

HR Grapevine Advent Calendar: How HR can mediate Christmas fall-outs



Unfortunately, while the majority of workers enjoy the festive period with joviality and egalitarianism, some employee's actions result in HR having to intervene in the following days.

Speaking to HR Grapevine Alex Efthymiades, Director at Consensio, gives her four tips for HR to mediate any Christmas mishaps.

1. "Nip the issue in the bud. If you hear that someone is upset about what happened or what was said during the party, it is best to address it immediately rather than wait until the New Year. Issues addressed early are less likely to escalate.
2. "Encourage parties to have difficult conversations with each other. This takes courage on the part of the parties, but if someone is upset about what someone else has said or done, the best thing to do is to speak to the other person about it. It is also ok to have such a conversation in the presence of an HR professional. Having difficult conversations is key and will help to resolve issues if the parties are face-to-face with each other rather than relying on someone else to address the issue on their behalf.
3. "Remain impartial, regardless of what you think of the appropriateness or inappropriateness of what happened. What is important is how the parties feel about it and how they perceive the situation. By taking sides, you are not helping them to discuss what is important to each of them. They need to understand each other's perceptions so that they can resolve their conflict.

4. "Allow the parties to come up with their own resolution to the conflict. HR professionals often give advice because that is what they are expected to do. However, the mediation principle of self-determination means that it is up to the parties to come up with ideas on how to resolve their conflict. This will give them ownership over the solution and they will therefore more likely stick to it in the New Year."