

The Top 5 Reasons Giving Back Increases the Ability to Recruit and Retain the Best.

With the quick arrival of “Giving Tuesday” on November 28th, a national movement dedicated to giving back following the shopping frenzies of Black Friday and Cyber Monday, I couldn’t help but wonder if Canadian business fully realize the workplace benefits of giving? I often speak with small business owners on the various activities they can employ to find the best talent. An effective recruitment and retention tactic is for companies to align themselves with charitable organizations which compliment their values and culture. The best candidates in today’s socially responsible society demand that companies give back – it is becoming an important incentive and helps attract and retain stellar employees.

Here are the Top 5 Reasons Giving Back Increases the Ability to Recruit and Retain the Best:

1. **Positive Vibes:** Corporate social responsibility has been dubbed as a leading factor in employee engagement. The higher your overall employee engagement, the more your staff will consistently have positive things to say about your company. Today’s team building and corporate morale initiatives need to focus on serving local communities. Corporate philanthropy programs and corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives are very effective ways to build corporate morale – offering a powerful way to build a stronger team and unite employees.
2. **Loyalty:** A brand that people are proud of can inspire loyalty. Workplace giving and volunteering activities help employees to make sense of their place within the organization in a positive manner. This reinforces that they are part of a larger, altruistic movement based on values, social justice, and giving. These feelings brought on by workplace philanthropy help employees see their company in a new light. When they recognize that they are working for a company with a broader mission to help the community at large, it strengthens their commitment to the organization and nurtures feelings of company pride and loyalty. Loyalty can lead to more revenue. More revenue is good for both business and employee morale – and can help you give back even more!
3. **Going Above and Beyond:** According to the Huffington Post, Millennials are almost twice as likely to be happy with how their career is going if they frequently participate in workplace volunteer activities. An engaged worker is a more productive worker. Employees become more engaged with their team as they all work toward a common goal. This drives down absenteeism and apathy while driving up productivity and employee satisfaction. When your company gives back, your team is also less likely to leave. “32% of employees would seriously consider leaving their job if their company gave no or little money to charity,” reports Forbes Magazine. Higher engagement and retention can provide your company with the obvious benefit of a more productive and efficient workforce.
4. **Camaraderie:** Also noted as one of the ways to boost employee morale, investing time, money and resources in CSR programs can also build corporate camaraderie. Focusing community involvement efforts on the key areas deemed most important by employees will help ensure CSR success. If employees care about the cause at hand or have a personal connection to the organization, it becomes more rewarding and also helps drive involvement and support from their business network, family and friends.

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5. **Recruitment:** Establishing yourself as a philanthropic company gives you a potential edge when recruiting new employees. Job seekers who see that volunteerism or financial giving is part of the company culture are likely to see that as a positive for your company. Individuals who already volunteer, work with charities and do other philanthropic work on their own are particularly likely to be drawn to a company with the same values. The company's philanthropic efforts give you one more bullet point to add to recruitment information.

Giving back is much more than giving away money. It should be tied to how the company operates and above all be authentic. It should begin by finding out where your organization's greatest impacts are, and then dedicating the resources to specific, measurable programs that leverage your existing strengths. Keep your employees informed on the activities and outcomes and recruit them to participate. They'll become your greatest allies and ultimately everyone gains.