

Improving employee job satisfaction benefits employers

Smart organizations know that retaining good employees is important. If your employees are satisfied with their jobs, you'll have a better chance of retaining them and they will be more productive and efficient as well. Although keeping workers happy in times of layoffs and budget cuts can be difficult, employers can do it.

One way to keep employees happy is to find out what they want and then try to give it to them. Although some employee wants, like big raises, may not be possible, other wants, like creating employee career development plans, can cost very little and can give a big boost to employee morale and motivation.

Employers often have a mistaken impression about what employees want. In a survey conducted by The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) and USA Today, researchers found a discrepancy between what employees wanted and what HR professionals thought they wanted. Employees ranked their top five "very important" job components as:

1. Job security
2. Benefits
3. Communication between employees and management
4. Employee flexibility to balance work and life issues
5. Compensation/pay

In contrast, HR professionals ranked the top five "very important" job components for employees as:

1. Communication between employees and management
2. Recognition by management
3. Relationship with immediate manager
4. Job security
5. Compensation/pay

Workplace demographics play a role in what employees want. Workers in their 20s may base job satisfaction more on work/life issues, communications between management and employees, and career advancement opportunities than on compensation. Younger workers may value educational assistance while older employees may value good retirement benefits.

Fortunately, it's easy to find out what your employees want: you can ask them. Elizabeth Rice Executive V.P. of Innovative Employee Solutions, says, "Conducting an employee satisfaction survey is one of the most important first steps companies can take to improve workplace productivity, employee retention rates, and overall profitability." Rice adds, "Employee satisfaction surveys help companies effectively gauge whether or not their employees feel motivated and content and troubleshoot any areas that might negatively impact their bottom line due to losses in workplace productivity and employee turnover."

For an employee satisfaction survey to be effective, Rice says that employers need to ask the right questions. The survey should include questions about the employees' level of satisfaction with their benefits and compensation packages; relationships with managers and co-workers; employer policies and procedures; workplace morale and motivation; training and career development programs; and quality of the employer's communication with staff.

Employers should use the results from the survey to make improvements to the workplace. By understanding employee concerns, companies can take positive steps toward improving employee satisfaction, productivity and morale.

For more information, contact CTSI at 303-758-9066.

County Technical Services, Inc.

800 Grant St., Suite 400
Denver CO 80203

303.861.0507
FAX: 303.861.2832

Technical Updates are available online at: www.ctsi.org