

## How Do You Show Appreciation?

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In my last article I mentioned the top three motivators for employees based on a survey that was done by HR Workforce. Those top three motivators for employee satisfaction and retention are: 1) Feeling cared about in the workplace, 2) Appreciation and recognition for effort and work done and finally, 3) Tactful disciplining. Did you know that the number one reason an employee will leave the workplace, according to a 2008 US Department of Labor statistics report, is because they don't feel appreciated? Additionally, more than one million employed U.S. workers participated in a Gallup poll and it concluded that the number one reason people quit their jobs is because of a bad boss or immediate supervisor. Many businesses leaders believe that employee satisfaction is primarily tied to salary. Paying all staff a fair salary is a must; however, it doesn't matter how much a person is getting paid that makes them feel valued and appreciated in your organization, that is up to you. How are you making sure that your staff feels appreciated?

One way to make sure that all members of your staff feel appreciated is to understand what is important to them in the workplace based on their generational values. Each generation approaches the workplace differently and are motivated by influences of their generation. For example:

- Traditionalist - Want an environment of human interface with supervisors and other staff
- Boomers - If they put in the time, they will receive credit and respect
- Gen X - Training and development particularly important
- Millennials - Want a retention or 'stay interview' within 90 days

Since there are four generations working together, creating a culture of cooperation within the workplace is critical to success, and finding ways to make sure your staff feel appreciated reduces turnover which also contribute to your success. Here's an exercise to test your cooperation. Cross your arms over your chest as you would normally do. Which arm is on top? Now, cross your arms again but this time put the other arm on top. How does that feel? A little uncomfortable? Maybe it's even a challenge to get your arms to cross since that's not how you would naturally do it. How often do you ask staff to "cross their arms the way you do," simply because it's the way you know? Is it possible that their way is just as effective, it's just different? For a staff member to feel appreciated, it's important that their approach is given consideration and their ideas are taken seriously. This is especially true for emerging leaders in Gen X and the Millennial generation. These two generations thrive when their input is sought out and utilized. Just imagine how appreciated someone feels when you ask them for their ideas or find ways to implement their suggestions to improve productivity, your budget, or the work environment.

By recognizing the different generational values that each staff member has as well as identifying key motivators, you help each individual feel appreciated, you retain quality staff and you impact your overall bottom line. Now, cross your arms, lean back and imagine the positive culture and work environment you're going to create for your organization.