

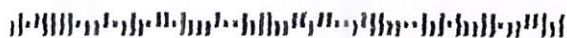
American Fastener

JOURNAL

VOLUME 40/NO 5 SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2024



CREATING A SUSTAINABLE EVERGREEN COMPANY



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COACHING FOR SUCCESS:

Develop, Motivate and Retain Your Employees

by John Tschohl



Why do people leave their jobs? Even if they are well paid and have good benefits, many will wave goodbye as they walk out the door, never to return.

They don't leave because they want more money or better benefits. They don't leave because they don't like their jobs or their coworkers. They leave because their managers and supervisors are not coaching, nurturing, recognizing or motivating them.

Fifty percent of responders in a Gallup Employee Engagement Survey of employees in the United States said that, at some point in their careers, they have left to get away from their managers. Only 30 percent said they are engaged at work. That translates to 70 percent who are not engaged. Wow!

What that tells me is that the old adage that says "people don't leave companies, they leave managers," is spot on. What do these figures mean for you as a manager or supervisor? It means that it's up to you to make sure your employees feel loved, valued and appreciated. That might sound like a tall order, but if you want your employees to enjoy their work, become more productive, and stay with you and your company, it's critical that you take a good look at how you treat them.

In a nutshell, you must become a coach. You must train your team members to perform at the highest level possible. You must give them the tools to

do so. And you must recognize and value their contributions every day. If you can do that, you will have a winning team and employees who wouldn't dream of leaving you. In the process, you will save your company thousands—if not tens of thousands—of dollars it would take to hire and train new employees. It's a win for you, your company, and your employees.

It's important that you make yourself available and that you set clear expectations, so your employees know exactly what you want of them. Set concrete goals and deadlines, and then meet with employees on a regular basis to have an open and honest conversation about them and their performance. Also, ask them to share with you any roadblocks that are preventing them from performing at their highest levels—and then ask what they would recommend as solu-

tions. When you do this, you are letting employees know that you respect and value them.

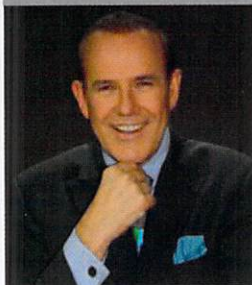
It's also critical that you train your employees. Consistent training and professional development will help your employees refine their skills and give them the self-esteem and confidence to exceed your expectations.

The most crucial—and effective—step you can take is to recognize employees for their accomplishments. Most managers think money is a motivator; they're wrong. Money is important, but it won't improve their performance. Praise and recognition—which cost nothing—are the most important tools you can use to motivate your employees.

In order for recognition to be effective, it must be timely, sincere and specific.

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JOHN TSCHOHL



John Tschohl is the founder and president of the Service Quality Institute—the global leader in customer service—with operations in more than 40 countries. He is considered one of the world's foremost authorities on all aspects of customer service and has developed 17 customer service training programs, including Speed, that are used by companies throughout the world. His monthly strategic newsletter is available online at no charge. For more information on John Tschohl and the Service Quality Institute, visit www.customer-service.com. He can also be reached on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter.

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Timeliness is critical. Don't wait a week or a month to recognize an employee for a job well done. As time goes by, that employee will grow resentful, and your words—when they finally come—will mean little or nothing.

Sincerity is important because employees can easily spot empty words. Make the recognition heartfelt. And be

specific. If you merely say, "Paul, you did a great job last week," it's meaningless. Tell him exactly what he did that impressed you.

Recognition is even more powerful when it is public. Do it at an employee meeting, or at an impromptu gathering around the employee's desk. Alternatives include sending out an email to every-

one in the department or sending the employee a personal, handwritten note saying why he or she is a tremendous asset to the company. I can guarantee that the employee will keep that note for years.

Of course, there are times when you have to cut your losses and let non-performing employees go. Let's face it: Not everyone is coachable. Some employees simply are not willing to put forth the effort it takes to better their performance. When you cut them from the team, you'll have more time to focus on those employees who will help you drive your business. ◀

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