Engage! Employee Development Secrets and Keeping Your Team Motivated

Having happy staff is the foundation of success for any organization. Any company that wants to compete needs to hire the best talent available for the job, and gifted and driven individuals require a challenge to keep them stimulated and content. Your job as the business owner or manager is to make sure that you have an employee development system in place that keeps your team motivated and moving in the right direction.

One of Pacific Crest Group's co-founders, T.J. Van Voorhees, recently addressed the Entrepreneurial Organization about how to "Boost Your Employee Engagement." To supplement T.J.'s presentation, we prepared a staffing strategy guidefull of articles and templates to help attract and retain the best possible talent.

There are many aspects to promoting employee engagement – far too many to review in a single blog post. However, as with any business operation, employee development needs to be approached as a structured system, with objectives clearly established at the outset and measurable results along the way. The larger objective is to improve employee results and performance in a way that promotes professional and personal growth, at the same time it enhances the employee-manager relationship. The end result should be establishing a relationship that makes the employee feel supported and nurtured, and that promotes mutual respect with management. To begin the process, there have to be established goals:

1. Identify the employee's goals. Do they align with company goals and values? For example, is the employee looking to earn more flexible hours or more paid time off to pursue other interests, or are does he or she have a clear path for advancement in mind?

2. Are there issues blocking commitment to those goals. Identify them and address them. Consider if an employee wants to advance, but is limited by a conflict with another manager or family commitments. Can those impediments be minimized or removed?

3. Create a plan. Set goals and metrics for employee development or advancement. Does that worker need guidance or a mentor? Does he or she need training? Is there more opportunity for self-direction?

4. Get the employee's commitment. It is one thing to outline the company's goals and expectations, but the employee has to accept them and own them as well. Setting milestones that you both agree are achievable will spur motivation.

5. Outline ways to remove roadblocks to success. Offer help or support where needed. Provide training to promote new skills.

6. Set a date for re-evaluation of progress and performance. Deadlines are crucial to the process.

Setting goals and objectives and benchmarking those objectives promotes employee retention and is the first step in developing a successful employee development program. Of course, before you can create a retention and development program, you have to successfully recruit the best employees. On March 22 we will be hosting the next meeting of the Marin Business Forum, including a presentation by John Younger, Younger, CEO of Accolo, on how to “Turn Your Company into a Hiring Machine.” John is an expert at using the latest techniques to recruit the best candidates. If you are in the area, feel free to join us, or contact us to learn more about how to fuel your own hiring machine.