Creating a Great Place to Work

Organizations who create a great place to work not only win bragging rights from the “Best Place to Work” competitions, but they also create highly engaged, motivated, productive and loyal employees. These kinds of employees not only achieve higher levels of productivity, but they also execute on business strategy, sell more, better control costs, provide improved customer service, earn more profits, and realize better overall results. Engaged employees have your back, are willing to go the extra mile when needed, generate new ideas, support other team members and demonstrate positive, contagious energy.

In today’s competitive environment, great organizations take the following actions to become the best place to work.

Create a Clear Roadmap
Start by creating a clear picture of what you want your work place to be like. It helps to analyze a few highly successful organizations like past winners of “The Best Place to Work” awards and organizations who consistently outperform others in the long-run. Define explicitly what your work environment will look like, how people will behave, and the practices needed to maintain this culture. With a clear picture of what you want, identify gaps preventing your business from becoming a great place to work, and then start slowly making needed changes.

Incorporate Engagement Practices
Organizations that live these practices create engaged employees:

- **Expectations** – Company, team and individual expectations are clearly defined, are reasonable and include employee input.
- **Line of sight** – Employees clearly see how what they do impacts business strategy and helps the customer.
- **Voice & Involvement** – Employees have input on things that impact them. Leaders listen and respond to employee ideas and concerns.
- **Informed** – The Company and supervisors keep employees up to speed on how the business is doing, informed about changes, and apprised about anything that may impact employees.
- **Interpersonal Relations** – Employees resolve differences of opinion respectfully. All levels of management maintain positive relations with employees. Back-biting, gossiping and personal attacks are non-existent.
- **Fun** – People find ways to have fun at work and together in other company events. They may start a softball team, participate in corporate games, create a bowling league, or have health improvement contests and other events that create positive interactions that are not just work related.
- **Trust** – Trust employees and demonstrate integrity, behaviors and practices that earn employee trust. Empower employees with responsibility and get out of their way, letting them do their job.
- **Score Keeping** – Did you ever play a sporting event like baseball, golf or basketball where you did not keep score? Odds are you did not play as hard or do your best. Employees who know what is important to the business, team and their job and have key measures that are tracked and regularly reported work harder and are more engaged.
- **Feedback** – Employees want to know how they are doing, especially when they are doing things well. Anytime you are surprised, approach employees with feedback. Hold regular meetings and one-on-one interactions that bring about communication.
- **Recognition** – Leaders and employees alike give praise and recognition for a job well done. Organizations have both formal and informal means of saying thanks and showing appreciation.
- **Fairness** – The Company has a clear, systematic, logical way to determine who gets paid what amounts, and everyone is clear on how it works. Compensation and benefits are regularly compared to market data and contain a strategy to meet or exceed similar position wages within that market. Employee inequities are addressed. Practices and leader actions are consistent and fair in their
execution. Employees have an avenue through which they can voice concerns where they are given fair consideration in resolving grievances.

- **Personal Growth** – The Company regularly invests in developing and training employees’ knowledge level and skills needed on the job, both now and in the future. Employees are given opportunities to be cross trained, experience new job challenges and to be promoted from within.

- **Job Enrichment** – Jobs are designed to create motivators like feelings of achievement, enjoying the work itself, recognition, goal attainment, challenge and personal growth.

**Create Effective People Management Practices**

Align all people practices (HR Infrastructure) to drive and support the kind of work place you desire.

- **Hiring & Recruiting** – Recruit and hire people who best fit with the desired job traits, culture, abilities and other qualifications.

- **New Hire Orientation** – Help new employees understand up front the culture and expectations.

- **Performance Management** – Define key performance indicators, goals, values and behavior expectations that represent the desired work place. Reinforce and hold people accountable for exhibiting desired “great place to work” behaviors and results. Quickly resolve employee performance issues in a positive fashion, not through punishment, helping them to succeed.

- **Employee Policies & Procedures** – Make sure employee policies and procedures support and align with the company’s values and culture.

- **Training & Development, Compensation Management, Employee Benefits, Compliance, Safety, Employee Relations & other HR functions** – Make sure you have best practice HR approaches and techniques built into how you perform all HR/people practices, and that they align and reinforce your work environment.

**Keep Pulse on Engagement, Morale & Perceptions**

Conduct regular opinion surveys and use other means to keep tabs on perceptions and attitudes. Assess employees’ perceptions regularly, then involve them in defining root causes, generating ideas to make improvements and letting them be a part of the solution. Also, conduct leader assessments, providing leaders with input on how they are being perceived.

**Track Key People Measures**

Establish and track measures that help you know when things are going well and when problems are present. Track turnover, attendance, goal-attainment and performance indicators for each position. When numbers vary, assess what’s happening and make needed adjustments. Conduct exit interviews when people leave to obtain insight on your work culture and possible needed changes.

**Supervisors – The Key**

The best efforts to create a great place to work can quickly come to a screeching halt if all supervisors are not onboard or are not trained in best practice people management techniques. Leaders must “walk the talk”, showing obvious support for your work environment, people practices and any changes taking place. Leaders are also key in reinforcing desired behaviors and results, holding their employees accountable for making your company a great place. What they say and do greatly impacts your work environment and employee engagement.

Creating a great place to work does not happen overnight but with persistence, and with the use of great people management practices it will become a reality.

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**Creating Work Environment Changes**

For assistance creating a great place to work, engaging employees, conducting opinion surveys or training leaders contact: HR Service, Inc. at (801) 685-8400 or visit us online at www.HRServiceInc.com