

10 ways to Create a Workplace that Shines

In today's demanding work environment, it is imperative to attract and retain the brightest employees. To do that you need to be an 'employer of choice'--one that creates an environment where people want to work. Consider these guidelines to attract and retain the best talent while enhancing your bottom line.

Purpose

1. **Vision**

Clarity and vision are the foundation of building a successful business. Companies that clearly articulate their mission and purpose and repeat it frequently to employees will create a corporate culture with a clear sense of identity. Those employees in turn will embody that purpose in word and deed. This type of clear communication creates a collaborative environment and directly impacts productivity.

2. **Values**

Once a vision is defined, values can then shape the course of action that follows. With massive bailout debacles, electronic and social media mania and 17 changes a minute, people are hungry for people and organizations that are worthy of their commitment and allegiance. Create a values-driven organization and watch morale soar.

Passion

3. **Work smart and with heart**

When people are doing what they love and loving what they do, their productivity and creativity know no bounds. When employees have a head/heart connection at work they not only have good energy themselves, they create good energy on teams. They produce more, lead more effectively and have energy at the end of the day!

4. **Aligning people and position**

The biggest mistake most companies make is hiring or promoting good people and then placing them in incompatible positions. It is imperative to utilize effective interviewing and assessment skills to best align human talent with job requirements. Integrate people's strengths and delegate their weaknesses. Hiring the right people is an art; when the company's purpose, vision and values are clear it is a natural byproduct.

Power

5. **Communicate**

Employees should not have to guess what is expected of them. Solicit their input and feedback. Employees that help shape decisions or define goals are much more likely to enforce or achieve them. Seek buy-in and watch the performance and team spirit explode.

6. **Collaborate**

Cultivate a team-like attitude throughout the entire company. Companies that have assigned parking for the CEO send a loud message of who's in charge and whose voice really counts. Employees that feel valued and connected will stay late to finish the project.

7. **Celebrate**

Strengths that are acknowledged and affirmed will deepen and expand. Catch people in the act of "getting it right" and celebrate it. Focus on what you want to create--not what you hate. Remember, most people learn by imitation; model what you want rather than criticize what you don't.

8. **Support Self Care**

Supporting people at strategic times in their life can pay rich dividends in terms of loyalty and longevity. Truett Cathy, founder of Chick-fil-A, understands if he takes good care of his employees, they will take good care of his business. Employees that are happy outside of work perform better at work. Encourage employees to have a life they enjoy.

Potential

9. **Embrace Change and Conflict**

It's important to foster an environment where change is explained and conflict is addressed in open and creative ways. Employees mirror management. Transform problems and challenges into opportunities for growth or re-design. Deal openly with problems and discuss them rather than issuing orders and solutions. Being exclusive and secretive shuts people down; being inclusive invites creativity, innovation and loyalty.

Plan

10. **Plan to Succeed**

A clear vision includes a plan for success. It may be a formal, written strategic plan or simply one that is expressed verbally on a regular basis. The plan should be fluid and easy to adapt based on the changing needs of the company and larger environment. A plan is essential to move into a bright future with purpose and passion.

Creating an inviting workplace where people want to show up everyday is a natural byproduct of companies that are clear on their purpose, encourage passion and empower their people to fulfill their potential. Move from purpose to plan with intention and ease.