

Developing Enthusiastic Employees Doesn't Have To Break The Bank

By: Jason Boltax with Daniel Nemet-Nejat

Employees are your biggest asset. In an increasingly competitive economy, the future of your business depends on your ability to make your employees feel invested in their work, to make the office a place they want to be rather than a place they can't wait to leave. Fail at this task and chances are you'll lose your employees to the competition. It is more important now than ever to build an effective system to retain your talent.

Developing enthusiastic, effective employees doesn't have to mean breaking the bank. But it does mean making the effort to create a culture that encourages each individual to maximize his or her performance. This environment is built on what we call the four Cs—**Connection, Contribution, Credibility** and **Commitment**.

Connection

Build relationships with your workforce. Employees want to work in a collaborative environment designed to utilize their skills.

- ✓ Make it a part of the weekly ritual to walk around the office and talk with your employees. This routine will foster an open relationship between you and your staff.
- ✓ Learn your employees' individual strengths and needs and design roles and tasks that will put each one in a position to succeed.
- ✓ Provide clear directions and goals for each project.
- ✓ Create a supportive and accountable workplace. Encourage your employees to learn from their mistakes, free from punishment, by holding regular debriefings to analyze performance on a project.

Contribution

Create a system that motivates ALL employees to contribute.

- ✓ Make sure all voices—not just the loudest ones—are heard. The workplace is not a schoolyard; there should be no bullies. In meetings, go around the room and ask everyone to offer their ideas.
- ✓ Teamwork is key. Group structures can be an effective way to harness individual talents in service of a greater goal.
- ✓ Incentives are a great way to motivate employees.

About the Authors:

Jason Boltax is the president and founder of JHB Human Capital Management (www.jhbhcm.com), a human resources strategy consulting firm, specializing in HR management, organizational assessments and workforce development. For more information about JHB Human Capital Management or this article, please call 646-228-8559 or email info@jhbhcm.com

Helpful Hints

A "wall of fame" is a low cost, but effective tool. Display positive feedback from clients on a prominent office bulletin board. That way all employees—not just the high potential ones—feel there is way for their good work to be recognized.

Set up a "pay and reward" system, where employees know that outstanding work—based on regular performance evaluations—will lead to a tangible reward, such as a bonus, a gift certificate or an extra day off.

Credibility

Earn the trust of your employees.

- ✓ Follow through on your promises. If you say you will set up an incentive program, you must do it.
- ✓ Be honest. Whether business is booming or struggling, tell employees what's what. They'll respect you more for it and feel like they're part of a team instead of hired hands.

Commitment

Lead by example. You, the employer, must be diligent about building a supportive workplace. Make it a priority. Show your employees that you value their contributions and recognize their achievements. Good managers remember to recognize and motivate employees. Great managers do it everyday.

The results are indisputable. Motivated employees have better morale, are more committed to their company's success and, consequently, are more likely to remain loyal to you, their employer. So follow the 4 C's and drive the bottom line in the right direction. Remember, your employees are your greatest asset.

Daniel Nemet-Nejat is an award-winning screenwriter and a journalist whose work has appeared in numerous national publications including *Wired*, *Movie Maker*, *espn.com*, *Golf Magazine*, *Stuff* and others.