



Practicing the Art of Communication and Confidentiality

John learned Mary is making more money than he is when he overheard a conversation between two payroll employees. Needless to say, he was not happy about this discovery. He's worked for the company longer than Mary and does essentially the same job as she. But what John doesn't know is Mary has more experience and technical skills. Now, there's trouble in the company.

Preventing situations like this and others like it is why confidentiality and proper communication are so important for payroll professionals. In fact, a [recent survey](#) from the American Payroll Association found that those two [soft skills](#) are the most important ones for payroll workers to possess.

Communication + Confidentiality = Confidence

Employees need to feel confident their paychecks will be processed timely and accurately. They also need to know their personal and financial data are protected. Payroll professionals who can clearly communicate and explain issues like payroll deductions and tax changes will instill this sense of confidence.

On the flip side, some information should never be communicated. You should never talk about sensitive employee data in areas where others can overhear. If you work in an open office, discuss salary via secure email or text messages. When you have to talk about confidential information, book a conference room and close the door.

You already know that, when it comes to paperwork, always shred instead of recycle when you no longer need the information. And if your office doesn't have a dedicated printer, copier and fax machine for payroll and human resources, you should get one so that confidential documents don't inadvertently get left in a place where other people can see them.

National Payroll Week

[National Payroll Week](#), which coincides with Labor Day, is designed to honor the economic, cultural and social achievements of payroll workers. In the United States from Sept. 1-5, 2014, payroll professionals will have opportunities to publicize what they do within their company, including issues related to communication and confidentiality in the workplace.

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