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Keeping People Fresh

We Americans have become obsessed with "freshness." We will not enjoy a trade surplus in agricultural products this year because, among other factors, we demand our favorite fresh produce all year. Hence, we import when domestic supplies are unavailable.

A Google search on five word pairs beginning with fresh revealed:

- Fresh fruit - 3,200,000 hits
- Fresh ideas - 538,000
- Fresh approaches - 42,800
- Fresh beer - 17,200, and
- Fresh people - 8,630 hits.

With apologies to the beer companies, I believe keeping employees fresh is more important than worrying about Born On dates.

Creating an environment that generates excitement among people is a HUGE contributor to success of an organization. Since you cannot maintain excitement among stale people, keeping the atmosphere and people fresh is paramount.

Fresh people:

- Look at old problems through new eyes
- Are more energized and excited
- Have contagious enthusiasm
- Stay focused on the goal, mission, or challenge

Leaders have many options for keeping their people fresh. Some of the most common and effective measures include:

1. Job rotation
2. Reorganization
3. Training, especially training not directly related to the job
4. Mentoring
5. "Star Gazing" or "Brainstorming" retreats, particularly if they lead to a

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5. Star Gazing or Brainstorming Ideas, particularly if they lead to a clear and compelling vision

For example, eBay CEO Meg Whitman says, "We have reorganized early and often. That keeps people fresh."

What about training? Besides the "soft stuff" benefits, Home Depot gained \$12,000 in revenue per employee by increasing training just 2.5 hours per year. That's a no-brainer!

Mentoring programs can be especially beneficial for experienced employees who may be somewhat bored. In addition to perking up the older employee's attitude, valuable lessons and guidance are passed on to the next generation.

Tom Wagner

We help clarify options so our clients
identify the Right Questions
and solve the Right Problems.

Call us at 800 422-1374 to learn more.

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