

The YEBDC Small Business Information Column

by Sue Gingerich, Business Advisor

"The Recipe For Keeping Employees & Keeping Them Happy"

What prompts people to stay in a job for 5 or 10 years? Is it because they can come to work and get paid with out doing very much? You know, a nice/slack/easy job! Is that what keeps people hanging around? Highly unlikely! Human nature being what it is, most people stay in jobs because they receive just the right amount of challenge, with just the right amount of stress and responsibility. Oh sure there will always be a few who want to do less, or those who want to do more. Fact is, if you see your employees as individuals and determine some of their individuals needs, you can most likely get them to work to their highest potential!

SO what is the recipe for success with your employees? First of all, observe your employees -- study them, understand what makes them tick. If you understand their "personalities" there will definitely be some clues about how they like to be challenged, or what is stressful for them. For example: An employee who is very independent and a bit of a free thinker, may have real trouble working in a very controlled environment with lots of "rules".

One excellent method for gaining insight into your employee's personality is by using the Drake Predictive Performance Profile, more commonly known as a P3. The employee simply fills out a questionnaire which the employer sends to their local P3 Representative (YEBDC), who in-turn, will return to the employer a 11 page profile about the employees personality at work. Part of the beauty of this method is sharing it with the employee to receive feed back on its accuracy. Most of the time they are about 96 to 98 % accurate. The employees really enjoy reading about themselves and the employer has new insight into his employee's personality. It is really best done in a team setting, where everyone in the organization participates. After receiving the profiles back it often becomes easier for co-workers to see why they don't always see eye to eye, or why different employees like different working environments.

It may mean not treating all employees exactly the same way, because, as individuals they are different and they respond to different motivators. Such as the employee mentioned earlier, the free thinker. This individual may do much better working in an environment where they set some of the rules. This individual may be motivated by things like; flextime or working from a home office, whereas a different employee might actually crave the structure and excitement of an office setting.

If employees do not like their work, they will most likely not stay long at the job or they will stay but not do a good job. Having a working environment that people enjoy goes a long way in helping people to like what they do! Something that bosses can do to find out what would help the employees to like their jobs more is simply to ask them. Ask them; what do they enjoy most about their job, what do they dislike about their job, what would help to make their job easier or better? Once employers have the answers to these questions they will have the ingredients that are needed to make their employees happier and most likely more productive in their organization.

If you have a small business and have a question or problem that you think The YEBDC could help you with please call or write to: The Yellowhead East Business Development Corporation, Box 249, Sangudo, Alberta, T0E 2A0
1-800-556-0328 or 1-780-785-2900, e mail: yebdc@yebdc.ab.ca, or access our Website at: www.yebdc.ab.ca

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