



## Policies & Procedures are a Must, So Buckle Down and Get it Done

Most Policies & Procedures (P&P) manuals sit in a corner collecting dust and are pulled out only as a reference of last resort. But take note, SBIR/STTR applicants and awardees, agencies expect you to have P&Ps in place to serve as your bible for managing your funds and activities. And practically speaking, if you ever need to defend an action, behavior or practice, “If it isn’t written, it didn’t happen!”

So how do you get started drafting your P&P? Like most things, it’s best to start with the basics. Get your goal/mission down in writing and list the roles and responsibilities of each employee of your company. Then outline the possible sections of your P&P manual; things like:

- **Accounting** - Describe the various aspects of your accounting system and how each will be handled. This includes things like cost types and monitoring, financial capabilities and reporting, procurement, payroll, accounts receivable and payable, etc.
- **Labor** - How are timesheets prepared and reviewed? Who explains time keeping to new employees? Who prepares payroll?
- **Employee Leave** - What is your policy on paid time off, holidays, vacation and sick leave? Is vacation accrued, use it or lose it, paid upon termination?
- **Travel** - How is company travel managed? What is the mileage rate for use of personal vehicles? Do you have company credit cards? What is your policy on flight allowances and rental car use?
- **Misconduct** - Describe your company’s policy on confidentiality and how to go about reporting breaches, steps for handling and resolving allegations, as well as reporting to the Office of Research Integrity

You will also need policies on contract management, emergencies, security, research protection (use of animals and humans), etc.

Clearly written and reasonable policies and procedures help management:

- Define required steps to achieve a goal
- Measure employee/company performance
- Train new employees
- Avoid misunderstandings and confrontation
- Provide confidence to staff and agencies that you know what you are doing
- Provide consistency and accountability
- Lay a foundation for improvement

Just going through the process of thinking through the issues involved in each section of your P&P is immensely informative, so write, edit, and re-write until you have a comprehensive document with the

flexibility to change based on lessons learned. Then distribute it to your employees, implement and practice it!

Contact Kris Bergman, BBCetc, Grants & Contracts Management Guru for information about our [Grants and Contracts Management Services](#) and other consulting services.