

# DMW to rate recruiting agencies by compliance

THE Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) said on Thursday it plans to rate employers and recruiting agencies based on their track record of compliance with labor standards and treatment of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs). In a statement, Migrant Workers Secretary Susan V. Ople said the

scheme involves a "white list" of compliant recruiters and employers. The DMW will also maintain a blacklist of foreign employers and recruiting agencies found to have committed violations, including exploitation and abuse of OFWs. Ms. Ople said the DMW hopes to tailor employment contracts to

each destination country's labor laws and migration policy. She also warned against fraudulent recruitment offers that could cause workers to be trafficked. "We also appeal to our countrymen to be more discerning about such bogus offers, and to

report illegal recruiters and human traffickers to the DMW," said Ms. Ople. On Monday, the DMW ordered the Philippine Overseas Employment Agency to suspend a department order that required rehired and directly hired OFWs to pay compulsory insurance premiums.

The Department of Labor and Employment (DoLE) had issued Department Order No. 228 requiring employers and migrant workers to pay for insurance coverage, subject to a full refund on the day of arrival at the destination. DoLE said the measure was meant to serve as a "protective

insurance mechanism against OFWs contracting the coronavirus." Ms. Ople cited the improving global health situation and the high vaccination rates among OFWs as a reason to suspend compulsory insurance coverage. — **John Victor D. Ordoñez**

OPINION

## What to do when workers issue death threats

**T**his week, a janitor reported scribbling in a toilet cubicle which contained a death threat against the human resource (HR) department head. The threat, addressed to the department head, was worded as follows: "Your days are numbered. Beware!" As the manager in charge of janitorial services, I took a photo of the graffiti and instructed the janitor to keep it secret. We locked the cubicle until the completion of an investigation. Management has no clue who might have done it, but suspects the employees' union, which could be playing mind games during the new collective bargaining agreement (CBA) negotiations, which have run to an eighth meeting. What would you advise our management? — *Lone Ranger.*

I wrote about this topic in this space on May 25, 2018 in a column, "Death threats from sacked workers? Here's the cure." That article is about 18 dismissed workers who were suspected of having issued threats. The situation mirrors your current predicament with a union that could be taking a hardball approach in CBA negotiations. Read that article online and connect the dots with the advice I'm about to give here.

Closing the cubicle is a good step. But don't be complacent. Even if the janitor has been told to keep the incident a secret, there's no guarantee rumors won't spread. You can't count on his loyalty especially if he's employed by a manpower agency or if he turns out to be a union sympathizer. Regardless of the identity of the perpetrator or perpetrators, the HR head and the management members of the CBA panel must take the matter seriously. Your suspicions are based on sound logic. The union may be resorting to

brinkmanship to unsettle management into fast-tracking the negotiations and extend a solid counter-offer.

MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS

CBA negotiation is often described as a "love-hate" relationship between labor and management. When this relationship involves death threats, it becomes a far more complex issue. However, management need not be intimidated. It must remain sober and consider the following steps:

**One, take the matter seriously without being emotional.** Don't be fearful but be extra careful. Otherwise, management could turn paranoid and not exercise its best judgment during negotiations. It should still perform its daily tasks, while changing its routines, like reporting early to work coming in late. Management schedule must be unpredictable, with working remotely an option.

**Two, inform top management and the security manager.** They're the best authority to decide on a safety and security protocol. The measures might include providing your HR head a security detail, an armored vehicle, and a bullet-proof vest. It may not be wise to issue firearms to people not used to them.

**Three, inform the union representatives.** Do this face-to-face and shortly before you adjourn a negotiation session. This should be the last item on the agenda. Be brief. Don't accuse anyone. Simply let them know that management is implementing security measures within the office or factory premises and the vicinity. The union could come to realize that its threat has backfired.

**Four, file a report with the police.** Have it on a police blotter. Cite the circumstances surrounding the CBA negotiations. Get a police report for the company's records, but

keep the matter confidential. Think hard before reporting to the police the names of union negotiating panel members or any union official.

You don't want to complicate the CBA negotiations should the union dig up a copy of the blotter which is a public record. Many union officials will not take it sitting down if they discover that management has linked them to death threats.

**Last, negotiate with the union as if there is no death threat.** You want management to present a brave front when negotiating. If you show any sign of weakness, chances are the union will know the threats got to you. Go ahead with management's original proposal and take it from there.

GOOD-FAITH BARGAINING

A successful negotiation of a new CBA that mutually satisfies both labor and management requires good faith in bargaining. The trouble is that management can't dictate terms to the union. The union can do almost anything short of filing a notice of strike. Just the same, even without an impending strike, management can only act on things it can control.

Good faith enhances management credibility, which includes a sincere desire to agree to a new CBA that is within the capacity of the organization to pay. While some trade unions can resort to dirty tactics, management shouldn't do the same thing. Never leave home without good faith as it attracts positivity, even when other people are unwilling or incapable of doing good.

Have a chat with Rey Elbo via Facebook, LinkedIn or Twitter or send your questions to [elbonomics@gmail.com](mailto:elbonomics@gmail.com) or via <https://reyelbo.com>



## China Bank makes employees eligible for LinkedIn upskilling

CHINA Banking Corp. (China Bank) said it has purchased licenses to use LinkedIn Learning for all its 9,800 employees, to help with their upskilling and reskilling via the professional networking platform.

Starting Aug. 16, all China Bank employees will have access to LinkedIn Learning, an online educational platform with more than 18,000 courses covering hard and soft skills.

"As we pursue our digital transformation, investing in new technologies to make China Bank an agile, modern organization, we are not forgetting that people are the catalysts of this transformation," China Bank Chief Finance Officer Patrick D. Cheng said in a statement on Wednesday.

"The business landscape is changing faster than ever; thus, it's crucial that we continuously upskill China Bankers to stay competitive and relevant in this digital age," Mr. Cheng said.

LinkedIn Learning makes those who complete its coursework eligible for certification and professional credit.

China Bank calls its program Learning EDGE (Empowered talents Driving Growth and Excellence), with the main benefit seen as the efficient upgrading of skills at scale.

"Ease of use and mobile capabilities are essential in training. Learning EDGE, available anytime on any device, will help us keep our people stay sharp with the skills needed for their roles now and in the future," China Bank Human Resources Group Head Maria Rosanna Catherina L. Testa said.

The bank conducted a trial run of the platform in July with over 500 employees.

"As the world recovers from the fallout of the pandemic and looks towards a skills-first economy, companies like China Bank are future-proofing their businesses and helping employees to be successful through continuous learning," LinkedIn's Head of Asia, Talent & Learning Solutions Frank Koo said.

"LinkedIn's unique position as the world's largest professional network allows us to quickly spot market trends and create relevant content for learners. By investing in its people, China Bank can effectively and efficiently plug any vital skill gaps, retain and attract top talent, and be at the forefront of navigating change in these fast-evolving times," Mr. Koo added. — **Keisha B. Ta-asan**

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