE, ONE STEP AT A TIME (continued)*

term treatment programs. Train managers on how to handle situations with compassion and where they can direct employees for help. Also, it is a good idea to have at least one individual trained in intervention coaching. This person, usually someone in HR, should make it known that if an employee needs to speak about a matter privately, he/she can come to them during established office hours.

### ACCOMMODATIONS

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other nondiscrimination laws, most employers must provide "reasonable accommodations" to qualified employees with disabilities. Most employers are familiar with different accommodations for physical and communication disabilities but are only recently becoming more versed on accommodations that can be made for those with a mental illness. Many of these employees can still perform the essential functions of a job with a bit of tweaking. Modifications may include: a flexible workplace or work hours, frequent breaks, job coaching, a private or enclosed workspace, allowing employees to listen to music via a headset, a desk near a window with access to natural light, advanced notice of deadlines, segmenting large projects into more manageable tasks, and visual project progression timelines. And of course, make sure employees are aware of how they can request an accommodation.

I've participated in charity walks before, but this one affected me deeply. To see thousands of people walk together to support a cause that many still shy away from, made my heart full. The stigma of mental illness is slowly subsiding; and my hope is that one day, all workplaces will be proactive about the mental health of its employees. By participating in this walk, HRTMS is optimistic that our involvement will encourage other organizations to join the fight, or at least, show the importance of acknowledging mental illness.

### RESOURCES

[www.thebalancecareers.com](http://www.thebalancecareers.com), [www.who.int](http://www.who.int), [www.cms.gov](http://www.cms.gov), [www.npr.org](http://www.npr.org), [www.dol.gov](http://www.dol.gov)



## QUICK TIP

### Using Job Description Token Wizard

Job Description Token Wizard is a tool that allows you to generate tagged text to reference various types of fields. The Token Wizard is the strongest tool for administrators to learn how to use to be able to work independently in the system because it can be used to pull information into column configurations, filters, formula boxes, and anywhere else that you may need to tailor displays or data outputs.

This article focuses on the first screen that displays when you open the Job Description Token Wizard, and how to choose the appropriate type of token to match your intended purpose. For this example, let's assume that we want to create an export that would pull a Job Title, Job Summary, and Location. We can use the Job Description Tagged Text Token Wizard to do so. Again, the Token Wizard is available in many areas throughout the tool but for this example, we arrive at it by going to **Administration Functions (or Administration Tools) > Job Description Named Expressions > Tagged Text > Token Wizard**.

[Click here](#) to read the rest of the article.

# WHAT'S NEW IN FEATURES

## EMPLOYEE JOB DESCRIPTION ACKNOWLEDGMENTS ENHANCEMENT

Automatically create an employee Job Description Acknowledgement workflow when a change is detected for an employee record - new employees are added, employees change their managers, or if existing employees change jobs.

## NEW HOME PAGE LAYOUT

JDXpert home page icons can be grouped under user-defined headings, such as "Tasks" and "My Information". This makes the user-experience easier to understand and icons are in predictable locations on the screen.

## NEW USER INTERFACE THEMES

You can now choose one of the JDXpert-inspired themes: Vista\_Blue\_JDX and Vista\_Grey\_JDX. These themes provide a new modern, crisp user-interface experience and may be more compatible with your corporate colors.

To view other recently added features, please [click here](#).

For more information about new features implementation, please contact your Customer Success Manager, Jen Ianniello at [jmianniello@hrtms.com](mailto:jmianniello@hrtms.com).



# SUCCESS STORY

## Job Descriptions – How They Saved One Company From A Costly FLSA Lawsuit

When Jennifer Peacock and her team chose JDXpert to help them manage and store job descriptions, little did she know that it would actually save them from a multi-million-dollar wage and hour lawsuit.

Prior to starting her own HR consulting firm, Innovative Consulting Services, Ms. Peacock was employed as a consultant for a large government contractor. She was tasked with creating and implementing a new compensation program that would enable her client to better-manage the compensation of its more than 6,300 employees. To redesign its current plan, she needed to examine the company's job descriptions so that a consistent compensation plan could be developed. Unfortunately, she discovered that the company did not have job descriptions. Instead, they captured their job description data by logging the education, experience, and a rudimentary summary of duties for each job in a single spreadsheet.

Ms. Peacock and her team, made up of two interns with no HR experience, completed 754 compliant job descriptions in 8 weeks. For content, they leveraged their internal spreadsheet and other sources like the JDXpert content library, job descriptions from other companies, SHRM and recruitment sites. They then used this content and JDXpert to draft job descriptions that could be sent to managers

and designated employees for feedback. With the help of JDXpert's collaborative workflow and editing tools, stakeholders were able to expeditiously review jobs and submit their edits in a track-changes format for Ms. Peacock and her team's approval. Job families, job tracks, and career ladders were created with information from the now fully-developed job descriptions. In addition, they created an ongoing review/approval process so that job descriptions could remain up-to-date and accurate. She also utilized JDXpert's FLSA Questionnaire feature to verify the classification of each job using the exact questions asked by the Department of Labor. Ms. Peacock was criticized for this decision, as management "knew" the exemption status of each job, but her choice turned out to be crucial in preventing her client from paying millions in an FLSA settlement.

The implementation of the new program went almost without incident, and stakeholders were embracing the process. Job descriptions were being updated, and employees were viewing their job description in JDXpert, feeling more empowered and knowledgeable about their responsibilities. Having accurate, updated job descriptions also helped the company as it went through its next performance review cycle and merit process. And even during an audit by the DCAA, auditors went as far as to rave about the process and JDXpert.

## Success Story (continued)

But the honeymoon phase ended abruptly when a class action lawsuit was filed. To everyone's surprise, the FLSA classification of a job was being questioned. An employee from one of the company's smaller outlets claimed that his job, and that of his co-workers in similar jobs, had been inaccurately classified. He alleged that these jobs, classified as exempt, were actually non-exempt positions, qualifying them for overtime pay. He and a number of his co-workers asserted that this was not an isolated occurrence, but something that was affecting similar jobs throughout the company. These employees went on extended business trips and would sometimes go on trips that would result in longer hours. They believed their jobs to be non-exempt positions because they routinely performed low-level tasks like pulling network cables. As a result, they felt that they were owed compensation for additional time worked. However, these employees were highly-skilled engineers who were paid market-based wages. It was now up to the company and their legal team to argue the legitimacy of their claim.

Meeting after meeting, Ms. Peacock and her client worked with legal counsel to build a strong defense. A major component of their case relied on the work she and her team did just months earlier. By using JDXpert, Ms. Peacock was not only able to provide attorneys with the finalized job description, but she was also able to report on the history of the job description in question—namely, who wrote it, who edited it, who approved it and when, and was even able to pull up the completed FLSA Questionnaire that helped determine the job's exempt status. Armed with this information, the company's legal team proceeded with confidence.

During legal proceedings, every aspect and participant was scrutinized. Ms. Peacock's expertise, the validity of JDXpert, and even the company itself was questioned. In the

end, all of the rigor taken during the job description evaluation and review process paid off; the class action lawsuit was dropped!

JDXpert provided this organization with a job description management process that was easy to maintain. Ms. Peacock and her team decided to use JDXpert to its fullest extent, giving them a built-in process for creating, reviewing, editing, and evaluating job descriptions which is critical in determining how jobs are classified and people are paid. Without the help of JDXpert, the results of this case may have taken a different turn.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### WEBINAR: Job Descriptions – How They Saved Us From A Costly FLSA Lawsuit

NOVEMBER 15<sup>TH</sup> | [REGISTER](#)

### HR USER TRAINING

NOVEMBER 15<sup>TH</sup> | [REGISTER](#)

### ADMINISTRATOR TRAINING

DECEMBER 11-13<sup>TH</sup> | [REGISTER](#)

## EDITORS



**Jen Ianniello**  
Customer Success Manager



**Ashley Johnston**  
Director of Marketing

Contact Jen Ianniello at [jmianniello@hrtms.com](mailto:jmianniello@hrtms.com) with any questions.