



Company Awareness Equals A Committed Staff

"It seems the culture in Utah is shifting. Are there Utah based companies who are recognizing those changes?" Deb, Salt Lake City.

To stay competitive, it is essential for companies to recognize cultural changes. A major factor in staying competitive is to acknowledge and respect the needs of your workforce. By recognizing the needs of the staff, people tend to feel more appreciated. When people feel appreciated, they are more likely to be committed to - and remain with - an organization.

Progressive companies are taking a much more holistic approach in retaining staff. One of the greatest ways to achieve this is by creating good a match between the employee's and the company's needs. When you can make that kind of match, there is a greater chance for long-term retention and a more motivated staff.

One company leading the way in employee motivation and retention is ARUP, one of Utah's Top Ten Family Friendly Companies. A full-service reference laboratory specializing in esoteric testing and offering an extensive menu of over 2,000 tests and test combinations, ARUP has long been considered a leader in their industry. Located in Research Park with an employee base of over 1,300 people,

Many organizations have an underlying concern about cutbacks due to the economy. "Employees are not concerned about the economy because they know we are continually growing," comments Madsen. "We have a program in place that helps people focus on what business is about. ARUP has set up a profit budget. When we exceed the company goal, we share the profits 50/50 with our people. The amount each person receives is based on hours worked rather than level. This program works extremely well. Our people are the reason we succeed and we need them to know this."

Realizing that money alone is not a motivator, ARUP provides employees with better than market average benefits. Additionally, showing appreciation in many ways is an essential motivator. Madsen believes that people join an organization, but quit a boss. A manager's job is about building relationships.

One way they accomplish this is with the amount of supervisory training that is offered. ARUP's Corporate University's management and leadership division allows for ongoing growth of all leaders within ARUP.

Assuring that their staff is able to keep current with what is going on, there is some mandatory training for non-management people.

ARUP has been able to keep their employee turnover rate lower than the industry standard by implementing programs that are an excellent fit for their staff.

ARUP is very pro-family and goes the extra mile in terms of support. A great example is that a new mother can change her shift or hours to accommodate her needs. Another example of their support for family is with their domestic partners benefits package. Realizing that the face of Utah has changed, the executive committee was very supportive of offering appropriate benefits to employees who are in a committed same sex relationship. From the response of those staff members who are utilizing the program, this was a very timely move on the part of management.

Finding ways to keep employees focused on business and cost savings contributes to the success of ARUP. A free onsite health clinic open to employees and their families saved the company over one million dollars in healthcare costs in 2001. A visit to the onsite wellness coordinator provides employees with diet and nutrition information or an individually designed exercise or weight management program.

"With the response we get, I'm surprised more companies don't do this," comments Von Madsen, SPHR, Assistant Vice President, Human Resources.

All staff and management are able to attend a weekly "Lunch and Learn" session where topics are presented such as elder care, financial planning, testing procedures and more. Often guest speakers are invited to motivate and inspire the staff.

In a recent internal study, it was learned that benefits influenced 58% of the staff to join the ARUP team. However, 84% choose to remain because of the benefits package. Another key influencer of retention is management's ability to honor the people they call team. By addressing Utah's cultures, ARUP attracts *and* retains an educated and motivated workforce.

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