

CORPORATE ENGAGEMENT: 3 TIPS TO BETTER RECRUIT AND RETAIN TALENT

“While there are certainly best practices to motivate at the employee level, there are also a few critical focus areas at the company level that must be addressed first to ensure your business is built to successfully recruit and retain talent: **start with your mission, know the why, and be authentic.**”

Contrary to the fairy-tale endings of most February feature movies, the truth is people today are more hesitant to commit than ever. Not only do recent lifestyle trends show increases in the number of people marrying later, postponing parenthood, and renting versus buying their homes, but even long-term contracts with health clubs and mobile carriers are proving too rigid for today’s consumers, who are increasingly opting for the flexibility of pay-as-you-go plans.

But there’s more.

This commitment-adverse mindset has also infiltrated corporate America. Modern Survey reports that a staggering 47% of all employees are either completely or moderately disengaged, and buzzwords like “job-hopping” have seasoned business executives left questioning when long-term loyalty became an antiquated concept.

With nearly half of the work force affected, it’s no surprise that 87% of organizations cite culture and engagement as a top challenge, as Deloitte University Press recently reported. And while it was once considered primarily an HR initiative, a comprehensive Gallup study has estimated the resulting annual cost in lost productivity to be over \$450 billion, reaffirming that leaders in all functional areas should have employee engagement at the top of their priority lists.

But where do you begin your efforts?

While there are certainly best practices to motivate at the employee level—from clearly communicating roles and expectations, to replacing annual reviews with monthly face-to-face meetings—there are also a few critical focus areas at the company level that must be addressed first to ensure your business is built to successfully recruit and retain talent:

START WITH YOUR MISSION

To keep employees on board long-term, it’s vital to attract talent that understands and embraces the mission of your organization. Attracting candidates on the basis of specific positions may help fill immediate voids, but attracting candidates with a shared passion for what your company is trying to achieve will significantly increase the odds that your hires will stay on to build their careers.

So how do you know if your mission statement is properly crafted to attract the right talent? The keys are to keep it simple, forward thinking, and as differentiated as possible. Consider Google’s mission statement: “Google’s mission is to organize the world’s information and make it universally accessible and useful.” It’s concise, progressive, and strikes a great balance between being lofty enough to inspire while specific enough to attract candidates who are passionate



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about the cause. The bottom line: The better you're able to communicate what your organization is aiming to achieve, the greater your odds of finding the right team members to help get you there.

KNOW THE WHY

If you're asking employees to fully invest themselves in your organization, it's not enough to offer competitive wages and a nice benefits package. Leadership expert Simon Sinek gave a widely-praised TED Talk in 2009 that powerfully argues that people don't buy *what* you do, they buy *why* you do it. That's why organizations with a clear "why"—those who can passionately articulate a clear vision and defining motivators—are typically more successful at retaining their employees. By communicating what it is they stand for, these companies are able to connect with, and ultimately hire people whose personal and spiritual values align with their own, setting the ideal foundation for productive and mutually-beneficial long-term relationships. "Don't hire people who need a job," Sinek advises. "Hire people who believe what you believe. They will work with blood, sweat and tears instead of for a paycheck."

BE AUTHENTIC

The demand for organizational transparency has never been greater than it is today. Not only do consumers expect it from the companies they do business with, but those within company walls demand it as well. It's one thing to have an eloquently-written company statement or to position your organization a certain way when conducting interviews, but successfully retaining talent requires that the philosophies and values you express as central to your business be truly ingrained in your atmosphere, culture, and benefits. Generic perks like free bagels may always garner some smiles, but the real opportunity exists in structuring your benefits to promote what's truly important to your organization. And whether that's work-life balance, continuing education, charitable work, or something entirely unique to your company, what matters most is that you turn your words into action. Not only will doing so underscore your commitment to your values, but not doing so is one of the fastest ways to create a revolving door. In today's corporate world, authenticity is a non-negotiable.

So what does this all mean?

Generic check-the-box exercises are no longer effective when it comes to keeping employees engaged and committed. Rather, leaders must be willing to start at the core of their organizations if they want to best position themselves to attract and retain top-level talent.

And whether your company is large and bursting at the seams, or so small that there simply aren't enough jobs to offer employees rapid growth or succession planning, the good news is we all have the ability to establish our missions and values in a way that will further engage our employees, keeping them enthused about not only what we do, but who we are and what we represent.

What does your organization stand for? Do your mission, values, and culture align to foster passionate and loyal employees? If you need help getting started, give us a call today at #708-738-5040 or visit our websites at RRGExec.com and SearchWorksllc.com