

Observations from the Bridge

Industry Staffing News

For the Industrial and Consumer Goods Industry

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The 18-Minute Ritual That Will Boost Your

Productivity

Solving small and persistent issues as they come up and dealing with emails and phone calls as they come in can easily derail you, says Peter Bregman, author of 18 Minutes: Find Your Focus, Master Distraction, and Get the Right Things Done (Hatchette Book Group; 2012). Here is the [three-step 18-minute daily ritual](#) to help manage focus and increase productivity:

STEP 1: Plan (5 minutes).

Before you begin your day or check your email, sit down with a blank piece of paper and write down tasks that will make the day successful, says Bregman. Then take your calendar and schedule those things into open time slots.

"There is tremendous power in deciding when you are going to do something," he says. Place

the hardest and most important items at the beginning of the day when distractions are fewer. If your entire list does not fit into your calendar, reprioritize your list.

STEP 2: Refocus (one minute each hour).

Set an alarm on your watch,

Hot Topic - Become an Employer of Choice:

In the recruiting industry we look at different eras as either candidate driven or client driven. The law of supply and demand applies to the labor market just like any other market. When times are tough and companies institute hiring freezes, there is an abundance of talent. We call this a client driven market, clients enjoy the "pick of the litter". Then there are times when everyone in the industry is hiring and we experience a major shortage of potential candidates. During those candidate driven times, good candidates have many options and employers have to work very hard to attract them.

Today we have an altogether new situation. We have moved to a candidate driven environment, however, employers still operate under the false impression that it is a client driven market. When the unemployment rate for college educated professionals is 3.5% and much lower for many engineering, R&D and operations positions, clearly, good candidates are in the driver's seat.

What are the symptoms of the two dynamics colliding? In our profession we call them turn downs, fall-offs and interview cancellations. Many companies move at a slow pace interviewing candidates and when ready to extend an offer, exhibit an attitude of "you are lucky to get an offer from us" or "take it or leave it". Low ball offers, inadequate relocation packages and little effort to woo candidates, trigger turn downs (candidate rejects offer) or fall-offs (candidate accepts offer and starts, then quits).

We work closely with our clients on what the market offers and what they have to do to get the best candidates available. Please enjoy the following article on becoming an employer of choice.

Sincerely,

Joachim Woerner
Managing Director

Gaining a Competitive Advantage as an Employer of Choice

As the economy rebounds and more employers adapt to filling executive and management positions in the candidate-driven market, it is becoming increasingly important for companies to distinguish themselves as employers of choice, to attract top candidates. With a recent Gallup study revealing that only 47 percent of American workers are completely satisfied with their jobs, employers are better positioned than ever to attract candidates who are ready to move out of current roles. So then

phone, or computer to go off every hour during your workday. When it rings, ask yourself if you spent your last hour productively. Bregman says this ritual will help catch you when you get off track. How you spend your time can be compared to what you eat at a buffet, he says.

"People often eat poorly at a buffet because what they want to eat in the moment is different than what they wished they'd have eaten at the end of the day," he says. The same thing can be said for time -- what you want to do in the moment is often different than what you wished you had accomplished at the end of the day. Checking in every hour will help keep you on track.

STEP 3: Review (5 minutes).

At the end of your day, review what worked, where you had the most focus and where you got distracted. "Did you accomplish what you wanted to accomplish?" says Bregman. "If not, what can you do better tomorrow?"

For example, if you got a lot done during the morning but had a hard time concentrating in the afternoon, consider scheduling work that requires focus, such as writing a proposal or designing a marketing campaign, for early in the day. Save less-taxing tasks, such as reading email or reviewing website statistics, for the afternoon.

Bregman says it's also a good time to tie up loose ends so they don't leak into the evening. For example, express gratitude to those who helped you and send quick updates to members of your team.

By: Stephanie Vozza

how does a company become known as an employer of choice that attracts star talent and makes employees never want to leave?

"In today's job market, aggressive salary and benefits packages that will potentially beat out counteroffers are not enough to lure top performers to new companies," says Rob Romaine, president of MRINetwork. "Employers have to develop unique ways to attract candidates into their companies and away from competitors."

To accomplish this, employers have to connect with their employees, find out what is most important to them and then provide programs and services that will be of value to the entire staff. This entails providing career advancement opportunities, ongoing training and continuing education programs, atypical benefits packages and employee perks that will make any employee think twice about leaving. Some companies have gone to great lengths to achieve this, providing unlimited sick and paid time off, flexible work schedules, game rooms and employee appreciation days where catered lunches, massage services and field days are brought in-house for staff enjoyment.

SAS Institute, a North Carolina software company, became the employer of choice in its industry by providing its employees with workplace amenities like an on-campus gym, no limit on sick days, company gates that don't open until 7 a.m. and close promptly at 6 p.m., and maybe most importantly - free M&Ms. These perks resulted in a turnover rate 16 percent less than competitors.

So what strategies can companies use to establish themselves as employers of choice? "It's important for companies to realize they can't become an employer of choice overnight," says Romaine. "It takes a collaborative effort from multiple teams within the organization, focused on developing and implementing strategies that attract star candidates and retain key employees. Each department has to look at what they can do in their respective areas to contribute to this process."

The following are steps companies can take to become an employer of choice:

1. **Know the company culture** and the type of employees the company hopes to attract.
2. **Develop a sound employer branding strategy** that is focused on distributing consistent messaging about the company culture and mission to clients, investors, employees and candidates.
3. **Conduct periodic employee surveys** to determine employee satisfaction with the company. This provides staff an opportunity to express their feelings on everything from benefits and career opportunities to a variety of company-wide practices, while identifying areas that can be improved.

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4. **Review the feedback from employee surveys** and develop strategies to improve areas of concern.
5. **Look for unique ways to create the "ultimate employee experience"**, reasons that make employees never want to leave, including anything from on-site cafeterias, gyms or daycare to parking and transit privileges.
6. **Submit a company nomination** for an Employer of Choice or Best Places to Work award in your industry. These awards invoke employee pride and bring increased credibility to the company brand.

While hiring managers may not always have the authority to implement the above strategies, there are things they can do to help retain employees. They can create career tracks for each position, so employees have a clear path for advancement in the company. They can also provide ongoing training, development and mentoring opportunities. Managers should additionally create an environment where creativity and outside the box thinking is encouraged. Finally, managers should reward employees for a job well done via company announcements and awards, or performance-based bonuses, promotions and raises.

Retention of happy, top performers is the most critical strategy for companies to become employers of choice. This is where the status of being a choice employer begins - promotion of the company's values through the ambassadorship of employees.

"What makes a company a great place to work for some people will not be great for others," advises Romaine. However, a company that is an employer of choice will recognize this in the hiring process and give as much consideration to the candidate's fit with the organization as it does to experience, qualifications and talent. They will additionally recognize the value in providing a collaborative, company-wide approach to not only attracting, but also retaining top performers that will move the company forward."

MRINETWORK in: firstfridaypreview

References

If you know somebody who wants to look at a next career step, please let us know.

We will keep all information highly confidential.

Our success is based on your referrals! Thank you!