

Prioritizing Policy Development

Thoughtful institutional policies are integral to establishing an ideal workplace environment. To prioritize and guide the development of RISD's policies, consider these questions to help determine how necessary and beneficial any new policy will be for the college.

1. Does the policy align with the RISD's mission and vision?

RISD's mission statement provides a broad overview of our philosophies and goals. Policy is created to provide very clear and focused expectations and guidance to employees on a daily basis so those goals can be met

2. How urgent is the need for written direction on this subject?

In general, there are *three instances that may not require policy development*.

- **Unique cases:** Policies could overlap and contradict each other, and managers won't have situational flexibility. College-wide issues should be examined critically for policy solutions, but individual issues can usually be addressed by a supervisor on a case-by-case basis.
- **Existing policy:** A good policy is flexible enough to respond to a variety of circumstances. Before creating written policy about an issue, take a look at existing policies. Often a minor revision is all that is necessary.
- **Nonessential issue:** Ask this question: "What happens if we don't have this policy?" Some issues won't have a large impact on overall productivity, and other issues are unlikely to happen. Direct your policy development efforts towards issues that can impact the institution in larger ways.

3. Is the policy integral to establishing or shaping culture?

It should come as no surprise that organizational policy plays a huge role in a positive company culture. Once established that a policy is a necessary addition to the workplace, consider whether this policy will benefit the culture.

To do this, evaluate the best aspects of the existing culture and consider whether the policy will elevate or stymie them. On the other hand, the new policy could be designed to address the negatives of the current workplace culture. For example, a policy that establishes employee accountability and responsibility can redirect behaviors.

4. How many employees are affected by the policy?

The highest priority policies are the ones that have the potential to affect *every* employee.

Consider how strong the impact on employee productivity will be for the new policy. -- the stronger the impact, the more immediately beneficial this policy will be.

5. Is the policy critical to workplace health and safety?

Every institution has a legal and moral responsibility to its employees to ensure their safety first. Policy that promotes healthy behaviors such as implementing a smoke-free environment can help shape a healthy culture among employees. Creating clear policy on sexual harassment in the workplace and educating employees on proper standards of conduct can create a safe environment. Policies like these deserve priority for the benefit of every party who has a stake in the policy development process.

Don't let policy development efforts go to waste!

There are three vital steps following creating company policy:

- 1. Publication**
- 2. Education**
- 3. Implementation**

RISD's policy site assures that our policies reach everyone who needs to know about it. Based on the nature of the policy, we can make sure they are read and acknowledged. New policy releases can also include quizzes for testing comprehension, if this is appropriate. Meanwhile, all of our policy data will be stored in one central, cloud-based location for easy management. It will also insure that only the most recent iteration of any policy is available on the policy platform while preserving all previous versions and other background documents.

Developing and instituting effective institutional policy will result in a safe and informed community that has all the tools it needs to meet the challenges of today's rapidly evolving environment.