

Smart Strategies

Solutions for Workplace Challenges

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Dear Subscriber,

I've had a busy 2010, which is great for business, but not so good for newsletter writing. Hope your 2010 has been good so far.

Read an interesting article on engaged employees. Sparked some thoughts of my own. Whether you are a supervisor or an employee, I think you'll find this interesting.

Hope You Enjoy!

Feel free to forward this to friends and colleagues.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Alan'.

Alan Krieger



Alan Krieger
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Engaged Employees

We're not talking about marriage, but we are talking about how to engage employees so they maintain a positive, long term relationship with their organization.

I've spent the last six months working on several large consulting projects related to workforce development. They put me in touch with Human Resources Managers from a number of companies and there was a common concern about how hard it is to find workers who are motivated to work hard.

My approach to motivating employees has been to focus on employee satisfaction. The article I read moves the conversation a bit to focus on what keeps an employee positively engaged with their work.

The key to engagement is employees feeling that they are valued and valuable.

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Quotes to Inspire

"Try not to become a man of success, but rather try to become a man of value." Albert Einstein

Some strategies include:

- Fully involving employees in the organization's operation - seeking and really hearing their observations, ideas and suggestions.
- Clearly defining what a "good" job looks like by clarifying outcomes and expectations.
- Giving regular positive and corrective feedback on these outcomes.

These strategies are ones I've regularly talked about in this newsletter in terms of employee satisfaction. Something new and different is:

- Finding each employee's passion and helping them use that in their work.

A question in a performance evaluation can include asking the employee how s/he feels about the job, what parts of it are most motivating and what else they would like to do in the organization.

While a company can't always fully meet the needs of the employee, when it can do so by changing the focus of the job, adding or removing a specific task, etc., that employee becomes more highly engaged in their work.

It make sense to me that an employee who enjoys the work, finds it meaningful and feels valued by the organization will be a highly productive, long term employee.

If that's not the case for you, think about your passions and see if there are areas in your organization where you could work more in line with your passions and/or areas in which you feel you would be more valuable and valued. Discuss this with your supervisor and help them see the value to them and the organization for the changes you are proposing.

The article I read that sparked my thinking is from a book: 'First, Break All the Rules, What the World's Greatest Managers do Differently' by Buckingham and Coffman based on research done by Gallup. I've just ordered a copy of the book and will let you know about it in a future issue. You might want to share it with your supervisor.

As always, I welcome your feedback and suggestions. You can reach me at alan@krsol.com

"You miss 100% of the shots you never take" Wayne Gretzky

Quotes for Caution

"Better to remain silent and be thought a fool than to speak out and remove all doubt." Abraham Lincoln

"Do not confuse motion and progress - A rocking horse keeps moving but does not make progress." unknown

About Krieger Solutions, LLC

We are a training and consulting company dedicated to helping people work together more effectively.

We offer training, leadership coaching, facilitation, team building and organizational consulting services.

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More Thoughts On Managing Stress

I just came off a very stressful 4 months (thus, no newsletters). I had a vacation in the middle of it, but that did little to help me deal with the day to day stress. I've been decompressing for several weeks now and can feel the stress and tension gradually working its way out.

I teach stress management and know many strategies, but using them effectively is tough when I'm under deep stress. In my decompression mode, I've noticed a few interesting things about stress and de-stressing.

I love to garden and find it relaxing. Yet as I've been pulling weeds, I've noticed that my face, neck and back tense up as I focus on making sure I'm pulling weeds and not baby plants I've planted. I've been practicing consciously relaxing as I weed and find that it helps remove the backlog of stress.

Another thing that's emphasized in stress management is to take time to breathe deeply. Under stress our breathing tends to get shallow. Those of you who've been subscribers for awhile know that I'm always looking for ways to do things quicker and I've found a shortcut to deep breathing!

The problem with taking a deep breath is that you also have to take time to release the breath slowly. That can take a couple of minutes, especially if you try to do 2 or 3 of them. When I'm stressed I DON'T HAVE a couple of minutes to spare!

The solution: Deep sighing. This is a way to exhale deeply and slowly... and guess what? As you trigger a sigh, you naturally take in a deep breath, and after a deep sigh you naturally take in another relaxed breath, so you don't have to keep paying attention. In fact, once the sigh starts it runs through on auto-pilot, so I can get back to my work and let my body finish the deep breathing.

I found myself sighing a lot as I dialed back on work for a few weeks. The only problem with it is that people around me wondered what the sigh was about and often took it as a negative comment. I now explain my sighs (de-stressing) so there is no confusion and try to do it more when I'm alone in the car, walking to an appointment, or at my desk.

Finally, I'm trying to make sure I do some conscious relaxing every time I begin to feel stress. It's easier to do when I'm in decompression mode, but by doing it regularly now, it should become a habit that carries over to the high stress times.

Think about what works best for you and practice it even when you're not stressed so you'll have it as a habit when you really need it.

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***"Reprinted from 'Smart Strategies - Solutions to Workplace Challenges', a newsletter from Krieger Solutions, LLC.
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**Thanks for subscribing
and for any comments
you send.**

Alan

Let me know if you have any strategies that work especially well for managing stress or de-stressing after the fact.

Email me at: alan@krsol.com

News From Krieger Solutions, LLC



I've spent the last six months on several large consulting projects related to workforce development. They have been fascinating projects that involved working with a wide range of high tech companies.

Another part of my business that has picked up recently is leadership coaching. I really enjoy helping people learn new skills and strategies that help them succeed.

If any of you know of leaders who could benefit from some fine tuning of their skills and strategies, please pass my email address on to them.