

MSI - BUILDING A SUCCESSFUL WORKPLACE CULTURE

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The first step within MSI’s strategic plan was to develop a new mission, vision and values that would encompass a strong statement in “Building Bridges to Success”. The mission focused on developing a successful road map for offender work skills training and reentry work opportunities. The second step was to build a successful workplace culture. While the focus on offender reentry is the goal, workplace culture within the industries organization from operations to leadership is equally as important. Culture is the environment that surrounds us all the time. A workplace culture is the shared values, belief systems, attitudes and the set of assumptions that people in a workplace share. This is shaped by individual upbringing, social and cultural context. In a workplace, however, the leadership and the strategic organizational directions and management influence the workplace culture to a huge extent. A positive workplace culture improves teamwork, raises the morale, increases productivity and efficiency, and enhances reten-

Chuck Beltz, MSI Supervisor/Manager Light Manufacturing Operations & Sign Shop receiving first MSI Administrator Coin Award (Chris Kamrada, MSI Administrator on the right, and Bellamy CF’s Deputy Warden on the left).



MSI Administrator Coin Award



Research by the Deloitte development consulting firm has shown that 94% of executives and 88% of employees believe a distinct corporate culture is important to a business’ success, and 76% of these employees believed that a “clearly defined business strategy” helped create a positive culture.

tion of the workforce. Job satisfaction, collaboration, and work performance are all enhanced. And, most importantly, a positive workplace environment reduces stress in employees.

MSI's positive workplace culture is defined by a set of clear organizational core values that are communicated effectively and discussed with the employees so that they feel part of it. It is the same commitment that an organization or a company makes to certain policies and actions, such as "going green" or "social change". It is not enough to state this in the mission statement, brand story or in marketing and promotional material. It is crucial that demonstrable actions are taken regularly so that the employees feel an individual and personal responsibility towards these values. This will ensure that they can evaluate their own attitudes towards these positive core values, and take pride in them.

Positive attitudes and actions affect workplace culture. MSI Administrator Christopher Kamrada implemented standard practices for all industries operations, including central office



Tom Fegan, MSI Supervisor, Thumb Laundry receiving the MSI Administrator Coin Award

to hang large banners of the mission and new core values to keep them top-of-mind in MSI's day-to-day operations.

Another step toward a culture change was to foster good collaboration and communication among staff members. Leadership and management style that encourages teamwork, open and honest communication is vital to creat-

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Famous quotes banners hanging in factory operation

ing a positive feeling in the workplace. Open and honest communication also means that regular audits are taken to evaluate how people are interacting with each other, feedback is welcomed and taken on board, and opportunities for social interaction are enabled. An Administrator Evaluation and Staff Feedback for Organizational Improvements survey was created to evaluate leadership, staff relationships as well as to collect suggestions and ideas for any needed improvements. Impromptu pizza meetings to celebrate year-end deadlines or positive progress reports are often the norm. This gives an opportunity for team members to nurture and foster connections with leadership and each other. Also, strict no tolerance open-door policies and complaint procedure is crucial for creating a positive collaborative environment.

MSI also strives for an inclusive work environment. A positive workplace is one where all the employees are valued, supported and nurtured irrespective of gender, sexual orientation or color. All employees

should have equal opportunities to progress and equal access to all the perks and rewards on offer. An inclusive workplace is one that values individual differences in the workforce and makes staff feel welcome and accepted. Motivational signage of famous quotes from various authors that supports inclusion, teamwork, and positivity is clear and on display. Create clear goals and rewards for staff members.

Motivated and engaged employees can be created if they are treated equally and have clear goals that they can work towards. Having a transparent policy for rewarding staff offers the staff an opportunity to measure their performance. Measurable performance indicators will mean that there would be healthy competition, but this kind of honest policy statement would help avoid negative feelings and resentment amongst the team members towards each other. When goals are positively reinforced, and achievements are recognized and celebrated, it leads to employees feeling valued which in turn creates a positive feeling in the workplace.

The implementation of a new Administrator Coin Award was designed to reward MSI staff members who have gone above and beyond to support the culture of industries and their operations. The coin award created using a current acrylic award plaque with a custom designed MSI coin embedded in the middle on a swivel base. The award is manufactured at the MSI License Plate, Vinyl Specialty Operation. Will Rondeau, MSI License Plate Manager, and his staff along with offender workers designed and created a prototype before approving a final design. The Administrator Coin Awards are now an integral part of MSI's workplace culture and a positive step to building staff confidence and positive attitude toward their workplace.

Research by Deloitte shows that 83% of executives and 84% of employees rank having engaged and motivated employees as the top factor that substantially contributes to a company's success.

A positive culture in the workplace is essential for fostering a sense of pride and ownership amongst staff members. When people take pride, they invest their future in the organization and work hard to create opportunities that will benefit the organization. By identifying and rewarding those who are actively striving towards creating a positive work culture, and supporting others around them, industries can encourage others to do the same. Positive

attitudes and behavior in the workplace are the direct results of effective leadership and a positive management style. MSI will continue new and innovative ways to "Build Bridges to Success" for Michigan offenders and "Build a Positive Workplace Culture for All Staff."

Newly elected Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer visited MDOC Central Office and stopped by the MSI offices. We were all excited that her vision for moving Michigan forward is the same as our motto of "Building Bridges to Success." Chris Kamrada has requested that banners be produced to hang in all MSI Operations and Headquarters. We also gave her a prisoner made American Flag that she loved and stated she would make sure every Michigan State agency was flying MSI flags. We believe she will be in full support of the industries program.



MI Governor Gretchen Whitmer at Michigan State Industries

CHUCK PATTILLO RETIRES AFTER LONG CAREER IN PUBLIC SERVICE

CALPIA General Manager and longtime supporter of CI Chuck Pattillo retired in January after 14 years leading California's CI agency. Pattillo has earned many accolades since the beginning of his career, and NCIA will always remember him as an innovator in the field, an active and driven board member, and Rodli award recipient.



NCIA wishes Chuck the best in his retirement!