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Improve Your Bottom Line, Benefit From Employee Ideas

By Chuck Yorke

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Customers want our products and services to be better, delivered faster, and produced less expensively. This means that everything we do needs to be improved. To stay competitive in this world we have to be better than we were last year and we should be prepared to be better next year. We must continuously improve. Engaged employees can show us the way. All employees can be thinking about how to reduce costs, looking at safety issues, reducing wastes and improving the environment, while at the same time developing skills to identify, articulate and communicate those kinds of things.

The Gallup Organization has studied thousands of companies and surveyed millions of employees. Their research has shown that very few employees are engaged and that a relatively small increase in the amount of engaged workers can reap great benefits for a company.

At the lowest level, engaged employees help a company stay in business and at a higher level employees start thinking about how they can improve themselves. They can take some ownership over their job; and also over their own development. It starts people thinking in new and different ways about the things they do.

In the book, "First, Break All the Rules" by Marcus Buckingham and Curt Coffman from Gallup, it is noted that the manager, not anything or anyone else, was most critical in building a strong workforce. A lot of companies struggle with leadership skills, communications interaction, and improving management skills. We are now undergoing a paradigm shift as many organizations are beginning to realize that management's job is to support the people doing the work as opposed to dictating how to do the work.

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Engaging employees in improving their work creates new levels of communication and gives the ownership of improvements to the worker. We now recognize that "you know your job better than management does because you are the one that does it every day." Since people are the expert in their work, who better to come up with ideas to improve it than them. We all want, need and deserve respect. Engaged people see the fruits of their labor as other people have accepted their ideas. They now receive positive feedback for a "job well done."

Any process, any product, any service can be made better in some way, somehow. One plant manager said, "It used to be that my problem solvers were solely the management team, but now my problem solvers are everybody in the building." How can you beat that?

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Chuck Yorke is an organizational development and performance improvement specialist, trainer, consultant and speaker. He is co-author of "All You Gotta Do Is Ask," a book which explains how to

promote large numbers of ideas from employees. Chuck may be reached at ChuckYorke@yahoo.com

Why Corporations Need To Care About The Commute

By Dr. M. Mastria

You would think corporations have enough to concern themselves about without also taking on the commute of their employees. How far someone lives from work should certainly be his or her own concern, shouldn't it? Or should it?

Over the years, studies and interviews have shown that the long distance commute has had adverse effects on the worker and work production. After 40 or 50 minutes on the road, the need to resist a break to relax and recoup is strong. Some people even plan on getting to work early so they can have time to reenergize before they begin the work day. There is no doubt that long commutes have adverse effects on work production throughout the day.

Still, why should corporations care? Because the loss of revenue creeps into the millions of dollars. Because making decisions when chronic fatigue has set in can have devastating effects. Because the accident rate increases significantly. Because absenteeism, health problems, relationship problems all have a major effect on the bottom line.

Corporations should care because the way to make money is to have well-oiled parts, both mechanical and human. From top to bottom, the employee who functions well, who makes good decisions, who produces outstanding work, is the employee who moves the company forward. And the employee who has difficulty in functioning, making poor decisions, producing poor work, is the employee who is causing the company to stumble on its march to excellence. And the road-weary employee can easily be the one having difficulty.

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What's a company to do? There are a number of things, both big and small that will that will ease the employee's commute and have beneficial side effects for the company as well. There are services aimed at providing companies with tools to help their workers with the commute (for a list, visit our website at Commuter-Assist.com).

Asking your employees what is needed or how you can help, will not only score big points among employees, but it will also increase performance and productivity. And for people wishing to achieve balance and success in your life, there are ways to get through and turn around anything in your life that is not in balance.

Dr. Mastria is the founder of

<http://Commuter-Assist.com>

which offers workshops, coaching and

additional supportive materials aimed at enhancing employee's lives. Contact us at 570-839-6394 or e-mail

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