

# MAINTAINING EMPLOYEE MORALE

By: Robert Sher

In these challenging times, it is more important than ever to maintain employee morale at your business. Satisfied, happy employees exude confidence, while frustrated, anxious employees exude doubt. Which do you prefer?

The choice seems obvious. It is important in your day to day management that you know how to prevent a rotten apple from spoiling the barrel. When you go to work every day, remember that you can make an employee's day, or you can break it. You – the president, manager, partner and supervisor – are the most powerful force in employee motivation and morale.

Here are some tips on how to protect and motivate your employees, your most valued assets:

- 1) **Lead to motivate.** Showing employees you get along with people, have compassion and know how to make them feel good about themselves will motivate employees to do their jobs well.
- 2) **Seek employee input.** How about asking each employee what he or she most values, and use their answers to set company goals? This shows employees they are valued.
- 3) **Catch them in the act.** Start a daily incentive program in which you "Catch 'em doing something great!" Give a small incentive, like a free lunch or coffee house card, and post his or her photo on the wall. This incentive will reinforce the importance of going above and beyond the job description. **It sets the bar for others to follow.**
- 4) **Launch an employee newsletter, print or online.** This purpose is exclusively to recognize employee accomplishments. Everyone loves to be recognized. This instills pride.
- 5) **Host a monthly fun hour.** Bring in lunch for the office. Bring in a therapist to do chair massage. Offer yoga during the work day – and you pay for it. This builds loyalty.
- 6) **Be upfront and honest.** When you have conflict, deal with it honestly. Take responsibility for your role in the conflict and move quickly to resolve it amicably. Apologize if you are wrong.
- 7) **Do not gossip.** Eliminate company gossip from your life, and keep all company concerns confidential. Hire a coach if you need support to handle company gossip.
- 8) **Do not micromanage.** Trust your employees to make smart decisions without your interference. Delegate. You will build self esteem by allowing employees to try new things and to be successful by adding a personal touch to a project.

- 9) **Train your employees.** To build on employee strength, provide training that allows them to learn and grow and learn what is necessary to make a significant impact in company operations. This will make their work more meaningful.
- 10) **Act, don't react.** Do not act hastily without thinking something through. If you lose an account, and you don't know why, do not call someone into your office and scream. Get the facts, and handle the situation delicately. Yelling is never affective. Speak calmly and act rationally.

Follow these tips and you will encourage your employees to go above and beyond the job description. Ultimately, this might help you increase your bottom line.

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