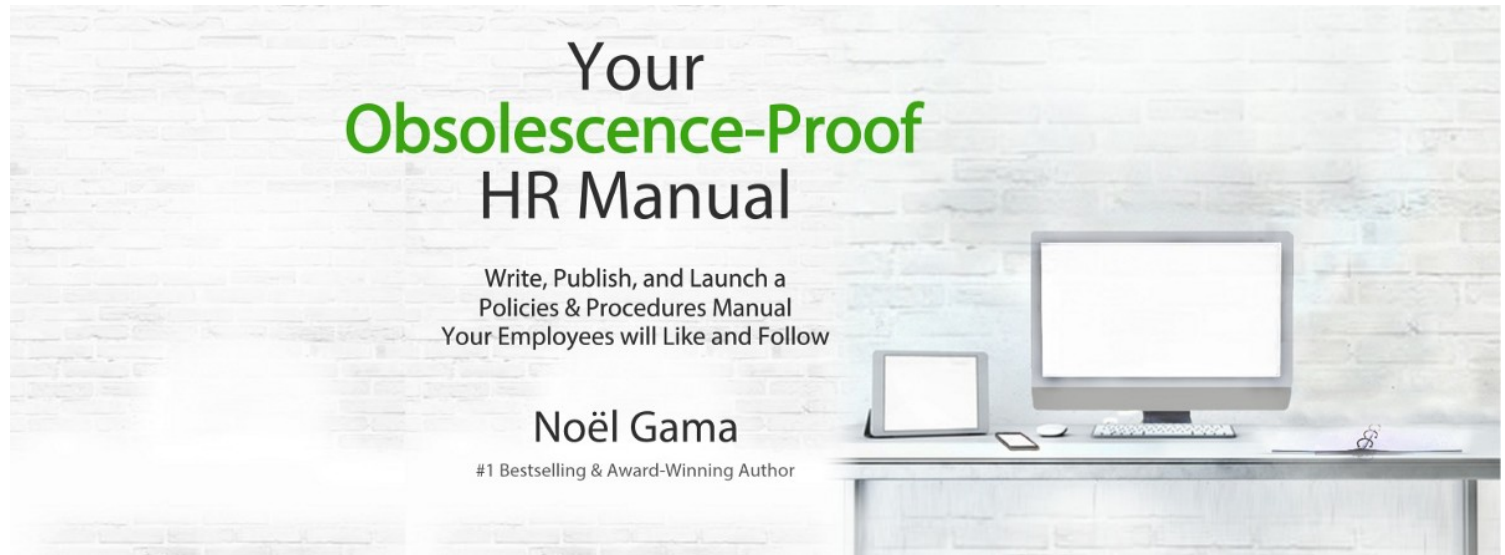# An Obsolescence-Proof HR Manual

(Sample Introductory Chapter)

At some point in your Human Resources career, you'll face what's considered one of the most dreaded assignments possible: writing or updating the HR Policies and Procedures Manual.

I sympathise. It can be a big task, especially if your company has been neglecting it for years—or never had one, to begin with. During my entire 30-year career, I've had to face this manual-writing task a few times. I know most people perceive it as a huge, never-ending project.

But when I first realised how much my peers hated this project, I was surprised!

This is your HR bible

The Policies and Procedures Manual is often the biggest victim of procrastination—people avoid the work because there seems to be so much of it.

Want some hope? Neither the project nor the manual need be of biblical proportions.

You need an up-to-date and fast-to-reference manual

Having up-to-date and fast-to-reference Policies and Procedures Manual can make your days in human resources very easy:

- Need to show an employee something important? Here it is.

- Need to verify the latest revision of a clause for your CEO on the phone? The current version of the manual is right there at your fingertips, to impress them with your efficiency.

Still, someone has to take on the job. And I can relate to how big a job that might seem to you right now.

Asking For Support

I was once the only scribe in my HR department at the time, and… well, I inherited the legacy system: a big overstuffed binder full of memos, office orders, circulars, amendments, addendums, and other such officious-sounding documents.

I was promised all the support I'd need to consolidate all that information into a comprehensive and coherent manual.

I asked for only two: assistance and a comfortable timeline for completing the project.

The company was very prompt in delivering that 'support': a large carton of a dozen manuals from other companies, massive tomes running into hundreds of pages; and my comfortable timeline came as a deadline— the company's annual day just a month away!

The Three Major Problem Areas

I immersed myself in the project. And I discovered three big problem areas:

- Our own policies weren't up-to-date because the format made doing so cumbersome.

- The reference manuals were unwieldy because of a poor coding and numbering system.

- There were a number of different versions of the same policies because there wasn't a built-in system to control central documents.

I'm sure you're facing a similar situation right now. Take hope, because necessity is the mother of invention, they say, and you're about to learn a better way of tackling this task, thanks to the solutions I discovered during my first experience.

Brian Clark, CEO of Copyblogger, said it best:

"Great ideas come from seeing intersections and associations between things that other people see as unrelated."

I found that intersection. I fell back on my experience of writing the ISO 9001 Quality System manual, borrowing its conventions to create the first edition of my company's HR Policies & Procedures Manual.

The Simple Solution

Now I can share my simple but effective system with you, my fellow HR scribe.

In this book, you'll discover a 7-step process that lets you compile, update, and maintain your HR Policies & Procedures Manual in a relatively easy and even fun way.

The system addresses the problems mentioned above of the conventional HR manual and has built-in safeguards to weed out and nip these problems in the bud. The method you'll learn about uses a simple loose-leaf binder system, which makes it a snap to keep the manual updated as required.

What does that do for you? It leaves you with a slim, easy-to-manage and quick-to-maintain Manual. You'll be proud of it, trust me—and your company colleagues will bless you for making their lives easier too.

You'll have obsolescence-proof, ISO-compliant HR Policies and Procedures Manual, and you'll complete it in 7 easy steps. In fact, you can complete this entire project in just 7 short days. More importantly, your HR manual will always be current.

The 7 Steps

In my book, I break down the steps into short, easy tasks so that you can tick off each step in as little as one working day:

Step 1: Getting Started

- What You'll Need

- Whom You'll Need

- Potential collaborators

- Making It User-Friendly

- The Dual Binder System

- Preparing Your Physical Binder

- Preparing Your Virtual binder

- Working With Folders On Your Computer

Step 2: Getting Organised

- Front Matter

- The Title Page

- The Copyright Page (Optional)

- Copyright Notice

- The Foreword Page

- The Preface Page

- The Acknowledgements Page (Optional)

- The Table of Contents

- Section Title Pages (Dividers)

- The Back Matter

- Forms & Formats

- Employment-At-Will Statement

- The Back Cover (Optional)

- The Main Content

- Feeding The Physical Binder

Step 3: Your First Draft

- Keying in Legacy Data

- Filling in the Gaps Reviewing

- Requesting Feedback

Step 4: Your Second Draft

- Receiving feedback

- Editing

- Obtaining Approvals

Step 5: Your Final Draft

- Endorsements & Testimonials

- Making It Reader-Friendly

- Getting It Print-Ready

Step 6: Your Online Version

- The Obsolescence-Proof HR Manual On Evernote

- Working With Evernote

- Tagging Your Notes

- Your Online HR Manual

- Generating the ToC on Evernote

- Back Matter (Optional)

Step 7: Ready, Fire! Aim…

- Getting Ready

- Duplicating & Packaging

- Packaging: Piles to Files

- Physical Distribution

- Physical Delivery

- Online Access

- Launch Day

- Aim…

- Revisions

- Obsolete Copies

- The Master Copy

My colleagues nicknamed the manual I wrote using this system, the *Evergreen Redbook*! It's a proven process for creating manuals that work —and that last as long as the company it serves. My company's been using the first edition of their HR manual for over 25 years, thanks to the built-in, easy-update potential it offers.

Bonus

What's more, their manual never ceased to impress every third-party inspection agency that came to visit, many of whom requested a copy.

But what good is an obsolescence-proof and user-friendly manual if it's not easily accessible and followed by your employees? I found a simple and easy way to make it available online, everywhere and anywhere; and collaboration made the manual everybody's business—making everyone Like and Follow it even before Launch Day!

It worked for them. It'll work for you too.

Thus, whether you have to write a manual from scratch, update an old one to create a new edition, or simply improve on what you have for a manual you can keep up to date easily, this guide will get you started, walk you through each step, and tell you exactly what to do to create a manual you're 150% proud of—quickly and easily.

Don't miss this great opportunity to be the author of your company's HR Manual. You're going to feel like a celebrity on Launch Day. Nothing beats that; I promise you!

And getting started is the first, sure step towards that. So, turn the page and let's get started.

Noël Gama is the author of the Kindle #1 bestselling book, "Your Obsolescence-Proof HR Manual" and an AWAI-trained B2B/SEO Web Copywriter & CMI/MPU-Certified Content Marketing Strategist with 30 years' experience heading HR & Corporate Communications in India's largest spiral weld steel pipe-manufacturing company. As the company's top 'scribe' as he's labelled, he fell into the role of content creator quite naturally and found himself being constantly tapped by top management in a consultative/advisory role on the creation of the three most essential content pools of the company viz., HR, Corporate Communications and Online Content.

Click here for more information about his Ghostwriting Services for HR books.