



Bark Is as Bad as Bite

Bad, bad managers are scaring off good employees, according to recent surveys reported by Chart Your Course International, based in Conyers, Georgia.

Chart Your Course principal Greg Smith says, “The secret to retention is not only good pay, but also managers who have good people skills.”

Two statistics from the surveys:

- Nearly half—48 percent—of employees don’t like their employers.
- Of all new employees, 50 percent quit after two days on the job.

Go to www.chartcourse.com

Can Teach Old Dogs New Tricks

Many companies actually do take action based on exit-interview feedback. So says a survey conducted by OfficeTeam, based in Menlo Park, California.

Executives at 1,000 U.S.

companies were asked how often they act on information gathered during interviews with departing employees. They answered:

- Always, 13%
- Somewhat frequently, 62%
- Rarely, 16%
- Never, 1%
- Don’t conduct exit interviews, 5%
- Don’t know, 3%

Here are five tips from OfficeTeam on conducting an effective exit interview:

1. Set the stage. Meet in a neutral location, and make it clear that the information won’t be used against the exiting worker. Explain that his or her insight can help improve the organization.
2. Consider a third party.



Even a leaving employee may feel uncomfortable discussing certain topics with a current supervisor, so it’s wise to have an HR staff person conduct the interview.

3. Act on serious situations. Never ignore a departing employee’s claim of mistreatment or discrimination. Refer the matter to your internal legal department.
4. Ask the right questions. Use open-ended, general questions at first, but be prepared to get specific.
5. Take emotions into account. Depending on whether an employee is leaving on good terms, exit interviews should be viewed as an information source. A hidden agenda can influence what an about-to-be former staff member says.

More info, online job search www.officeteam.com

Can Tell a Book by Its Cover

Amazon.com, the huge online purveyor of books, reads employees’ opinions and feelings every two weeks using *eePulse*, an electronic survey and communications tool that solicits workers’ comments, questions, and suggestions via email.

EePulse, which is run by an Ann Arbor, Michigan-based application service provider, uses a simple question format asking employees to rate their “pulse” or energy level.

Based on a scale of 1 to 10, answers range from “not doing much, not having fun” to “overwhelmed by work and need help.”

People are encouraged to talk to their managers, Amazon leaders report results to employees, and the company says it tries to address out-

How To

Six Keys to True Client Loyalty

by Laura Michaud

Customer satisfaction doesn’t always lead to client loyalty. Even when your clients are completely satisfied with your product or service, 40 percent will leave and start doing business with your competition. Even though you’d still retain more than half of your clients, losing 40 percent will cost you more than you may think because attracting new clients can cost nearly double what it takes to attract repeat business from your existing client base.

What’s the solution? You need to go beyond client satisfaction and develop the rapport that will make clients adore you. Only then, will you achieve true client loyalty. Increased technology isn’t the way. In fact, the more high-tech the business world becomes, the more challenging it is to build client rapport. Despite their conveniences, email, voicemail, palmtops, and other technological marvels take our attention away from customers and eliminate the human touch needed to build long-term client relationships. And new technology makes it easier for your clients to come in contact with your competition.

Here are six rapport-building tips to help you go beyond client satisfaction.

1. Truly listen to your clients' needs. Your clients want to talk about themselves, their situation, their wants. The more you talk about your business, the more you turn away your clients. Stand out by focusing on them and listening. To test your listening skills, ask whether your mind wanders, you make silent judgements, or you think about what you're going to say next. And, ask the client open-ended questions.

2. Establish common ground. Clients want to feel a connection beyond just being a client. If clients come to your office, make your office decor an extension of your personality and likes, with family photos, travel shots, and other mementos. Or you can develop telephone rapport. For instance, ask your client's hometown. And listen for clues. Do you hear a busy office in the background, loud machinery, or other indicators of the caller's office environment? If so, comment.

3. Exceed your client's expectations, every time. An age-old rule: Under promise and over deliver. The first step is honesty. If you think it will take two months to complete a project, quote a two-month timeframe. If you get the job done a week or two early, you have under promised and over delivered. Also go the extra step—an extra phone call or quick personal visit. Let your clients know you care and that you're doing everything possible. Then, get the job done.

4. Make them laugh. One of the quickest ways to build rapport is with humor. A good joke or funny story eases tension and breaks down mental barriers, and shows your human side.

5. Keep a positive attitude. When you're positive and upbeat, people naturally want to be around you and do business with you. That doesn't mean you can't have a bad day. Just try not to show your clients the kind of day you're having. Keep a lift in your voice and before you know it, your body responds in a positive manner.

6. Prove that you care. Your clients want to know that you have their best interests at heart. They also want a sense of "we're in this together." You can convey that by being genuinely happy and excited to talk with them. Give them your undivided attention. Keep notes on regular clients, with their birthdays, recent vacations, and so forth. It's an easy way to individualize your service.

When you go beyond client satisfaction and create true client loyalty, you develop long-term relationships that can lead to increased profits. The end result is clients who love you and a business that grows and thrives.

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standing concerns.

Source *The New Corporate University Review*, training university.com

Trend Watch

The proportion of U.S. workers who don't speak English as their first language is growing. In fact, many employers now offer courses in English as a Second Language.

Spanish-speaking countries are not in the top 10 in population, although there is a large number of Hispanic workers in the U.S. workforce.

America can expect more Chinese workers and to do more business with China,

In 2000:

□ U.S. population is 275,562,673 (last count).

□ China's population is 1,261,832,482.

By 2010:

□ United States 300,118,269

□ China 1,359,140,968.

The questions posed by strategic business futurists Roger Herman and Joyce Gioia: Will you be fluent in the multilingual corporate world? Will you be able to recruit internationally?

Sources *Trend Alert* The Herman Group, www.herman.net; U.S. Census Bureau

Survey Says

In 85 percent of cases, organizations look inside to replace departing CEOs, according to a recent study by Drake Beam Morin.

DBM has identified 10 key competencies to help HR professionals and senior executives make important decisions on the next CEO:

1. Flexibility. Able to adapt to dynamic environments; thrives on change.
2. Low risk aversion. Able to take and manage appropriate risks and use them to the organization's advantage.

ate risks and use them to the organization's advantage.

3. Business acumen.

Knowledgeable about trends, practices, and policies affecting the industry and business. Understands competitors and strategies that work in the marketplace.

4. Visionary. Creates and communicates a compelling, inspired sense of core purpose. Leads on the vision of the future, not the current reality.

Can sift through a vast amount of information and solicit opportunities and possibilities.

5. Ease with ambiguity and uncertainty. Can cope with and embrace change and use it to advantage. Able to act without having the total picture.

6. Strategic agility. Can see ahead and anticipate consequences and trends; has broad knowledge and perspective; articulates vision, possibilities, strategies, and plans.

7. Customer focus. Has a clear understanding of customers' needs, preferences, interests, timelines, and decision-making criteria. Can walk in the shoes of customers and speak the same language.

8. Communicator. Relates well to all kinds of people up, down, and sideways in the organization, inside and outside. Able to influence and stimulate other people and build constructive relationships.

9. Motivator. Is charismatic and persuasive.

10. Continuous learner. A quick and relentless learner. Can analyze successes and failures, and learn from the experiences.

More info www.dbm.com

Send press releases or short articles on news, trends, and best practices to News You Can Use, Training & Development, 1640 King Street, Box 1443, Alexandria, VA 22313-2043. Email NYCU@astd.org.