SURGE
PEOPLE PARTNERS

A DECISION GUIDE FOR LEADERS

# BLACK, WHITE OR GRAY?

How to make workforce decisions when answers aren't clear

THE ONE QUESTION TO ASK FIRST

> **"WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE IN SIX MONTHS, AND DOES IT GET US WHERE WE NEED TO BE?"**

## 01 SEPARATE BLACK AND WHITE FROM GRAY

These aren't judgment calls:

- → The law: wage and hour, leave, discrimination and retaliation protections, worker classification
- → Safety
- → What you've put in writing: offer letters, contracts, handbook and policies

## 02 GET SPECIFIC ABOUT THE GRAY

- → What do we know today?
- → What don't we know yet, and when will we find out?
- → What would change the decision?
- → Who needs to weigh in? Finance, operations and the managers who will carry the load.

**"We're an at-will state" doesn't settle it.** Every decision still needs a clear business reason, consistent treatment and documentation.

## 03 LOOK SIX MONTHS OUT

A cut that saves money this quarter can leave a staffing gap, a missed customer commitment or a resignation from someone covering two jobs.

## 04 DECIDE, WRITE IT DOWN, SET A DATE

Make the best call you can with what you know. Write down the reasoning and the assumptions behind it, and set a date to revisit it. If the assumptions change, the decision can too.

## WATCH FOR: CUTTING TOO DEEP

Teams get stretched too thin, morale and engagement drop, and high performers leave first. Then you're rehiring, replacing and waiting for new people to get up to speed. Put those costs in the decision before you make the cut.

**Facing a tough decision right now?**

**We're here to help.** Schedule a call →

Scan to schedule