

## Union Leader

### Ask the Expert: Anne Scheer, labor issues

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During a recession -- or any time business is slow for an extended period of time-- employers frequently seek to cut the costs of doing business until profits return to pre-slowdown levels.

When those cutbacks involve employees, salaries or staffing levels, an attorney is often needed to be sure legal requirements are met and employers are on solid ground going forward.



SCHEER

Those types of labor issues are part of the expertise of attorney Anne Scheer of Devine, Millimet & Branch, and also the topic for this month's "Ask the Expert" series by the New Hampshire Union Leader and Amoskeag Business Incubator.

In an article on the topic -- written exclusively for the popular monthly feature of the state's largest newspaper and Manchester's thriving small-business support facility -- Scheer points out several tenets of New Hampshire business law pertaining specifically to staff cutbacks, reduction in hours and compensation issues.

Scheer, who graduated from Keene State University, UNH and Case Western Reserve School of Law, says whatever employee payroll/benefit reductions an employer makes, the employer "should give employees as much notice and information about them as possible so employees can plan and adjust their own lives and finances to handle their loss of wages, hours and/or benefits."

That advice and other tips are available in Scheer's article for Ask the Expert -- entitled "Anne G. Scheer: 'Legally reducing employee costs . . . Number of employees, hours, pay and benefits'" -- which will be posted at [www.unionleader.com](http://www.unionleader.com) and [www.abi-nh.com](http://www.abi-nh.com) throughout November.

► **[Anne G. Scheer: 'Legally reducing employee costs . . . Number of employees, hours, pay and benefits'](#)**

In her article, Scheer talks about state and federal labor laws, sending employees home on days business is slow, advance notice, reducing benefits, and furloughs.

She emphasizes moving forward with employees to give them the reasons the employer is making the change, and making employees part of the solution by engaging them in the problem and in offering possible solutions.

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"If there is any hope of good news on the horizon, without being overly optimistic, give employees that news as well," she writes.

As "Ask the Expert" moves into its third year as a collaboration between the newspaper and the incubator, experts' articles remain online for readers and Web site visitors to ask for specific advice from the expert, via e-mail, and receive e-mailed responses.

Access to the Experts series is at both Web sites, where visitors can click on the "[Experts](#)" tab in the business channel and submit questions.

Past experts have included media representatives; sales, IT and finance managers; social networking experts; accountants and insurance executives; financial literacy experts; small-business people and a host of other experts in various fields.

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To submit a question, use the form above or [this link](#).

Next month's expert is a Hooksett woman with an accomplished corporate marketing, public relations and television news background who has launched her own marketing and PR company.