

Reenergize Employees For The Fall



It's Fall and across Canada leaves are turning the most beautiful colours. Whether you live on a coast, on the plains, the prairies, among the great lakes, in the tundra, anywhere in between, the Fall is a wonderful time to take stock and reengage your workforce.

For many of your employees the Fall means the end of summer vacations and time to close up the cottage, cover the pool or put away the Trampoline. In the workplace it often means preparing for year-end results, wrapping up projects, looking at budgets and making difficult decisions for the upcoming year. Some organizations will have positive results and the year-end may mean budgeting for new equipment or maybe new staff or, on the flip side, tightening budgets and cutting staff.

The economic outlook for Q3 and Q4 in Canada is looking brighter, or not, depending on which forecast you read and on what day. According to the recent TD Quarterly Economic Forecast posted on September 25th, 2014 the economic outlook for the Canadian Fall is 'good' as Canada benefits from the rising tides in the US that have been drawing exports into the market. Unfortunately there is a grey lining in this good news. TD identified two weak spots in the economy; those were business investment and employment. The report suggested that with luck the good economic news may push business to invest and hire, but we have heard that before.

The bottom line is that if you want to re-energize your employees for the Fall you cannot rely on economic news to boost their mood or their productivity. Taking proactive steps to invigorate your workforce can help you smooth out those performance and productivity ebbs as the days of sunlight grown shorter

5 Ideas to Energize Your Workforce

1) Introduce something new and fun: Introducing something new and fun does not need to be big or silly, but sometimes those elements are helpful. Think of something novel, set a day aside and don't tell your employees what is happening. Hiring a hay wagon to visit your workspace and take your workers and their families on a hayride is something fun. Just tell your employees to dress comfortably and invite their families. A low cost, short term intervention can be just the thing to make everyone feel special and energized by the Fall.

2) Discuss Career Paths: Workers who are uncertain are unhappy. Workers like the opportunity to explore their future career options. Bring in a Career Coach who can educate your busy workers about the trends and changes in the economy and labour

market. November 3-7th is Canada Career Week. The Canadian Career Professional Association is offering a free series of expert panel discussions on topics relevant to Canadian Careers. Your employees can be reenergized when they are informed about their options for the future.

3) Share your Vision and Priorities: Employees want to know their leaders have a plan and know how to execute their plan. Openly sharing this vision collectively with employees can help them reinvest in their connection to the organization. Communicating priorities and everyone's role in achieving the priorities helps employees reinvest working towards organizational goals.

4) Freshen up the Workspace: The fall is a time of beauty outside, what a great time to bring a little touch of that beauty into your workplace. Solicit ideas to repaint one room, a break room or customer facing room, buy new furniture, add interesting art to the walls, or just have a fall cleaning (don't ask your employees to do the work unless you know it is something they would love to do). Hire a stager to come in for 1-2 hours (a small investment) and provide ideas to rearrange your space.

5) Encourage Healthy Living: The Fall can be a time when your employees are beginning to be less active and between Thanksgiving and Halloween they may not be eating as healthy as possible. Provide employees with a presentation from a chef or nutritionist to discuss healthy lunches or breakfasts, encourage your employees to participate in a weekly team lead walk or meditation class or more. Yes this can be done all year round, but this time around include a Fall theme to the conversation. If you want your employees to participate get the leaders to don their walking shoes or take stand in the tree position along side the team.

Sometimes it does not take much to make a positive change. If your employees know you are trying (so you have to genuinely try) that can a great start unto itself. Change does take time and repetition to happen and last. With the change of each new season you have an opportunity to lead and engage your staff.