If you want to increase retention, achieve a high level of front line employee performance and provide quality guest and employee interactions, you need to place a focus on your supervisor staff. “Many leaders fail to recognize that new employees are enthusiastic about starting a new job, and that, by their actions, management destroys this enthusiasm. Our research shows a measurable decline in employees’ morale after they have been working for an organization for six months, and this deterioration worsens as they continue to evaluate what they expected against what they are receiving,” stated by Douglas Klein, President of Sirota Survey Intelligence firm that provides behavioral research and consulting services to Fortune 100 companies.

People don’t leave companies; they leave supervisors.

Most managers know this to be true, yet they don’t invest the necessary time and resources to ensure supervisors possess the people skills to lead and/or inspire the leadership of others. We can no longer fill leadership positions with individuals who are not equipped to handle the people side of the business.

Quality supervisor orientation and supervisor development programs that provide a high level of awareness about self and others is essential for the growth and success of your casino business. This article is focused on recommending strategies to ensure existing and incoming supervisors are given the tools necessary to protect the most important asset of any organization.

Make Sure Supervisors Can Coach

Coaching for sports is similar to coaching for people. In either case, good coaches assess a player’s strength, watch their progress and find out who needs help. Skills create habits and coaches create skills. Until supervisors effectively communicate and are responsive to each individual player, quality performance can not happen.

“They call it coaching, but it is teaching. You do not just tell them it is so. You show them the reasons why it is so and then you repeat and repeat until they are convinced, until they know,” as quoted by Vince Lombardi, Hall of Fame Green Bay Packers coach.

Clarity Supervisor Roles Before, During and After Employee Training Programs

Before Employee Training: Supervisors need to endorse all company training by preparing employees for the training experience and by letting them know that the training they are about to attend is communicating expectations that are important to them.

During Training: Supervisors should be willing to participate in training programs as guest speakers and mentors.

After Employee Training: When employees return from any and all training programs, they should find their supervisors are eager to discuss the concepts learned and provide the support that is necessary for a person practicing new behaviors.

Too often casinos have invested in training programs and they have not reaped the rewards of their investment. In these cases training was an event and management is left feeling training is not worth the investment. Every training effort deserves time spent in preparing for the implementation of the skills beyond the classroom experience. When your supervisors are engaged in the ongoing support of training and when their roles and responsibilities are communicated, employee behaviors begin to change.

Make Sure Supervisors Understand the Value of Employee Engagement

What drives employees to stay at work and to be engaged is primarily two things:

1. People need to have a sense of fairness in their organizations, with how they’re treated and how their customers are treated.
2. The second is the quality of the relationship that people have with their manager.

If an employee is excited about work and knows how to do his or her job very well, or if they’re frustrated by some lack of fairness or the way they’re being treated by their manager, then only part of them shows up to work. Some terminate themselves, others stay and become part of the “warm body” pool. Maintaining a competitive advantage lies in the ability to get productivity out of each person, which means supervisors must be engaged in helping people enjoy what they do.

There are many ways high performing supervisors go about engaging employees, the following are just a few:

• When they delegate they try to delegate the tasks they know the person will enjoy and succeed with.
• They let people know they believe in them.
• They never embarrass employees in front of their peers.
• They give feedback both for perfection and imperfection in a spirit of caring.
• They proactively seek their employees input on department concerns.
• They share company information and changes openly and in a timely manner.
• They show interest in their employees’ future job interests.

“I think that people realize our competitive advantage these days is our ability to get productivity out of each person, and productivity is not like driving a horse. It has to do with their heart and their soul, and their minds, hands and their habits,” as stated by Scott Blanchard, Senior Vice President, The Ken Blanchard Companies, a global leader in workplace learning, productivity, performance, and leadership effectiveness solutions.

If you’ve ever participated in a new employee orientation session, you know that new employees usually are enthusiastic about starting their jobs. However, in a very short period of time management, by their actions, can take the life out of this enthusiasm.

What to Do?
The one thing most casinos have not done and should do right away is to put in place a mandatory new supervisor orientation training program. This program should ensure that supervisors learn about HR policies and procedures and how to implement them consistently and fairly. Managers should also learn that they have incredible influence. Their strengths can empower and energize the people who work for them. ♠

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