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At no other time in our history have we had 4 generations in the workforce. The Loyalists realize that the “gold watch” is no longer there for the taking and the boomers are trying to provide a work-life balance that leans more to “life”. The “X” and “Y” generations are focusing on the “now” and using the workplace to provide income for their “fun” activities. We have changed our thinking from “job security” to “job entertainment”. Most people realize that no job is permanent or that lifetime employment is real, so most workers have eliminated job stability or security from their vocabularies.

The workplace environment is becoming more like the “free agent” market associated with baseball or football. The worker is now becoming the “free agent”. So it has now become the goal of many organizations to lure the “free agents” and to also make sure that they want to stay on the team. Most of the workers today consider themselves “free agents” feel they are free to move from one job to another without recourse. This does not mean that they are not willing to become engaged and focus on the things that will help their employer achieve their goals. It does mean that we must focus on our Human Capital needs. Many in HR believe that if you are not seeking ways to nurture them and meet their needs, they will be seeking greener pastures.

So what do the greener pastures look like? According to recent surveys, the American worker is seeking: 1) Interesting work, 2) Meaningful work, and 3) Work-life balance. Many young people today believe that their jobs should provide more than just a paycheck and that their job is much more fulfilling towards what they want to do with their careers. Most young people believe that no job is permanent and they have the ability to control their own career and development. In other words, they want to feel valued, be engaged, and to feel in control of their destiny.

What are Workers Really Seeking?



It is generally believed that when salaries are commensurate with the employment market, people look for the things that are important to them. They want the opportunity to contribute and develop while being challenged by their management team. We have to motivate employees daily to make sure their personal and business goals are integrated in a culture that is totally satisfying yet challenging. Here are a few ideas to help you do just that:

1. Be a good company citizen - maintain the highest of ethical practices and focus on giving back to the community
2. Make sure the communication between employee and employer is “open” - be sensitive to the needs of the employee in life as well as in the work environment.
3. Realize that people become “great” employees when they work for a “great” manager - don’t underestimate the value of your front line manager.
4. Teach the employee how to achieve a better work/life balance and treat everyone as an individual.
5. Use a mentor or coaching program to compliment the development of your good employees. Provide a personal interest to their development.

The priorities of the American worker are changing and if, as employers, we do not change, we will not only loose our good employees but our good customers as well. In other words, pay attention to the needs of your workers, simplify your business strategy, and challenge them to be more productive and you will get the results you desire.