



TenStep Supplemental Paper

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Net Policy

Internet access has become an important part of corporate life. Its prominence is worrying HR professionals since they are the ones who struggle to keep a balance between demands of top management and employees. Legal liability, slow Internet connectivity and a loss of productivity are a few reasons why management should limit its use.

Non-work related Internet use works out to be expensive to the company. How do organizations combat this problem? Set up a flexible Internet use policy. This policy developed for all departments in the company will help minimize the abuse of the Net.

Some steps in creating and maintaining such a policy are as follows.

Corporate Culture Check

A flexible Internet use policy that is respected by both the employer and the employee reflects a company's culture. Work-related research should be encouraged with regulations on the use of inappropriate information.

The Internet policy formulated should not be rigid but should allow flexibility in mining data. This restricts inappropriate content from entering the work place.

Formulating the Policy

Some aspects that need to be covered when formulating a perfect policy are:

- A disclaimer that warns the employees against the dangers of the Internet and makes them aware that the company is not liable for any unlawful material viewed or downloaded.
- A summary of the boundaries of use that sketches out the differences between appropriate and inappropriate information.
- An agreement that prevents the use of fire walled sites. The agreement should also detail the consequences of entering into a fire walled site.
- A 'no expectation of privacy' statement that waives privacy rights over any information sent or created using the company's computer network. The administrator would always have access to information sent or received from the company's network.

Creating Awareness among Employees

Policies and regulations on the use of the Internet should be communicated effectively to employees. This communication in itself eliminates most problems related to the abuse of the Net. The policies can be incorporated into employee manuals and also emphasized in training sessions.



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HR teams in companies should discourage the use of new technology downloads such as MP3 music files, video downloads and many more such technologies. The use of such files not only blocks the bandwidth but also reduces productivity at the workplace.

Policy Enforcement

Enforcement of flexible Internet policies and filtering the use of inappropriate information goes a long way in building a disciplined work culture. Internet usage should be monitored in such a way that it should never get to the point where use in the office is terminated. Employees who misuse the Net should be deprived of the Internet in the company. There are many web filtering softwares that allow HR professionals to filter appropriate sites and prevent its use during work hours.

Corporate culture, educating and updating the employee and policy enforcement are all fundamental steps in creating and maintaining a flexible Internet policy.