

People investment plan increases performance



People Sense

Lorinzo Foxworth

"Wow!" A recent report by the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that more than 1.5 million jobs have been lost since 2001. That means that 1.5 million people were terminated or laid off in the past two years.

Do you wonder how these employees were prioritized for the pink slip? Was losing the job based on the bottom line, popularity, performance

and results or the political machine? Who knows? Some of you might say, "Who cares, I have my J-O-B.

My question is, how much, if any, did employers invest in these valued employees to allow them to become more effective in their professions?

Since 1998, employer investment in professional development has been on the decrease.

For lack of better words, dollars and cents continue to be the main cause of lost jobs in America. Many business owners know that employees make up the largest expenditures on the financials.

But what does that mean in terms of cost-effectiveness?

If the big boys and girls (BBG) fail to prioritize employee development and measure the return on investment from it, then that makes employee effectiveness less appreciated.

If anything, BBGs will continue to look at employees as a means to an end; employees are hired to produce and if they aren't, shelve them! Ever heard your CEO say that at one of the closed-door meetings? You won't tell, will you?

The fact remains, having a comprehensive employee development process will increase performance and the bottom line. Your company will retain a quality and effective staff, which is so much in demand today.

But alas, there is a caveat to this awesome challenge. You must initiate a vision and commitment to the process. If you implement an employee development process but hold and fold when there aren't any immediate results, you're back to square one.

So the real question you have for me, is how do you initiate such a process in Your Inc.?

Glad you asked. Below are the essentials to an effective people investment plan:

Get BBG buy-in first. When the folks that sign the checks sign up, recruiting others is a cinch. Mainly, the process has the push and commitment it needs.

Involve employees. Allow employees to be in the initial stages of development. If you want their buy-in, get them "in" on the go.

Set perimeters and measurements. If you don't know where you're going, how do you know when you get there? Knowing how the team will look and perform, and at what degree and stage, sets your process up for early success.

Hold leaders and staff accountable. Regular updates with specific details allows operations to become effective.

Promote the process. Infiltrate the entire organization with banners, e-mails and other communication that sells staff development. Get set for the long haul.

In challenging times, employees enthusiastically want to be held to the test of exceeding the bottom line. Employees are valuable, productive and creative. Ask them how to save money, increase retention and increase production.

In these challenging times, many organizations know the culture of their employees because they have employee development plans that work. We'll measure the effectiveness of the mission statement next time. ■

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