Bosses are the keystones to building employee morale

by Michael_Kinsman

It is difficult to overestimate the effect a bad boss has in a workplace, but it's just as easy to undervalue the effect of a good boss.

A survey by Yahoo! HotJobs reveals that 43 percent of American workers would leave their jobs if they didn't like the supervisor's management style or were not given adequate mentoring in their jobs.

The boss obviously has a big impact on employee morale, and not in a good way.

But let's turn that research around. It shows 43 percent of workers would forget about moving to another company if they liked the management style of their boss and felt they had a future with their employer.

I don't know about you, but in an age when companies have moved employee retention to the top of their wish list, taking steps to ensure that 43 percent of the work force will not hop to other jobs seems like an important thing.

This tells employers that one of the most important things they can do is reinforce with their managers that boss-worker relationships are a valuable and important aspect of their jobs. Companies should also be willing to invest in training that helps supervisors build better relationships with workers.

In fact, building good working relationships with individual members of the work force should be the highest priority of any manager.

That's because good managers are respectful of others, fair in their treatment of all workers, honest and candid in assessing a worker's performance and future with the company, dedicated to the company's goals, and understanding that workers will make mistakes or have off-days and that doesn't mean they should be penalized.

The one-to-one relationship each boss has with his or her employees is the most crucial factor in motivating workers to achieve the company's goals and keeping those employees on the payroll.

Yet most managers in the U.S. workplace were given management jobs not because of their people skills but

because they demonstrated success at other jobs in the company.

Most companies provide very little in the way of relationship-building skills for managers, even though the skills are essential in today's workplace.

There is a long-held misconception in business that workers don't want to be loyal to an employer and can be lured away to another by a small increase in salary.

The reality is that workers want to be loyal but feel comfortable moving to another employer if they don't have a good relationship with their boss.

In many ways, witnessing the firsthand conduct of a supervisor defines the company in the eyes of a worker. Companies are nothing more than ideas, and they use people to help them reach their goals.

Because the line supervisor is the one member of management to whom most people report, workers come to view that relationship as their official relationship with the company. If that personal relationship sours, so does their relationship with the company.

For that reason alone, companies must step up efforts to provide supervisors with relationship skills. The Yahoo! HotJobs survey is testimony that this will be money well spent if supervisors build better relationships with those who work for them.

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