

Connecting People and Strategy

Newsletter by C Bergeron Associates

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Retain Talent By Getting Personal

While the labor market is red hot, implementing retention efforts is critical. These days, employees are no longer loyal to their companies – loyalty is reserved for the people they work with. Research indicates that the most influential person is the employee's manager.

Here are a few ideas on how you, as a manager, can affect employee retention. What do these ideas all have in common? They require you to deliberately and genuinely develop close and caring relationships with each of your direct reports. You have the most influence so put these ideas into action today.

1. **Help her fit in.** Provide a clear understanding of contribution expectations and how they fit into the firm's grander vision. *Message:* We expect great things from you and they matter to the company and me.
2. **Provide resources and tools** so he can do his job well. *Message:* You need good tools to produce good work and optimize effectiveness.
3. **Provide her opportunity** to do her best work. Remove obstacles, coach her, and place her in a job that makes the most of her talents. *Message:* We want you to be successful!
4. **Ask questions, listen and respond.** Create forums to hear new ideas. Implement suggestions made by him. If the ideas are not suitable for implementation then talk about why and jointly explore how, with some modification, the ideas could be implemented. *Message:* You have good ideas that make a difference.
5. **Celebrate success.** We all like to be part of a winning team. Recognize success when you see it! Get the next level of management involved in recognizing success too. *Message:* We appreciate you, your work and how you go about achieving results.
6. **Partner for development.** Make his work challenging. Assign resume-building responsibilities. Role modeling, simulations, special projects, stretch

assignments, job rotations and training coupled with coaching can be effective development tools. *Message:* We believe you have more to offer and we want to invest in you.

7. **Relax the environment** and free it of formalities and protocols that inhibit her creativity. Encourage freethinking, informal and open dialog, risk taking and learning. *Message:* We want you to *want* to be here to create, learn and have fun!
8. **Be flexible in meeting individual needs.** Learn about the many roles in life that he fills: spouse, parent, elder care provider, sibling, community leader and employee. Cater to his needs to help bring his worlds together. *Message:* We recognize there are many demands in life and we want to do what we can to support you.

Remember, as a manager you have the most direct influence on the employee work experience. Make the experience positive and get personal with your top talent!

Article Watch

Is the Zest for Success Compromising Results?

The two strongest cultures typically found in technical start-up firms are those "set by" the founding management and the initial product development team. The two cultures may conflict, which can lead to compromised product delivery and product features. This article presents ideas on how to create balance between the two cultures resulting in improved organizational performance. "Corporate Culture in Internet Time", First Quarter 2000, Issue 18, by Art Kleiner, from Strategy + Business, a quarterly management journal published by Booz, Allen & Hamilton.

www.strategy-business.com

Our Results

The Challenge

CBergeron Associates is working with a large technical service organization. A leader in its industry, the company has a clear vision, strategic plan and portfolio of outstanding service offerings. The firm recognizes that its growth is contingent upon providing excellent customer service by opening additional office locations and staffing each location with several hundred skilled employees who are prepared to support large geographic areas.

The company's previous office location selection process effectively addressed real estate and information technology requirements. High labor costs and turnover rates encountered early on at several of the new sites led to the revision of strategies starting with the site selection process.

Several associates and I consulted with key players of the firm and jointly designed a process that more effectively identifies new sites for business expansion while giving greater weight to labor force factors and important process interdependencies.

The Process

1. Identify additional locations across the globe that satisfy infrastructure needs from real estate, information technology, labor availability and cost perspectives.
2. Ensure the locations can provide the appropriate quantity of quality talent. CBergeron Associates conducted a series of labor market analyses that included gathering a "macro" view of the local labor market and insights obtained through conversation with local community leaders.

About CBergeron Associates

We work with leadership teams to produce better business results by aligning business strategy and people. We can help you translate your business strategy into a performance based action plan, increase company-wide understanding of the plan through implementation of a communications strategy and align workforce and management practices with your business strategy.

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3. Talk with potential new hires to assess their abilities and aptitudes in meeting the predefined job performance goals.

The Results

1. The process for identifying appropriate additional office locations was re-designed.
2. A profile that describes ideal new sites in terms of economic and labor based benchmarks was created.
3. At least two new sites for expansion have surfaced.
4. Our future action item is to transition the labor market analysis step of the process back into the company as a working model. We will keep you posted.

Carol Bergeron, President

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Routing List:
