

# NO-COST/LOW-COST EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION

- ▲ Properly thanking employees costs nothing, yields much
- ▲ Well implemented, appreciation upholds company values, culture
- ▲ Appreciation and employee growth initiatives lead to retention, higher performance



Thank you!

**Attracting talent is expensive; replacing talent costs far more.** There are those who emphasize increasing pay and it's true, people often leave for more money elsewhere. Nevertheless, people are often reluctant to move and only do so when their needs are not adequately met. Rather than breaking the bank, are there some low and no-cost options for retaining talent and helping them feel appreciated? Absolutely.

According to Gallup surveys of the American Workplace, only four in 10 U.S. employees strongly agree that their supervisor, or someone at work, cares about them as a person. The gains that can be attained by doubling that figure are profound. However, that doesn't mean that appreciation schemes need to be elaborate. Sometimes, the simplest ways to communicate are the best. Here are five approaches that leaders can enact right now.



1

**While Managing by Wandering Around (MBWA), Catch People Doing Things Right** –

Make it a practice to wander and watch. Who's doing things well? Customer service and help desk people have a tough job. When was the last time a leader either listened in, reviewed recordings (if you make them) or just hung around the area to get a sense of the general buzz in the department? And made a point of remarking when things go as expected? Are your delivery personnel getting the job done well? On the manufacturing floor, who's working the right way? Who's got suggestions for improvement? When was the last time leaders did some of those jobs and then talked with teammates about their experience after? **If leaders are on the floor often enough, employees won't tense up while they are around and will act normally.**



2

**Supporting Our Values Cards** – Employees only... Provide employees easy access to cards that name a fellow employee that they have observed supporting a particular company and how they did it. The donor fills out the card and gives it to the employee in question, who turns it in for entry into a special award lottery and/or group celebration (i.e. team party, etc.) which occur monthly or more frequently if deserved. **The reward events provide a way for storytelling that reinforces the values supported by the employees and helps them appreciate that their work is meaningful.**

3

**Fika for Work from Home (WFH)** – In Sweden, Fika is a coffee break tradition. It does not involve work talk. For companies with WFH, schedule a virtual meeting and ensure that coffee and pastries/fruit/snacks are delivered before the meeting. **Then, get together and socialize. This would also be equally effective for workers in the office.**

4

**Talk to Employees about Career Growth** – One of the simplest ways to show appreciation for employees is to **talk with them about ways they can grow their careers frequently and comment to them regularly on how they are doing.**

5

**Consider Offering Flexible Work Time** – Even if WFH is not an option, flexible time may be. **According to Gallup, 51% of employees say they would change jobs for one that offers them flexible work time.**

According to Gallup's Survey of the American worker, Employees are leaving their job for numerous reasons. the most common explanations employees give when voluntarily exiting their job are:

- career growth opportunities
- pay and benefits
- manager or management
- company culture
- job fit

**Making sure that leaders are visible, actively seeking out people and recognizing when they do things well improves manager performance and employee relations.**



Supporting the culture by rewarding those who display the values is a simple and effective way to reinforce the culture of the organization. When prospective employees interview, they will be impressed by the type of culture that has been created. This not only communicates appreciation, but it also serves to attract talent.

According to the Work Institute, the greatest number of voluntary departures have been for growth opportunities. When an organization works to develop its employees, it sends a powerful message about how they are appreciated. **In Gallup’s survey, only three in 10 U.S. employees strongly agreed that in the last six months someone has talked to them about their progress.** Simply taking the steps to communicate interest in their growth and the progress they have made will yield enormous benefits in appreciation and retention.

Employees want to know that the work that they do is meaningful. Being present with employees in this fashion delivers very important and powerful messages about their importance to the enterprise. **Perhaps the lowest cost initiative of all is for leaders to personally thank their team members for their contributions from time to time. Costs nothing; yields much.**