



## Five Steps to an Effective People Strategy

In today's economy there are few things a company can do that will have greater financial benefits over time than developing a well thought-out, comprehensive and compelling People Strategy. Here's a five step plan that may help you get a sense of how easy this can be to implement at your organization:

### **Step 1 – Know Who You Are**

The trick to it is in first making sure that your strategy is in line with the company's overriding Purpose, as well as your Mission, Values, Goals and Growth Plans. This is easier said than done, because many organizations find at this stage that they don't yet have a good feel for why they exist and the best types of people to attract that will help them achieve their goals. I suggest going through this exercise before attempting a formal People Strategy.

### **Step 2 – Recruiting**

Once you know why you exist and what you're really about as an organization, it's helpful to create a recruiting methodology that coincides with your Purpose, Culture and Style, so you attract people with a share vision and views. This will insure greater retention and reduce costly turnover of employees who don't fit comfortably within the company. While we work with clients on a wide range of award and reward programs to improve employee engagement, performance and value, we can show that a small reduction in turnover alone will pay for the bulk of your investment in recognition; so this is a big deal!

### **Step 3 – Awards/Rewards and Incentives**

A good strategy should combine all of the ways you touch employees. This includes everything from simple, no-cost day-to-day appreciation to periodic recognition that thanks people for their efforts, and then a series of well formulated performance management incentives. While this may take time to develop, as you don't want to overwhelm people with too much too soon, we suggest picking the "low-hanging fruit"; the hand full of behavioral initiatives that when improved, will have the greatest impact on savings or profit. This will get things rolling in the right direction, so leadership will be open to adding more measurables to the platform and yield even more returns over time.

#### **Step 4 – Training**

Finally, it's important to properly train your managers to understand both How and Why to use recognition effectively. If you launch your program with well-informed leadership, excited about the program and ready to use it, you have the best chance of coming across as believable, winning employee trust and launching a long term People Strategy that has high levels of participation, as well as provable ROI. You'd be surprised how many companies spend a ton of time creating the perfect program with a balance of all the right messaging and measurables, and then miss the mark by launching it with minimal gusto and low enthusiasm.

#### **Step 5 – Rinse and Repeat**

The most overlooked part of most programs we review is the Measurement & Analysis. If you don't actively track, measure, tweak and work to optimize your program content and communications on a regular basis, it will likely to lose momentum and the results will slow. We see a lot of situations where elements of an initially vibrant recognition program have descended to nothing more than entitlements, being dangled to entice activity, not properly rewarding positive growth. A support team that monitors and manages your program to keep it fresh, relevant and engaging is key to getting the most out of your People Strategy.

We call this entire process an Umbrella Recognition Solution. When you're ready to embark on this project for your company, we would be happy to offer some thoughts and ideas that may help you make it the best it can be.



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