

# **CAPITAL**

## **OPEN DOOR**

### **DEFINITION**

The Capital Lumber Company Open Door is designed to educate everyone on our issue management process, to encourage all employees to discuss work-related problems or concerns with the appropriate manager at any time, and to provide effective tools and multiple options to all employees.

The program is a form of conflict management and is a process that is the keystone of positive, effective working relationships. It is based on supporting the positive working relationship between each employee and her or his immediate manager, and provides for other sources for information and resources outside of the direct reporting relationship as needed.

Further, the Open Door is based on the commitment that employees may exercise this process without fear of reprisal. Retaliation for using Open Door, making a complaint, or for participating in the process in any way will not be tolerated. Violation of the Open Door in the form of retaliation for use of or participation in Open Door program will result in immediate disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

The use of the Open Door to report situations that the reporter knows to be untrue, inaccurate or are known to have not occurred, or to report a person or persons in retaliation for actions taken by that person with the intention of "getting them in trouble" will not be tolerated. Abuse, purposeful misuse, or fraudulent use of the Open Door will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Finally, Open Door supports and encourages reporting issues to the immediate next level of management, and assures employees a hearing with those in a position to act upon the issue, typically beginning with the immediate manager. However, an employee may contact any manager up to and including the President of Capital Lumber Company. Lists of managers and their contact numbers are posted at each location in the Employee Break area.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES: MANAGERS:**

Capital encourages employees to bring work-related issues to their immediate manager. Managers are in the best possible position to assist employees with problems and concerns, and it is an essential job function of a manager to do so to the best of her or his ability. Managers will also request assistance from more experienced or senior managers or the Human Resources department as needed, keeping in mind issues of confidentiality. Under some circumstances immediate notification of Human Resources may be required.

Managers will be available and engaged as needed to listen and respond appropriately to issues and concerns of employees. If time is not immediately available, the manager will set aside sufficient time, within an appropriate timeframe, to hear the issues of, and respond, as appropriate to the employee.

## OPEN DOOR - PROCESS

- All employees should recognize the Open Door as both an informal and formal process for resolving work-related issues.
- Everyone is required to understand, support, and participate willingly in the Open Door, and to use it appropriately.
- Managers are expected to invite individual employees to use the process freely with no fear of reprisal, discrimination, or adverse action for having done so, and embrace their roles as facilitators and conflict managers.
- Individual Employees are expected to accept the invitation for dialogue, recognizing the Capital commitment to issue resolution and problem solving at the level in the organization closest to the issues.
- All employees should recognize and implement principles of fair play, good business sense, and the most important principle of all — treating others as that person wishes to be treated.

## STEPS

- When you have an issue, you should engage the Open Door as soon as possible, but within a reasonable time after the problem occurs. Typically, this would be hours, or at the very longest, a day or two after an event occurs.
- Discuss the issue or concern with your immediate supervisor.
- If the problem can't be resolved with the supervisor, you may contact the next manager in the division, the Open Door Line 800 number or Human Resources.
- If your supervisor is unable to resolve the problem within three working days, the issue will be forwarded to the next level Manager or HR.
- If the next level Manager cannot resolve the problem within three working days, the complaint is sent to the Regional Manager, with a copy to the President and Director of HR.
- The Regional Manager, President and Director of HR will make a final, binding decision within five working days.
- If you do not feel comfortable talking to your manager or you would rather talk to someone else, you may consult with any member of management, the Office or Human Resources Manager or Director, or the Division Manager. Remember that when it comes to problem solving, you have many options from which to choose. All lines of communication at Capital are open, and we want to assure you that no reprisal will be tolerated when you come to us with a problem.
- We expect that you will use this process to discuss any work related issue that you may have, and the Company will attempt to provide consistency as well as just response and action as far as reasonable and practical.
- You will not be discriminated against or in any way penalized for using the Open Door.
- If an employee feels uncomfortable using the Open Door with her or his manager or other division staff, he or she is encouraged to call the Open Door Line to discuss the concern. Available 24 hours a day, Open Door Line allows an employee to speak anonymously live or via the web with an independent company that is not affiliated with Capital. The Open Door Line phone number is 1-800-442-0697. The web address is: [www.compliance-helpline.com](http://www.compliance-helpline.com), the Username: OpenDoor, Password: Welcome.

## **MANAGER TRAINING COMPONENTS**

The following are some suggestions for inviting all employees to exercise the open door option and supporting them in doing so on an ongoing basis.

**BE AVAILABLE.** Get to know people as individuals. It is difficult to be an effective resource for people you do not know. When you are approachable, you allow for development of good professional relationships and openness. Some managers may choose to set up regular “office hours.” Others make it a point of walking the entire work area twice a day, speaking with everyone during their rounds. This process directly invites comments by asking, “How are you doing today?” to each co-worker.

**PAY ATTENTION, BE OPEN AND RELAXED.** When an employee brings an issue to you for discussion, give the issue your full attention. If you cannot do that at the moment, make an appointment in the very near future to meet when you can devote yourself to fully listening. When you have full focus, give the person time, and support in expressing the issues. Listen actively, and ask questions to make sure you understand the concerns. Voice your commitment to the process and give the issue fair consideration. This is the time to listen and ask questions, not to respond or even form opinions.

**GET THE FACTS.** You need to understand the issue clearly. Ask questions carefully and listen actively. Use the process of repeating what you “think” you heard relative to the details of the issue or issues. Find out what the employee thinks the best outcomes are. Be objective and ask the person what they feel some possible alternatives or solutions might be, being careful to explain that they may not necessarily be the ones that get used. You need participation, and, if you can find solutions that are suggested by the participants, they are more likely to be viewed as acceptable later.

**QUESTION AND DOCUMENT CAREFULLY.** You need to know WHAT, WHO, WHEN, WHERE, HOW and WHY. Do not rely on hearsay – but make sure that you know what the “grapevine” is saying. Sometimes it is partially or fully true. Advise the employee that the Company will be investigating discretely, but that there is no commitment to complete confidentiality. Instead, only those who need to know anything will be involved. Understand what COMPANY policies are involved. Many times, you may be working with an HR staff member who may be helping with this, or you may turn over your notes to HR to complete the investigation in order to free you up for other roles in the process.

**BE TACTFUL.** Be sensitive to the concerns and emotions of the employee. It takes a great deal of energy and perhaps even a certain amount of courage to bring a concern forward. Never dismiss any issue out of hand – even if it is something that you think you may have heard and resolved already. Be especially attentive to those who may use the Open Door frequently. These people may have a finely tuned sense of what is happening, and are often very helpful to the organization in identifying issues. Make sure to avoid approaching things in any way that might humiliate or embarrass an employee. The issue is real and valid in their opinion, or they would not have brought it to you, it is your responsibility as a manager to understand the content of the issue and help focus on the resolution in a positive, professional way.

## **MANAGER TRAINING COMPONENTS – cont'd**

**NO JUDGEMENTS.** Insufficient process and immediate action without HR involvement will lead to greater issues. Get all the facts and be analytical. What might be the cause of the issue? Is the issue event driven, if so, where and when did it happen? Are there other employees involved? Are people being treated equitably? Is there a question of perception? Is it a complaint of favoritism, either unintentional or deliberate? Why are people not pleased with what is happening? How is it affecting people and their performance?

**GET THE ANSWER.** If the issue is something that can easily be adjusted immediately without any concern or effect to Company Policies, Procedures or Guidelines, DO IT. If you do not have all the facts and you need to settle the issue right away, gain agreement with the employee about follow-up and time-frame. Make sure that you keep in touch with the person continuously until there is a final answer. This may mean every day or maybe once a week, depending on the situation. Make sure that everyone knows that it is in process – not ignored or dropped.

**CONSIDER THE CONSEQUENCES OF YOUR DECISION.** Make certain you know what the effect of any resolution might be, not only to the individual but also to the rest of your organization, and maybe even the Company! The decisions that managers make on one action may be applied to other situations in other divisions – whether it is the best solution for them or not. Always be aware that you have the obligation to consult with Senior Management and HR on issues that impact or interpret Company Policy, laws, regulations or statutes.

**ADMIT MISTAKES.** We are all human. If events or facts prove us wrong, we quickly let others know of the error and what we intend to do to correct it. Many times, we may not be able to obtain all of the information that might help us resolve an issue at the time. Sometimes, no matter how hard we try, issues may not be clear until some time passes or other issues are resolved. When we make mistakes, we make things right. Always let HR know if this has happened and before you take any action to correct the situation.

**GET A REVIEW OF THE PROCESS AND YOUR FINDINGS.** Call your manager and HR and go over the situation with them. A second opinion is always good, and perhaps what you are suggesting could help others, or might bring up something that may need to be addressed in other areas of the Company. Alternatively, the second set of eyes might help you think about things differently, or consider the implications from a different perspective.

**Under the following circumstances you must immediately contact the Director of Human Resources:** reports of any violation of law, statute or regulation, allegation of sexual harassment, allegation of illegal discrimination, report of retaliation for any reason, examples: for making a complaint, reporting an injury or unsafe condition, or for using the Open Door.

**SUPPORT YOUR DECISIONS WITH REASON AND SOUND PRACTICE.** Explain your decisions based on analysis of the facts. Never "pass the buck" for a response to higher levels of management – if it is a situation that you can change as a manager, own the decision. Never, ever say, "Upper management has decided..." You are the person with the authority and responsibility to manage. You may have reached a decision with the input of others, and the outcome may not be what you consider ideal, but it is imperative that you present it with full support and ownership. Gain agreement when possible and, if there is still disagreement, always invite inquiry to a higher level.

## **MANAGER TRAINING COMPONENTS – cont'd**

The responsibility for the positive working relationship is one of the simplest concepts in employee relations to define, because it is shared. In addition, it is a responsibility that takes commitment by every employee to be effective.

Teams of managers and employees share equally the responsibility for a positive working relationship. As such, the following describes tools for developing and maintaining positive one-on-one relationships.

Company Policies define the roles and responsibilities of individuals within a work group, and they are managed by and influenced by the group's manager. The manager is obliged to make those roles and responsibilities clear, and to be just and consistent in application of them.

Each person, every manager and employee, must commit to open, honest dialogue and a further commitment to nurturing the one-to-one relationship to their mutual benefit, the benefit of the work group, and Capital.

Individual employees must understand their role within the organization's framework and are obliged to seek clarity when they are uncertain.

When misunderstanding or disagreement occurs, each person within the relationship is equally obliged to resolve issues at the most direct level, elevating issues only when dialogue fails to gain mutually satisfactory results.

When issues are elevated to another authority, that authority will ensure that each party understands the perspective of the other, and that the higher authority may require further dialogue at the one-to-one level.

Finally, upon agreeing to an issue's resolution reached at any level, each person is obliged to continue to build the working relationship.