

Recognize your employees!

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Today's workplaces are demanding. There never seems to be enough time to get the work done let alone have a personal life as well.

It is precisely because of this hectic lifestyle that people are finding it a challenge to keep it all together and mental health claims are rising.

Unfortunately, the manager is often caught in the middle between upper management and the workers. The manager has to satisfy the strategic directions set forth by the VP/President/CEO while keeping the employees happy and productive.

The manager role is a difficult one. The pressures are great and unfortunately, managers get caught up in their own stressors and often neglect to recognize their employees.

In my business, I see many casualties of these pressured workplaces. Most of my clients have been on disability for mental health reasons including Depression, Burnout, Stress.

Through the return-to-work preparation

process, my clients and I spend time discussing the workplace that they left and the one to which they will be returning.

I ask my clients:

1. What would have helped you when you were struggling at work?
2. What might have helped prevent the leave in the first place?

I am amazed at how the answers are always the same. Some minor variations, perhaps, but the essence is the same.

Employees discuss the extent to which they felt undervalued. They remark on the workload and the lack of appreciation from their managers for work done. They report that they usually did not get any recognition. They did not get any words of appreciation for going the extra mile to meet a deadline. They note that the work environment is go-go-go without stopping for lunch let alone breaks during the day.

My clients tell me that a simple thank you from their manager would have been appreciated. Recognition for their efforts would have helped.

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The Work Information Newsletter is developed by Adeena Wisenthal, Director of ERGO-Wise, a centre that specializes in services for the workplace.

In particular, Adeena prepares employees to return to work following a disability leave.

This issue focuses on creating healthier workplaces and ways to improve people management to get improved results.



Although Valentine's Day is traditionally a day to express one's romantic love, why not use Valentine's Day to start recognizing your employees and express your 'love' to them!

Recognize your employees.

Make your employees feel valued.

Drop off a chocolate as a small 'thank you'.



Recognize your employees

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My clients are not young children who crave a parent's attention and approval. On the contrary, my clients are adults who have been very successful in their careers. They are high functioning workers who for a variety of reasons (some personal, many work related) have crashed.

They have taken leave from work and have gone on disability. With the appropriate medical care, time off the 'treadmill', and return-to-work preparation, they can now anticipate a return to the workforce.

Are the work environments prepared for them? Have the workplaces changed at all while my clients have been on their journey back to health?

My clients' feedback about what is not working in today's workplace sounds simple. Much of what they identify as needed in today's workplace is grounded in principles of child psychology but can be adapted to the work environment.

Recognize your employees for the work they do. Give them positive feedback when appropriate. The pat on the back and the 'thank you' can go a long way.

My challenge to you is to try this approach. Let's face it, today's workplaces are not working. We know this by the statistics regarding the rise of mental health disability claims and the associated loss in productivity and the negative impact on the bottom line.

So, I urge you to start letting your employees know that they are appreciated. You have nothing to lose!

Tips for creating healthier workplaces:

- ♥ Thank your employees for a job well done.
- ♥ Set an example for open communication.
- ♥ Show your employees you value them-recognize their contribution by telling them.
- ♥ Encourage your employees.
- ♥ Recognize deadlines-give employees realistic timelines.
- ♥ Designate a room for breaks away from the desk.
- ♥ Establish 'recognition' sessions - acknowledge accomplishments, thank workers for efforts/assistance provided.
- ♥ Schedule regular staff meetings. Keep employees informed.
- ♥ Provide welcome/information packages for new hires.
- ♥ Provide healthy food choices.
- ♥ Encourage healthy living. Promote a daily walk.

Useful Reading

The Carrot Principle

Adrian Gostick & Chester Elton

A Carrot a Day

Adrian Gostick & Chester Elton

The Art of Managing People

Tony Alessandra & Phillip Hunsacker

People Leave Managers...Not Organizations!: Action Based Leadership

Rick W. Tate & Dr Julie White

Succeed Without Burnout

Ben Kubassek

People need to be recognized.

People need to feel valued.

People need to feel appreciated.

ERGO-Wise specializes in workplace mental health. We offer support to employers and their employees to improve functioning at work as well as in one's personal life. We focus on reducing disability thereby increasing the bottom line.

Our services include: return-to-work preparation, ergonomic assessments, duty to accommodate, supportive counselling, and vocational exploration.

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