Employee Recognition Programs

Mark Whitney prepared materials on employee recognition programs. These materials were prepared in connection with a recent seminar. The materials are available by clicking on the PDF link above.

Article Summary

All employees like to be recognized and appreciated. An employee recognition program can be the key to motivating employees and infusing a healthy dose of creativity into an otherwise "stale" corporate culture.

Traditionally, recognition programs were viewed as a "nice thing" for companies to do. Today, companies are thinking about recognition more strategically and aligning their employee recognition programs with their business goals. The world's best organizations treat recognition as a critical business process, closely tied to improving employee engagement, retention and performance. According to a June 2009 survey by the Aberdeen Group, close to 80% of the "best in class" Fortune 1000 employers have instituted some type of employee recognition program. As further proof of its nascent import, Bob Nelson, President of Nelson Motivation Inc. and best-selling author of *1001 Ways to Reward Employees*, estimates that the U.S. incentive industry is a $27 billion-dollar enterprise.

In short, higher levels of employee engagement bear a strong correlation to superior levels of job satisfaction, enhanced employee performance, corresponding improvements in customer service and engagement, and ultimately a quantifiable return on investment. A properly developed, implemented and administered employee recognition program is a sound, strategic investment, and not an expendable nicety.

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