

The Employee Engagement Survey- the power of knowing.

*By Kathi Guiney SPHR, President and Sr. Human Resource Consultant, **YES!** Your Human Resources Solution*

With the current recession and dreary employment outlook we don't hear much about employee turnover. In fact, you may have voluntary turnover that is approaching 0%. Is it really because your employees are so satisfied? Job cuts, more work and less pay are not usually the path to happy employees. In fact, a recent Executive Quiz conducted by Korn Ferry found 47% of those surveyed were either somewhat or very dissatisfied with their current position.

If almost half of these executives are unhappy –just imagine what is going on further on down in these organizations. Recent Watson Wyatt information indicates that as many as 2/3 of the general work force is either doing just enough to get by or even worse, just waiting until they can leave. It does not take much of a stretch to suggest that some employees in this group are considered by your management team to be among your "best" employees and the same ones being counted on to ensure the company's successful future.

The reality is – when the job market is bleak employees are hesitant to take the risk of changing employers. But that should not lull you into a false sense of confidence. If your best employees are just waiting for the job market to turn, you should ask yourself:... ***What can I do now to prevent the future loss of the company talent?***

Knowing what satisfies, motivates and engages your workforce is just as important in a down economy as an up economy. Fortunately, there are easy to use on-line survey tools such as SurveyMonkey.com and Zoomerang.com. A well-crafted survey lets you find out quickly and anonymously what is on the minds of your employees and what you need to do to avoid a "brain drain" when the economy turns.

What makes a good survey question? Ask your employees what one thing they would change, ask them what is the best thing about working for your company, ask them if they would refer a friend to work at the company. Use as many multiple choice questions as possible and make it fun.

Once the survey data is collected, be ready for some surprises. You may find that you (or management) and employees do not see eye to eye on the work environment and what motivates them to stay engaged and productive. It is imperative to follow up with employees after a survey. Conducting surveys without a follow up action plan will increase employee dissatisfaction and quite likely lead to the "why did I bother" response from employees. (Candidly haven't we all experienced this at least once in our work life - not good!)

Action plans based on survey results do not need to be costly. For example, if the feedback is that employees do not feel informed on the company's business status, a solution may be more frequent communication on business goals and establishing clear line of sight of how employees can contribute to the company's success.

By including employee surveys as a tool in your strategic planning you will position your company to emerge stronger and more focused when the economy turns around. Your best employees will be more apt to stay and you are likely to attract the attention of talented new hires who will view your company as being in touch with employees - an employer of choice.

YES! Your Human Resources Solution: Kathi Guiney SPHR, President and Sara Snoy, SPHR, CCP, GRP Senior Compensation and Training Consultant deliver **the expert level HR you need- when you need it.** For more information on this article and how **YES!** services will have a return on investment for your company, call Kathi Guiney at 949-842-2848 or e-mail at Kathi@yeshrsolution.com