

As seen in September 2011 issue:

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Motivation

Putting People First Puts Corporations Ahead

BY JAMES B. DITTMAN

Great companies know that their greatest asset is the quality of their human capital. They create a culture of employee appreciation and recognition to make certain that they can attract, engage, and retain top talent. Caring about people is also good business. Provide people the best conditions, benefits, and recognition and they will live core values and communicate the brand.

Having a strong brand and culture of appreciation is critical to keeping top performers. In fact, a survey last year showed that almost 20 percent of high performers who scored low on job satisfaction indicated plans to leave their companies—a figure almost twice what was reported in 2008. Consider the impact to your bottom line if one out of five of your top performers left your company.

Creating an award-winning culture goes beyond the occasional perk and press release. Companies must dedicate themselves to maximizing employee engagement. And now companies can invest in enterprise-wide web solutions that clearly enunciate brand values and drive employees toward them by recognizing efforts with communications and rewards.

Just as every person has his or her own sense of style, each person has a preference in how he or she wants to be recognized. A truly robust incentive, recognition, and rewards solution

provides the opportunity for eCards, leaderboards, certificates, awards, and points to redeem for merchandise, gift cards, travel, and event tickets.

In large corporations, the capability to measure performance improvements, track behaviors, and reward and recognize individuals and teams at different levels becomes much more critical to budgeting and forecasting. Enterprise-wide solutions have easy-to-use tools that provide critical reminders and help manage performance and budget allocation for years of service awards, learning, sales performance, employee milestones, safety, wellness, and many other elements.

A thoughtful system goes beyond the actual rewards and recognizes the continuous drivers of individual behavior and business outcomes. Remember, people spend most of their waking hours at their jobs. Work is not only a source of livelihood, but one of relationships, knowledge, challenges, and rewards. Understanding the psychology of human motivation is integral to a corporation's success.

“Organizations that buy into employee engagement learn to work collaboratively across units to find the best way to achieve long-term financial goals,” says Bruce Bolger, managing director of the New York-based Enterprise Engagement Alliance. “A program includes consideration of corporate goals, vision, and values that align

individual achievement with behaviors consistent with delivery of the brand promise.”

An engaged workforce is a community of individuals dedicated to making a difference. It's crucial to business that this value is bolstered to create an ongoing culture of excellence. Employees gain satisfaction through recognition and appreciation that can be peer-based, manager-based, or a combination. And they derive self-confidence and motivation through the recognition earned. The company benefits from a ripple effect of positive attitude and emotion that permeates the culture and extends out to customers.

James B. Dittman is president of Dittman Incentive Marketing, based in New Brunswick, NJ, a leading provider of incentives, rewards, and recognition programs using online software as a service (SaaS) to help companies realize immediate ROI in motivating salespeople, employees, channel partners, and customers. The company's solutions include TotalPro, Great Escapes, and Great Rewards. Dittman Incentive Marketing is a founding trustee of the People Performance Forum at Northwestern University and the Enterprise Engagement Alliance.

For information, visit the company at www.dittmanincentives.com and on Facebook at www.facebook.com/dittmanincentives.