

HR Update

STATE OF ALASKA
DIVISION OF PERSONNEL
AND LABOR RELATIONS

FY 09- ISSUE 03
SEPTEMBER 24, 2008

HR.....SOLUTIONS FOR SUCCESS.

Russian River © Lavonne Rhymer, Alaska DOTPE

IN THIS ISSUE:

- EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT
- THE 7 ENGAGEMENT IMPERATIVES
- QUICK FACTS
- ACTIVE JOB CLASS STUDIES

HR UPDATE

LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK

Please let us know what you think of our publication. If you have any suggestions about how to improve the HR Update or topics you think should be addressed, please contact franklin.hurt@alaska.gov.

New Faces in DOPLR Management

The new Training and Development Program Manager is Tim Parker. Tim has transitioned from within the Training and Development Program.

The new Assistant Human Resource Manager for the Health and Social Services Service Center is Aaron Gelston.

Aaron came from the General Agencies Service Center.



Employee Engagement

By Connie Preecs

An engaged employee is a person who is fully involved in, and enthusiastic about, his or her work. This employee has a strong sense of accomplishment from their work and uses phrases like “I love what I am doing”, “I want to do this”, “I am dedicated to our success”. Engaged employees are committed to, and fascinated by, their work. They understand the importance of their work and how their work impacts the mission and goals of the organization.

An engaged workforce is a stable workforce. Stable not in the sense of no staff turnover but in that engaged employees make career moves based on moving up, not away, from the work that keeps them happily showing up every day.

In contrast, disengaged employees feel underutilized, bored, and unfulfilled. They are busy acting out their unhappiness, sometimes taking on the victim role or undermining their co-worker’s accomplishments. This is a waste of time not just for the organization but for co-workers and the employees themselves.

As a manager evaluates employees in the organization, he or she will probably see an entire spectrum of engagement: a few who are fully engaged, some who are partially engaged and, regrettably, those who are totally disengaged.

Most managers will want to increase the number of employees who are fully engaged, motivate those who are partially engaged, and move those employees who are totally disengaged into engagement.

The Division of Personnel offers several workshops that can help in the process of getting employees engaged. They are listed below:

★ Interpersonal Skills

This one-day course is designed to teach participants basic concepts and skills associated with Assertive and Empowered Communication, Dialogue and Interpersonal Feedback.

★ Academy For Supervisors

This five-day course is designed for supervisors who will learn the basic knowledge and skills necessary for the lawful, ethical, and effective supervision of State of Alaska employees.

★ Performance Coaching

This one-day course is designed to teach supervisors and managers basic knowledge and skills that will enable them to manage a continuous performance improvement environment.

HR Update FY 09 - Issue 03

★ Respectful Workplace

This half-day course is designed to provide employees with knowledge of their rights and responsibilities under key state and federal Equal Employment Opportunity laws. Employees also learn to recognize inappropriate behavior including sexual harassment and have knowledge of their choices in dealing with disrespectful behavior.

★ Change Management for Supervisors

This one-day course is designed to teach supervisors basic concepts, knowledge and skills that will enable them to manage the process and people elements of successful change implementation.

★ Valuing Diversity

This one-day course is designed to teach the basic concepts and knowledge necessary to understand diversity issues and build awareness of the value of diversity in the workplace. **Important Note: All employees must attend this course; supervisors must attend within one year of appointment.**

Links to learning objectives, class schedules, and enrollment for these classes are found at: <http://dop.state.ak.us/website/coursedescrip/>

The 7 Engagement Imperatives

by Tom Terez

There's an invisible shelf at the entrance to every workplace in the world. Many people use it every day without thinking. When they arrive for work, they put their hearts and minds on the shelf -- and go about the day's work with little or no emotional or mental involvement. When the workday ends, they return to the shelf, reclaim the best part of themselves, and carry on with their lives.

According to the rosier research on workforce engagement, only three out of ten people in the typical workplace use their hearts and minds every day. These "actively engaged" people are enthusiastic, committed, and productive. Two out of ten are "actively disengaged." They're the ones talking trash and seeing every workplace change as a personal slight. The rest -- half of the typical workforce at an organization -- is "unengaged."

That last figure is so enormous it bears repeating: Fully half of the people in your typical organization shelve their hearts and minds on the way in to work. As the workday unfolds, they are present in body yet emotionally and creatively absent.

It's a problem, but it's an even bigger opportunity. Here are seven ways to engage the unengaged:

START WITH PURPOSE

People want their work to have meaning. They want those tasks and projects to promote some greater good. When's the last time you and your colleagues talked about your overarching mission?

HUNT DOWN THE BUSYWORK

Over months and years, every workplace gets bulked up with meaningless procedures and process steps that steal time away from meaningful work. Try stepping off the busywork treadmill and taking a critical look at how you spend your time. With co-workers, pinpoint one or two time-draining activities you can ditch right away.

INVITE PEOPLE IN

If you're analyzing a problem, brainstorming ideas, weighing options, reviewing data, or doing anything else that requires brainpower, reach out to more people for input. Some of them will have to run over to that shelf to re-engage their hearts and minds, but that's the point, right?

RE-INVENT YOUR MEETINGS

Many meetings are a one-way routine in which the boss simply delivers information -- something that could be done more easily by e-mail or handout. The best meetings are forums for dialogue in which all participants can shape the agenda, ask questions, and freely share their views. Speaking of which, have you and your colleagues recently traded thoughts on how to make your meetings more useful?

GET SMART ABOUT SPACE

Thomas Edison designed his Menlo Park invention factory to be the best of both worlds. The first floor had separate workspaces so people could focus on their individual developments, and the second floor had community work areas where parts and pieces were turned into inventions. In your own workplace, are there complementary places where people can work alone and work together?

HR Update FY 09 - Issue 03

LEVERAGE THOSE STRENGTHS

Real fast now: What are the top three strengths of your three main colleagues? What are your own top strengths? If you're not sure, stop everything and come up with answers right now. Everyone has great strengths that are waiting to be put to work -- even that annoying co-worker, who just so happens to have the knowledge you need to solve that problem you've been struggling with for weeks.

SHARE THAT KNOW-HOW

The people around you are some of the smartest people you never knew. They have book smarts, street smarts, and rich life experiences that remain hidden. So why not set aside an hour for your own impromptu 60 Minute University? Take turns spending 10 minutes each teaching something -- anything -- to the team.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Tom Terez (TomTerez.com) is an international consultant and frequent speaker on organizational performance (BetterWorkplaceNow.com) and personal excellence (InnerBest.com)

Quick Facts

In a recent Gallup Poll, 10,000 companies and businesses were surveyed regarding their ability to boost the engagement levels of their employees. The poll found:

- In businesses where managers focus on employees' strengths, the probability that an employee will become disengaged is 1 in 100.
- In businesses where managers focus on employees' weaknesses, the probability that an employee will become disengaged grows tremendously to 20 in 100.

- And in businesses where managers ignore employees altogether, the probability that an employee will become disengaged doubles to 40 in 100.

Once again, it becomes apparent just how important managers and supervisors are to employees and how the employees feel about the work that they are doing.

Active Job Class Studies

- Administrative Clerk & Supervisors Study
- Accounting Study
- Economist Class Study
- Program Coordinator Study
- Land Surveyor Study

More information about job class studies may be found at: <http://dop.state.ak.us/website/index.cfm?fuseaction=classification.classStudiesList>

