

What is a Great Workplace?

The Twelve Dimensions that Describe Great Workgroups

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What makes a great workplace? A study conducted by The Gallup Organization of more than 80,000 employees revealed that several factors combine to create a quality workplace. The findings pointed to the importance of employee recognition as a critical source of employee satisfaction and retention. The objective of the research was to identify the consistent dimensions of "quality workplaces," defined as those in which four critical outcomes - employee retention, customer satisfaction, productivity, and profitability - are all at high levels.

Recognition and praise ranked fourth among the 12 dimensions that consistently correlated with those workgroups that have higher employee retention, higher customer satisfaction, higher productivity, and higher profits. The dimensions do not include pay and benefits. That does not mean that pay and benefits are not important. But it does mean that compensation levels do not differentiate great workgroups from the rest.

The study found 12 indicators linking employee satisfaction with positive business outcomes. Among these positive business outcomes was profitability, and proof that companies who combine productivity measurement and set goals combined with their recognition program are the most likely to be successful.

Employees who are extremely satisfied at their job are four times more likely to have a formal measurement process in place and receive regular recognition compared with those who are not satisfied. When an employee is satisfied with their workplace and the way they are recognized, they are likely to tell others about their organization. Word of mouth marketing is one of the most effective forms because it is genuine, so when employees are telling others about the pros of their workplace because of its recognition program, others will be attracted to that organization. If the organization's recognition program is strong, chances are you will be able to retain any valuable employees that were attracted and they will continue to spread the buzz to people they know who may be qualified to fill one of the other positions in the organization. In this study, 82% of employees surveyed agree that recognition motivates them to improve their job importance.

This study shows us that a strong recognition program should have a positive domino effect on attracting and retaining the best employees for your organization. If your recognition program is strong, employees will feel valued and drive themselves to keep up the good work or achieve even more next time. When employees feel valued and enjoy working for their organization, they will talk about this outside of work and others will become interested in working for your organization.

If this employee is in a social circle of people with similar interests, there is a chance that some potentially valuable employees could be attracted to your organization. Your strong

recognition program should retain these employees and hopefully have the same effect on them as the original employee they heard this from. In theory, this cycle will continue and build a strong reputation for your company among its employees as well as outsiders, increasing customer satisfaction, profitability, and productivity while reducing employee turnover.

The 12 components that make up successful workplaces are:

1: Knowing What's Expected

Expectations are the milestones we use to measure our progress and, within the workplace, those milestones mark the pathways that guide us toward achievement. If expectations are not clear, we are hesitant, indecisive, and unsure of ourselves.

2: Materials and Equipment

In providing the necessary workplace tools, we face the challenge of maximizing potential by appropriately matching individuals, each of whom has a wide range of skills and knowledge, with the right tools.

3: Doing What I Do Best

Full human potential is realized only when people are in a position to use their greatest talents. Great performance is found when people are in roles that match what they naturally do best. Matching the right person with the right job is probably the most significant challenge organizations and managers face today.

4: Recognition or Praise

Praise and recognition are essential building blocks of a great workplace. We all possess the need to be recognized as individuals and to feel a sense of accomplishment.

5: My Supervisor Cares About Me

Employees don't leave companies; they leave managers and supervisors. The impact that a supervisor has in today's workplace can be either very valuable or very costly to the organization and the people who work there.

Employees want quality relationships with someone who can guide them

6: Someone Encourages My Development

The innate yearning to learn and grow is natural to human beings. Our jobs allow us to encounter new situations and find new ways to overcome challenges every day. Every employee wants to learn and grow.

7: My Opinions Seem to Count

All employees want to feel that they are making significant contributions to their workplaces. The ways organizations hear and process employees' ideas will shape, to a large degree, whether or not they feel valued for their contributions. Employees need to feel valued and know that they really make a difference in their companies and organizations

8: My Company's Mission or Purpose

Employees want to know they are making a difference, contributing to an important endeavor. The best workplaces give their employees a sense of purpose, help them feel they belong, and enable them to make a difference. A clear understanding of how one's particular job contributes to the company's "reason for being" can be a powerful form of emotional compensation

9: Doing Quality Work

Helping all team members identify the characteristics that will result in a quality product can lead to greater efficiency and increased productivity. Trusting that one's coworkers share a commitment to quality is a key to great team performance

10: I Have a Best Friend at Work

Human beings are social animals, and work is a social institution. The evolution of quality relationships is very normal and an important part of a healthy workplace. In the best workplaces, employers recognize that people want to forge quality relationships with their coworkers, and that company allegiance can be built from such relationships. The development of trusting relationships is a significant emotional compensation for employees in today's marketplace

11: Talk to Me About My Progress

The best managers recognize that a performance review provides time to discuss the progress and growth of an employee. It can help employees understand themselves better and give them a clear perspective on how their contributions really make a difference to the organization. Quality, individualized feedback is very valuable.

12: Opportunities to Learn and Grow

The need to learn and grow is a natural instinct for human beings. We can learn and grow by finding more efficient ways to do our jobs. Where there is growth, there is innovation, and this is a breeding ground for more positive and refreshing perspectives toward ourselves and others. Productivity does not come from working harder, it comes from working "smarter." Work environments that promote learning and growth on the job are attractive to employees.