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**HR STRATEGIES Q&A**

## **Communication and costumes**

From questions about tacky costumes to politics to corporate culture, managers have a lot of decisions on their hands. Houston's employment experts offer timely tips:

**Q:** Should managers share information with employees about the impact — if any — the current economic crisis will have on the company?

**Tony Shelton**

**President**

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Definitely. It's hard for anyone to relate to the current worldwide financial crisis in anything other than personal terms. How will this affect me and my job? That's the most important question. In the absence of communication from management, speculation and office gossip will fill the void and the resulting distraction and fear can really damage productivity.

Whether or not the current economic crisis is affecting your business, it's still a good idea to talk about it with your employees. Have you just received a substantial order or landed a new client? Let people know that. On the other hand, have you lost an important client due to the financial crisis or another reason? Let employees know that, too, and what they — and you — need to be doing now.

Don't delay talking to employees because you don't have all the answers. Your employees will be comforted even by knowing you're paying attention to the possible economic fallout for your company and for them.