

NEWS & NOTES

Issue 5

ENABLE YOU INC.

Enable You Inc. provides the resources to complete the ongoing work or special project you haven't the time or staff expertise to address. Our services include a comprehensive range of business planning, human resources, marketing and communications support. Ask about our complimentary Opportunity Audit (with recommended action plan). Contact us at:

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CREATIVE SPARK

Any organization that doesn't regularly move forward with new ideas can stagnate. Looking ahead to mid-year results, here are a few thoughts to spark your marketing plans:

- **Experiment:** try some "guerilla" marketing
- **Get Feedback:** ask your customers and staff for feedback on your company's strengths and weaknesses
- **Respond:** do something with that feedback you receive
- **Simplify:** focus on achieving 3 critical goals
- **Renew:** yourself or business by learning something new: read a book, attend an industry event.

MOTIVATED EMPLOYEES: THE "NO-COST" MEANS TO INCREASED PROFITS (PART 2)

Part 2 of our exploration of employee motivation continues with a look at **some recent survey findings.**

In "**Motivating Today's Employees**", by Lin Gensing-Pophal, motivation theory provides the basis for understanding the psychology of human behaviors in the workplace. A study sponsored by KPMG and conducted by the Families And Work Institute found, "Workers are most likely to be satisfied with their jobs, committed to their employers, and productive at work, when they have jobs that offer autonomy, meaning, learning opportunities, support from supervisors, and flexible work arrangements that are responsive to individual needs."

Already, **where employers are experiencing labor force shortages**, flexible work schedules, various types of sabbatical programs, career-goal related training, opportunities to interact with senior executives, and quarterly rather than annual performance reviews are being offered to attract, retain and motivate employees. A Retention Risk Assessment is included in Gensing-Pophal's text, to help managers evaluate the likelihood of losing an employee/s. Guidelines for hiring, performance management challenges, and a review of the most meaningful job benefits/perks are also outlined.

Health and wellness programs can play a significant role in lowering employee stress and increasing productivity, through:

- higher morale
- improved decision making
- decreased absenteeism and turnover
- decreased insurance and medical costs.

A study of participants in Canada Life's fitness program during the 1980s found turnover dropped from 15% to 1.5%, and absenteeism fell 22%.

But, what if employee morale and motivation are generally strong, and you want to create a particular focus at a particular point in time? **Bob Nelson's "1001 Ways To Reward Employees"** reiterates that personal attention from a manager is almost always extremely motivating. 63% of respondents in a Wichita State University study ranked "a pat on the back" as a meaningful, desired incentive. Moreover, praise that's timely, face-to-face and specific makes an employee feel most appreciated.

Interesting, then, that other studies have shown severe gaps generally exist between management and employees regarding praise and

recognition. Bob Levoy of Success Dynamics found managers ranked themselves 4.4 on a 1-5 scale for telling their employees they were doing a good job. Those same employees ranked their managers at only 1.7! **This “feedback gap” is indicative of the unrealized potential for improved motivation and profits.**

In the next e-bulletin, we conclude our feature on employee motivation with a listing of innovative Reward & Recognition ideas, a “top 10” list of best rewards, and quotes from some highly effective business motivators

TRUE OR NOT TRUE?

Test your knowledge. The first person to email the correct response wins a Starbucks Coffee Card.

93% of greeting cards are purchased by women.

When Vesuvius erupted in 79AD, it buried the city of Pompeii and many of its inhabitants.

BUILDING EFFECTIVE TEAMS (PART 2)

In our last issue, we defined what an effective team is (see Issue 4, Building Effective Teams-Part 1) and we cited an example of a Help Desk consolidation with several team related issues.

The senior management team members weren't working together and the employees answering the phone handled the customers differently and didn't share information.

Fortunately for this call centre, the director recognized that there were problems in her own team and chose to address these, as well as begin the process of making the larger team a cohesive unit.

While the senior team worked together to learn about and trust each other, they made sure that everyone in the call centre felt informed. This meant developing a comprehensive communication plan which included quarterly presentations, question & answer sessions, a monthly newsletter and weekly updates about ongoing projects.

Since performance is one of the critical factors in any call centre environment, a special performance program was introduced to help everyone get on board. This program gave the employees the opportunity to participate in the operations of the new call centre. Various employee committees developed call scripts, identified the tools employees would need to do their jobs and how they would be measured. They even involved themselves in the creation of an awards program.

Gradually, at this new Help Desk, employees began to trust each other, including the management team. Through regular surveys with the clients, after only a year of working together, this team received a 92% satisfaction rating from its customers. The quality had increased 54% in the first 6 months and productivity had climbed 14%.

So what had they done? They helped their employees understand their goals and talents and how they could apply them to the team goals. Employees felt ownership for their jobs and therefore, commitment to the goals they had helped to create. Management welcomed questions and trusted the employees, encouraging, them to express themselves openly, even if the opinion was an opposing one. The senior team recognized employees for their contributions every month. Members were always allowed to participate in the decision making and always encouraged to learn.

In short, they did all the things that make a team great. The proof became very evident two years later, when the senior team of the Help Desk was asked to help with another call centre consolidation. The employees of the Help Desk were the ones allaying the fears and explaining how things would be done. They smoothed the way for the second consolidation because the same methods of building the team were being used.

See Mississauga Board of Trade Magazine, Volume 1, Issue 11 (Spring, 2007) for a recap of Enable You Inc's recent seminar.