

Creating a “Great Place to Work”

Do your staff know why they are employed?

At first glance this sounds like a fairly facile question. Of course they know; their job is to do such and such, and they have been trained to do it! But if we go beyond the fact that they understand what their assigned tasks are, and then ask the question as to whether they understand the owners aspirations for the business, and just how they fit into the process of these being achieved, we sometimes get some surprising answers.



Ensuring clarity in this regard is not only critical to the best interests of the business, but it is also a key component in continuing staff motivation. I recently came across a web site (www.greatplacetowork.gov.uk) of the “Great Place To Work Institute, Inc.” an international organisation headquartered in San Francisco, California, that says it pretty well, as follows:

“People who say they work in a great organisation put it down to a knowledge that they know what’s going on and how they fit into the bigger picture, and a sense that their contribution is valued and makes a difference. All of this adds up to a sense of opportunity, achievement and excitement.

Great places to work come in all sizes and are drawn from all sectors. They can be very different from each other, but they all seem to share a common culture:

- they **achieve results** by sharing the goals of the organisation with their people
- they **involve everyone** by sharing information and effort
- they **develop people** by sharing learning with everyone

Nobody can guarantee success and of course some organisations can do all these things and still fail because of factors outside their control. But the **evidence** demonstrates that involving and developing all your people leads to measurable benefits and sustained success. This culture of partnership with your people is good for your organisation.

To achieve outstanding results means everyone sharing the business goals - understanding the business you’re in. Reaching your goals is only possible through good management of your people and their development.

This approach increases the chances of becoming an agile customer-facing organisation, and helps to secure the best levels of performance and the highest standards of product, service delivery and satisfied customers

Achieving results means:

- successfully managing change
- constantly innovating and improving the ways things are done

- focusing on customers (both internal and external)
- attaining quality and excellence in all that you do
- having motivated people
- valuing their contribution
- providing appropriate training

Recognising and valuing the contributions and diversity of individuals in your workforce helps you understand your customers' different needs and expectations more effectively. It allows you to establish the shared values that bind your organisation together. But how do you make this possible? What does it mean in practical terms for your organisation?

It's about creating real partnerships. Involving all your team in business decisions and sharing information with them will generate new ways of achieving the business' goals more quickly, cheaply, simply. More than ever business success depends on the people in your organisation bringing in a continual flow of new ideas.

So what are the benefits of involving everyone in your organisation?

- Better understanding of what you are trying to achieve
- Accelerated product and process innovation
- A climate of trust and partnership
- More flexible ways of working

Developing people needs to be at the heart of an effective business strategy. If your people are to contribute the best they can to your organisation, they need to gain new knowledge and develop new skills and share their knowledge and learning with others. Most importantly, you need to support and encourage your people to apply these new skills in the workplace. This will help make learning part of your way of developing the business, enabling your people to lead product and process innovation, maintaining a competitive edge.

So what are the benefits of developing the people in your organisation?

- Improved recruitment and retention
- Greater flexibility in individuals and in teams
- Better management of change
- Improved productivity”

Cheers

Cam Charlton – Director
KLEINHARDT
BUSINESS CONSULTANTS
cam@kleinhardt.com.au