The Most Meaningful Ways Businesses Can Show They Are Thankful For Their Employees

By Vip Sandhir, Founder and CEO, HighGround

It's important for your employees to know you're thankful for them all year round — but it's particularly relevant to make them feel valued during the holiday season. Part of the reason it's so vital to show your employees that you're grateful for them is because frequent job-hopping is more common than ever. According to a Mercer survey, one in three employees are looking to leave their current organizations. One way to make sure your staff stays with your organization is to reward them in a way that is actually meaningful. Rewarding employees should involve more than just giving them a gift card. If companies really want to show their talent that they are appreciate, they should look to engage employees with recognition they appreciate, help develop their skills and provide career paths or other growth opportunities.

Move beyond typical rewards

Many businesses make the mistake of thinking that providing Friday beer carts or allowing their employees to work from home will show their gratitude. But these perks are becoming more commonplace — plus they don't provide a sustainable platform for businesses to engage with their employees. Moving beyond typical awards will help make long-term impacts and

address what's really important to employees. When a business takes the time to determine what's important to their company, and then implement policies and engagement tactics to meet those needs, it will make employees feel respected. For example, a Net Impact survey found that 88 percent of workers considered positive culture important to their dream job. Find out what's essential to your employees, and then make an effort to implement those changes to show your gratitude.

Engage your employees

Engaging with your employees will not only make them feel valued, but will also help improve your business. Employees want to be involved in the conversation, so give them a voice and an opportunity to be heard. According to a Future Workplace survey, Gen Y workers, more than previous generations, crave the chance to contribute creatively to the company. They're also more eager than ever to understand what employees really want — by using technology wisely. By utilizing tools for real-time mood and sentiment tracking, aka "pulse checks," and period benchmarking surveys, a company can use the results to create an open dialogue for positive change.

Recognize employees

According to the U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics, 40 percent of employees quit because they don't feel recognized. Recognition is up there with career opportunities and pay as the top priorities for candidates when selecting an employer. It's not just recognition from the executive team that needs to be implemented, but businesses need to facilitate a way for employees to recognize their team members for a job well done. By allowing peer-to-peer, top down, and bottom up recognition, all team members will know when their colleagues are grateful for them and how their achievements align to the values of the organization. According to a 2013 CareerBuilder study, 50 percent of respondents said, "increased recognition" would

entice them to stay with a company. Recognizing employees will not only be a way to show you're grateful for them, but it will also help you keep your best talent.

Modernize employee development with agile goals and continuous coaching

Coaches don't wait until the next week's practice to correct players' mistakes from the last game. They utilize real-time feedback for immediate course correction. Businesses need to use the same tactics. Annual reviews are dying, and for good reason — they don't work! According to an Employee Performance Management Survey, 45 percent of HR managers don't believe annual reviews are an accurate representation of the employee. Employees don't like them either because they want feedback they can act on immediately. Real-time feedback works whether it's positive or negative. If feedback is negative, it allows them to fix their mistakes instantly. If it's positive, it motivates people in the moment by knowing that their managers think they did a good job and that their employers are in fact grateful for them.

Take the time to show your employees that you appreciate them in a way that is meaningful to them. By moving beyond typical rewards, engaging and recognizing your employees, and sharing real-time feedback you will make sure your employees know how grateful you are for them. And during the holiday season, now's the time to show your thanks!

__About the Author:__ Vip founded HighGround in 2012 with a mission to change the way companies engage their employees. He has vast experience building start-ups from the ground up and growing them significantly. Vip is also a Co-Founder of the corporate food technology platform Fooda. He previously worked as the Executive Vice President and Founding Executive at Echo Global Logistics (Nasdaq: Echo), the COO and Co-Founder at The BusBank, and the VP of Sales and Operations at

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