IDEAS FOR BUILDING ENGAGED AND MOTIVATED EMPLOYEES

Make sure your people know that you value your staff

- Make reference to the “enriched unique approach” (e.g., innovative thinking, helping without being asked, thinking outside the box, operating as a mentor or peacemaker),
- Ambidexterity (bipolar thinking)
- Get to know their personality so you can coach for weaknesses and play on strengths and passions
- They will know how you see their strengths/weaknesses because you have communicated that with them—preferably face-to-face.
- Receiving a handwritten note with specifics about what was done well (from the boss’s boss, a key stakeholder or a colleague) is also greatly appreciated.
- Allow employees to participate in ongoing training and development opportunities, based on targeted needs.

Add ‘fun’ to the productive workplace equation

- Make time for learning, embrace and applaud learning opportunities while also taking time to engage in activities that create down-time, hum ourful fun in these activities not only drive greater rapport but can enhance creativity and innovation.
- Don’t be afraid to include a healthy dose of learning and fun into meetings and communications. Negativity will breed more negativity, and fear puts human beings into a fight or flight mode, neither of which drive engagement, empowerment, or results.
- Seek assistance from Organizational Development and Consulting Services (ODCS) at (404) 413.3332 to help you plan an internal or offsite retreat for your department.
- Contact Employee Development and Wellness Services (EDWS) at (404) 413.3342 to schedule wellness activities for your entire staff.

Build a culture of employee appreciation

- Create for example, “Thankful Thursdays”. On this day colleagues and managers write notes to thank someone in the department for an “act of kindness” or doing a great job.
- Create a “Spot” award. This small award could be provided to anyone that you catch providing excellent customer service.
- Write handwritten notes to your employees to acknowledge accomplishments. Handwritten notes show that you took the extra time to acknowledge them. The notes can also thank an employee for going above and beyond. The key is to be specific about the behavior and the timing of mentioning it.
- Consider creating an informal recognition program where peers recognize each other for helping VFA (without being asked). Keep the process simple and be sure it focuses on specific behavior that is observed or communicated by the recipient. Recognition should occur within six business days.
- Show concern for employee issues, both personal and professional.

Communicate with your staff on a regular basis

- Be transparent and keep staff in the loop at all times. Nobody wants to be the last to know. Communicate important updates to GSU’s Strategic Plan and any other important campus initiatives.
- Take time to listen to the concerns that your employees have. Create a “donuts with the boss” hour for employees on a regular basis. This will allow you to know the employees better and their concerns.

Shift from the “me” mentality to the “we” (i.e., team) mentality

- Recognize and reward team performance and team projects.
- Discuss the value and Return on Investment (ROI) of teamwork.
- Create healthy and effective teams that can add excitement to meeting a goal or objective.
- Empower team members who have earned the right to make decisions lead a project, speak on behalf of the department, or solve a challenging problem.

Start demonstrating and training yourself and others to become solutions-focused

- When errors occur, admit the error and learn to use this failure to drive collaboration and engagement.
- Do this by focusing on the shared objective and how you will work together with mutual respect to attain it.
- As a result, otherwise people will be able to create better solutions.

Go above and beyond by giving back to the community

- Make learning growing and giving a normal part of how you operate. Find new ways to reach out and serve the community at large. Work on a community service project together. Contact the Office of Civic Engagement at (404) 413.5533 to help you identify organizations needing help.
- Motivate and inspire not only those you employ but all constituents, to be part of a greater goal that speaks to contribution and purpose. Show those you lead and serve that you care, and help them give back.

Create a Friendly Work Environment

- Create a pleasant work environment that motivates employees to want to come to work each day.
- Take advantage of your wall space. Create a bulletin board that includes special occasions, successful outcomes, university accomplishments, etc. This board can also be used to recognize individual and team achievements and milestones such as work anniversaries and birthdays.
- Encourage employee fitness by providing pedometers to track daily steps. Also, post simple exercises that can be accomplished in the workplace without breaking.
- Contact the Radio to arrange for your employees to attend a performance together or contact the Athletics Department to attend a sports event.
- Have workshops on your staff! Encourage them to take a break. Work goes much faster when you are refreshed and re-energized.
- Put out some healthy treats in the office and call everyone over for a snack. I’ll get people interacting with their coworkers and give everyone a much-deserved break. Encourage working with Employee Development and Wellness Services (EDWS) to create a book club for you or join in their monthly book club.