



Developing a Family Mindset

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WHAT'S INSIDE?
MEMBER SPOTLIGHT
Ideal Printers
(page 10)

Building a Best Workplace
(page 2)

Breakthrough Opportunities
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(page 14)



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

02

BUILDING A BEST WORKPLACE
Susan Pschorr
Suttle-Straus

04

BENEFITS OF ONE-ON-ONE PROFESSIONAL COACHING
Joseph Marin
Printing Industries of America

07

WHAT'S THE CARROT?
Jenn Strang
Printing Industries of America

08

EHS TRAINING AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT
Jamie Mackay
Printing Industries of America

12

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: IDEAL PRINTERS
Sarah Sudar
Printing Industries of America

16

BREAKTHROUGH OPPORTUNITIES START WITH PEOPLE
David Crawley
University of Houston College of Technology

19

INFOGRAPHIC: ADDING VALUE TO YOUR COMPANY CULTURE WITH MENTORING
Ligaya Scaff
Printing Industries of America

20

HITTING IT OUT OF THE PARK: TEN WORLD-CLASS HIRING PRACTICES
Cheryl Jekiel
Lean Leadership Resource Center



Left to Right

Francisco Cardona, MIS/IT/Partner
Joan Siewert-Cardona, CFO/Sales/Partner
Andy Olson, COO/Sales/Partner
Lana Siewert-Olson, President/Partner

Infographic References (page 19)

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Building a Best Workplace

Susan Pschorr
Director, Human Relations
Suttle-Straus

We at Suttle-Straus believe that people are our most important asset and the foundation for all we do. It is the people, working together, who have raised the company to the level of performance and respect that it holds today. Each year, Printing Industries of America's Best Workplace in the Americas competition offers a great opportunity to reflect on our progress and successes while inspiring us to raise the bar and become even better. A continuous improvement mindset is at the heart of our organization, and the data and programs we submit in each year's application serve as the new baseline to build and improve upon so that we stay on the leading edge of great places to work. The categories included in the Best Workplace application—Communication & Culture, Employee Resources & Benefits, and Safety & Work Environment—provide focus and clarity on the key factors that go into making a strong, employee-focused company. Throughout the year, we collect data and supporting documentation related to the activities surrounding these categories so that the information is easy to access when application time comes around!

Communication & Culture

Open communication is part of our culture. Our CEO holds quarterly town hall meetings for all shifts to share information about the business. We post financials in breakrooms and produce a bi-weekly newsletter available in print and digital versions. Leaders hold one-on-one meetings with each of their team members at least quarterly. These meetings focus on gathering ideas for process improvement, removing obstacles that hinder accomplishing key result areas, and discussing areas for career development and how the team member can help develop others.

The team at Suttle-Straus works hard to produce top-quality work, but we also like to have fun and our culture reflects that. On Halloween, we let our creativity shine, decorating our work areas, competing in costume contests, and serving up a fabulous potluck. Suttle-Straus actively supports our community through organized company charitable events, like our fall United Way campaign, the Share Your Holidays food drive to benefit the Second Harvest Food Bank, and Go Red for Women to support the American Heart Association. Adding an element of friendly team competition to our events has made them quite successful, and for the past two years, Suttle-Straus has been in the top ten contributing companies for Share Your Holidays, among much larger companies.

To formally recognize employee achievements, we host an annual awards dinner complete with entertainment. At this event, we recognize length of service and craftsmanship and give awards from nominations solicited from everyone in the company. Day to day, we recognize each other's accomplishments on team recognition boards located in production areas.

Employee Resources & Benefits

In a competitive job market with local unemployment around 2%, offering a great benefit package is table stakes. This means incorporating not only health, dental, and vision insurance plans, but also life insurance, disability, 401(k), generous PTO, profit sharing, longevity bonuses, and computer loans and tuition reimbursement. The robust Employee Assistance Program at Suttle-Straus offers counseling, legal and financial resources, and concierge-type services to help employees

“Open communication is part of our culture.”

—Susan Pschorr

find information on such things as housing, child and elder care, home repair, and making major purchases.

Other enriching aspects to the company include wellness activities such as a monthly salad bar and healthy food potluck, on-site chair massages, programs on financial and wellness topics, activities such as yoga and salsa dancing, and sponsoring company teams for community charitable events such as 5Ks.

Safety & Work Environment

The health and wellbeing of our whole team is a top priority, and the Safety Shield component of the Best Workplace program provides an opportunity to review and improve safety practices. Safety is embedded in our culture. Team members participate in safety audits and bring issues to the attention of the Safety Administrator, who conducts daily safety walks.

Top-quality products can only come from a top-quality environment. Our manufacturing areas are spacious, clean, well lit, and organized. We use our facility to showcase our capabilities in print production and environmental graphics, so our surroundings are creative, vivid, and fun.

At Suttle-Straus, Best Workplace is not only a PIA competition, but also a philosophy of doing business that we are committed to achieving every day. Time to start working on this year's application!

For more information on the Best Workplace in the Americas competition, visit www.printing.org/bwa.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Susan Pschorr joined the Suttle-Straus team as Director of Human Resources in 2007. She holds a bachelor of science in communication arts and French and a master of business administration in entrepreneurial management from the University of Wisconsin—Madison. Susan's previous professional positions include Director of Finance & Human Resources at Platypus Technologies, Business Manager for Oprah Book Club author Jacquelyn Mitchard, and Director/Producer at WISC-TV.

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Joseph Marin
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Source: <https://www.brainshark.com/ideas-blog/2017/august/5-sales-coaching-stats-that-are-hard-to-ignore>

Coaching has become a more prominent workforce development tool in recent years. Study after study has shown that employees who were given personal, specialized direction and feedback boosted performance and results faster than those who were not. There are probably dozens of benefits for one-on-one coaching that can be cited—but if we could boil them down to the three most positive effects, they would be the following:

One-on-one coaching fast-tracks your goals.

Internet search is a great way to find tidbits of information, but as for major changes to your professional development, it's not the way to go. When you work with a coach, you're tapping into years of professional experience and advice. Chances are, a coach will have already been through many of the scenarios and obstacles that you're experiencing. A coach can provide the approach and direction that you need so you can move forward more quickly. Best of all, that advice and direction is presented with context—it's relevant to your specific business needs. Internet search will never be a replacement for a great coach. Let's see Google do that!

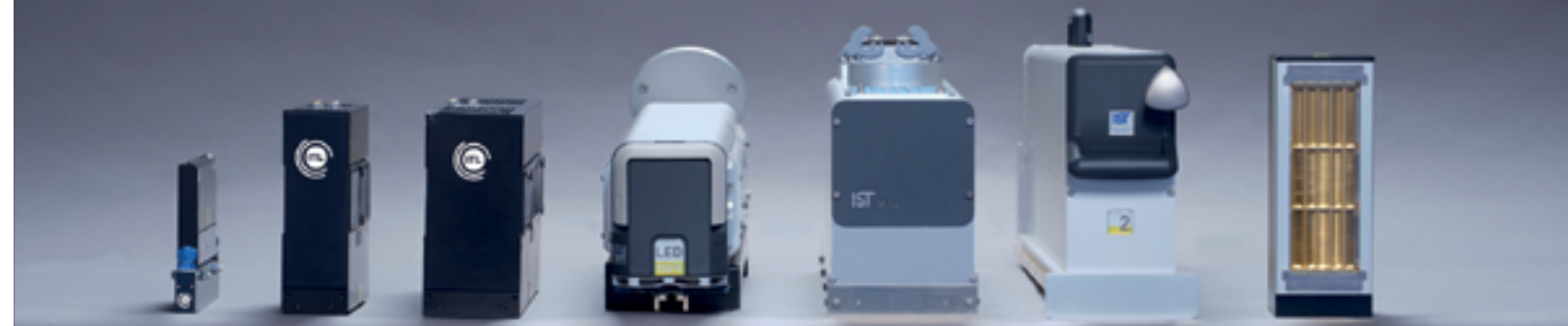
One-on-one coaching sets the right mindset.

We all battle "the voice." I'm not talking about the TV show here; I'm talking about the self-doubting, self-sabotaging little voice in our heads that keeps us from achieving our goals. It's that voice that tells us

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we're not good enough. To give up. To go back to the old way. A coach will help you push through those situations of self-doubt and keep you confident, positive, and focused on your goals.

One-on-one coaching makes you accountable.

Accountability is all about delivering on commitments. To hold you to your commitments, a good coach will help you set clear expectations, make sure you meet each milestone, and provide honest feedback. Setting clear expectations gives you a vision for your success and a plan for how you'll get there. Meeting milestones means agreeing on specific targets and timelines to meet your goal. Finally, open, honest, consistent feedback from your coach will let you know exactly where you stand on reaching your goal. Feedback could be positive or negative—remember, it's always more productive to be honest rather than nice.



What's the Carrot?

Getting your staff to complete learning assignments can be tricky. Sometimes they feel that they might already know the material and sometimes it can be a timing issue, but often it might just be the motivation (or lack thereof) that's not giving them the get-up-and-go to finish.

- 1. It's not one-size-fits-all.** What motivates you doesn't necessarily motivate everyone else. Don't be afraid to ask if your current plan doesn't seem to be working.
- 2. Get creative.** Make a prize tree that includes a variety of items such as gift cards, certificates for additional hours in paid time off, bonus money, sports tickets, and more. Let the employees choose their prizes from the tree when they complete a course or reach a designated milestone.
- 3. Build it into your review process.** Making training a part of regularly scheduled conversations about performance and increases shows that you are com-

mitted to investing in your employee's future with the organization.

- 4. Make it clear and communicate it often.** Put a poster up in the break area describing how you are willing to give out perks in exchange for training hours. Talk about it at staff meetings.
- 5. Recognize efforts.** Send a congratulatory email when an employee has completed a course. For larger milestones like certifications, make sure to call them out at staff meetings to acknowledge their hard work in front of the group.

Investing in training, providing the time to learn, and using creative ways to motivate means a more engaged staff. Raising employee engagement has a positive impact on morale, performance, and profits.

To learn more about how your organization can take advantage of more than 20 courses, 30 webinars, industry certifications, sales training programs, and much more in Printing Industries of America's iLearning Center, visit printing.org/iLearning.



EHS Training and Continuous Improvement

Jamie Mackay

Director, Environmental, Health & Safety Affairs
Printing Industries of America

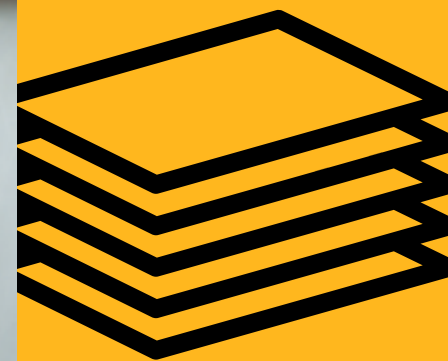
Employee training is often required by regulation, especially environmental, health, and safety (EHS) regulations. The Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) also requires temporary employees to have the same training as other employees if they are exposed to the same hazards. Train-

ing must be provided in a format and language that employees understand. EHS training has become an essential part of every employer's environmental, health, and safety program for protecting workers from injuries and illnesses as well as protecting the environment.

Many safety and health standards and environmental regulations include explicit EHS training requirements to ensure that workers have the required skills and knowledge to safely do their work and to prevent the release of pollutants and waste into the environment. Businesses should determine whether the EHS content of their training programs meets regulatory requirements and standard operating practices. Training records should be reviewed at least annually to verify and document that all necessary personnel receive initial training and all relevant follow-up training. New employee orientation programs should include elements that are intended to increase employee awareness of EHS best practices and instill a sound EHS ethic in the workforce.

Satisfying EHS training obligations is critical for your business, with the overall goal of ensuring the safety, welfare, and productivity of your workers and protecting the environment. Providing training in other topics (such as continuous improvement) can help better protect your employees and support your business objectives.

A common theme and a priority in both continuous improvement and EHS activities is protecting and respecting workers. Employees who are knowledgeable about the EHS aspects of their workplace can factor them into their continuous improvement efforts, resulting in operations that are more efficient, safer, and that respect worker health and the environment—



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all while meeting EHS regulatory requirements. EHS training supports the same business objectives as continuous improvement initiatives.

The integration of EHS and continuous improvement can occur in the most basic business practices. For example, let's look at standard operating procedures. Rather than having a separate safe work instruction (SWI) that applies to the job being performed, the standard operating procedure should include the hazards and EHS considerations of the job. The employee doing the job then has only one set of procedures/instructions to follow instead of two. The employee also develops an understanding of how EHS considerations and the job being performed are integrated, which can lead to an improvement in EHS performance, such as fewer injuries or a reduction in emissions.

Operating and maintenance activities are also a relevant place to emphasize the connection between continuous improvement and EHS performance. An upset in operating conditions or lax maintenance practices can lead to upsets in EHS conditions. For example, if an ink overfeed condition occurs in a printing operation, product quality can be compromised and excess fumes from the volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in the ink can adversely affect workplace air. If the building ventilation system is not properly maintained, the excess fumes may create a workplace hazard. It may also result in excess VOCs being processed through the thermal oxidizer, resulting in excess air emissions. Employees who are trained to recognize upset conditions can quickly take action to correct the upset. And, employee EHS training coupled with training on continuous improvement in operating and maintenance practices can have a direct

positive impact on EHS performance by reducing workplace hazards and sustaining compliance with EHS requirements.

We all strive to have a workforce that is engaged and embraces continuous improvement and EHS compliance as an integral part of the way we do business. We see this as a way to work smarter, increase productivity, improve product quality, and minimize adverse EHS impacts, with the objective of running a successful business. Having a well-trained workforce is essential for cultivating a culture of continuous improvement and EHS excellence.

For more information on EHS services provided by Printing Industries of America, visit—

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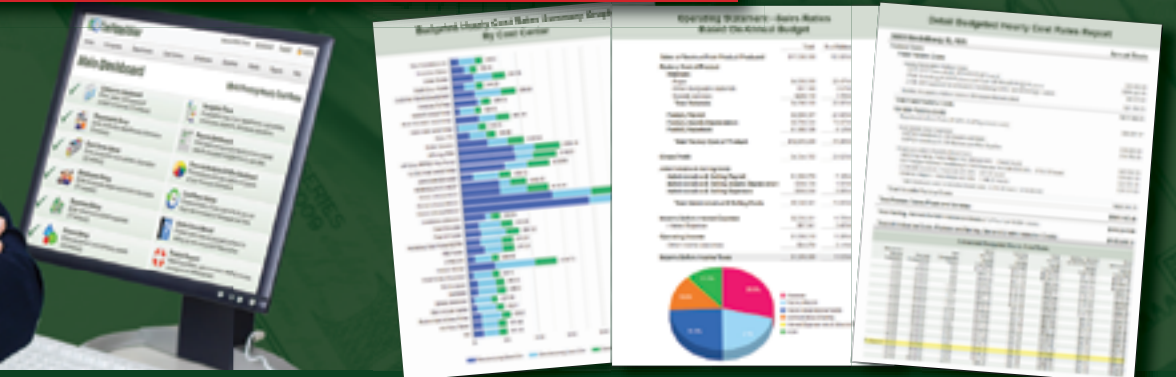
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MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Ideal Printers

Sarah Sudar

Copywriter,
Printing Industries of America

Ideal Printers is truly an ideal family. The St. Paul-based company was founded in 1979 by Howard and Rhoda Siewert with six employees, two of which are still employed with the company today. Howard left his sales job at one of Minnesota's largest printers, Brown Printing, to start out on his own, leaving a job selling catalogs and publications to sell letterhead and business cards from a storefront operation in north Minneapolis. Over the years, the company has grown, acquiring a digital printing company in 2010 and a mailing company in 2013, both of which account for a big part of their business. Over the years, the company has also added more family members as well as employees who are like family to the Siewerts.

President Lana Siewert-Olson didn't envision herself working for the family business. Setting out for college, she wanted to become a physical therapist but quickly realized that wasn't the career for her. Howard asked her if she ever thought about studying business, and she finally saw herself become a part of the family legacy.

Lana joined the company in 1987 and when she married her husband, Andy, her father asked him if he ever thought about working in the printing industry. Howard clearly has a way with words, and Andy joined the company in 1994 after getting his feet wet at three other printing companies. He currently serves as vice president of operations. There's an internal joke that Andy can never leave the company, because every company he worked for before closed their doors after he left.

Howard's other daughter, Joan, was also not interested in working in the family business, but then she met her husband, Francisco, whose family in Colombia happened to own a printing business of their own. He thought his wife was crazy for not working for her family's successful business, and they both relocated from Atlanta to Minnesota and came on board. Joan is the vice president of finance and Francisco is the vice president of information technology. The four adopted a rule that they would run the company in a four-person consensus after Howard retired in 2002. However, he can still be found



hanging around the office when he's not volunteering or on the golf course and he remains the chairman of Ideal's board of advisors.

"Howard takes on special projects, like researching and searching for new or used equipment, new options for suppliers, writing blogs, etc.," says Lana.

With no formal training programs available to teach machine bindery and with fewer and fewer people in the workforce, Ideal Printers has found a way to attract new employees via their temp crews. When they find a temporary employee who catches on quickly, has a great work ethic, and embodies some of the company's core values, there is a chance they could be hired full-time.

"You find people who have not been able to find work, find their niche, or had troubles along the way," says Lana. "It's great to give them the opportunity to start their careers in the printing industry."

The company is also excited that it is attracting a number of younger employees. It's been a constant struggle to find them, but Lana says that once you do, it seems like more of them want to come and work too. What she loves about the younger workforce is the energy they are bringing to the company. They are learning printing and work ethic from the long-time employees, and in return, they are bringing great energy and tech savviness.

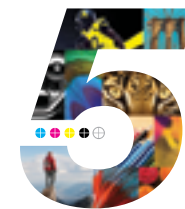
One of these young employees is Lana's son-in-law Dustin. Up until this year, the family didn't think that anyone in the third generation had an interest in joining the family business. They had the mindset that all four of the second generation would



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retire around the same time and have to sell the company. After Dustin took a severance with his past employer, he created the company's new website, as it had not been significantly changed since its inception 19 years ago. He has since moved into the mailing department where he's working with variable data and mail processing.

"We are super excited to have him on board, and he has already made a significant impact at Ideal by creating a website which better represents who we are today," says Lana.

Ideal Printers wants to keep the family mindset with all of its employees and invests heavily on holding events to bring them closer together. Each month there is an employee engagement event, whether it's a chili or hot dish cook-off, holiday party, summer cookout, or baseball outing at the St. Paul Saints games. When Ideal purchased a mailing company in 2013, the workforce became more diverse, adding a large Hispanic population. The company honors their culture by sponsoring a Cinco de Mayo party and a Baby Jesus lunch after Epiphany.

With employee health in mind, Ideal Printers has a self-improvement fund. Each year, an employee can use the fund to do something that improves their lives, including things as diverse as dance lessons or purchasing a bike. They also get a day off during the week of their birthday to celebrate, and the company has a profit sharing program and has invested more into the

401k offerings. Last year, Ideal added a match program and held educational seminars to get more employees invested in their financial health.

The company prides itself in now being a woman-owned business, and Lana has definitely seen the industry change for the better. When she first started attending regional print industry meetings, she was one of a handful of women in the room; now she's seeing many more. Ideal Printers was certified by the WBENC (Women's Business Enterprise National Council) as a Women-Owned Business in 2017. Lana says that women like supporting other women-owned businesses and it has definitely helped get the company's foot in the door with larger corporations that actively seek to do business with diverse suppliers.

She's also focused on attracting more women into the company, specifically in sales positions. Women find it more natural to promote the WBENC certification than men and they need to capitalize on that as much as they can.

After celebrating its 40-year anniversary this year, Ideal Printers continues to put family first: treating employees like their own family and investing in the next generation of leadership, whether they come from the Ideal family or the Siewert-Olson-Cardona family.

For more information on Ideal Printers, visit—
www.idealprint.com.



Breakthrough Opportunities Start with People

David Crawley

Professor of Practice,
University of Houston College of Technology

Since the invention of paper and ink, urban infrastructures and community economic enrichment have accelerated. For over a millennium the printing industry has been a benefactor of innovation, enabling breakthroughs in productivity that changed the lives of billions. However, over the past decade the printing industry has faced growth challenges from technology-inspired market disturbance, digital media disruption, and interference from untraditional competition.

In spite of these distractions, the future of the printing industry is still exceptional. This is primarily because the profession's sustainability of progress is embedded in its people. This statement recognizes that all opportunities in printing are first conceived and developed in the minds of those who have dedicated their careers to the industry. To capitalize on this strength, every printing operation should periodically go beyond the idea box to conduct formal innovation exercises with

employees. The objective is to encounter ways to do things differently, look for unmet needs, and champion profitability from new channels.

Here are factors to consider when problem solving and mining for growth among professional printing colleagues:

Specific mindsets that employees and teams should demonstrate to maximize their ability to innovate

- **Focus:** Most important is a clear understanding of what needs to be accomplished and agreement on why. Nothing should go forward unless these two aspects are addressed. Also, can the outcome be measured?
- **Courage:** Creating new ideas and challenging tradition takes bravery. Trust the team's capabilities and follow a systematic thinking process that will guide collaboration, provoke thinking, and lead to a quantifiable outcome.
- **Encouragement:** Positive support. When working with others to create new solutions, leave your judgement and politics out of the startup endeavors. Those aspects can come into play after the idea is formed into a concept. The environment for incubating successful concepts is openness, acceptance, and enthusiasm. Conformity, traditions, and external factors should

be embraced as challenges to mitigate—not virtues to propagate.

- **Failure:** Embrace failure as a path to refinement. Just because something failed—or someone says it will—doesn't mean the idea is bad. Be brave and challenge failure as a hurdle to work around.

The biggest challenges to leveraging innovation and remaining competitive

- **Fear:** The biggest challenge is fear. Fear must be addressed with multiple ideas as catalysts followed by fail fast, fail cheap agile procedures to quickly develop prototypes and validate them as measurably viable.
- **Technology:** People manage technology—not the other way around. Ideas often become generated and accepted within the functionality of technology. Don't let technical boundaries impose restrictions on your ideas—or the ability to implement them.
- **Knowledge Leak:** Knowledge leak is the degradation of skills over time... and a printing organization's talent pool can become complacent and degraded by half in six years. Enterprising companies often conduct internal training programs to keep the workforce up-to-date and competent. Innovation proficiency can be taught and should be part of these learning exercises.
- **Operational Flex:** Operational processes benefit from being Lean. However, sometimes being streamlined does not permit incubating meaningfully unique possibilities. Organizations should allow management the ability to flex its structure to investigate potential. This helps companies anticipate change and generate progressive solutions.

The first steps to bring innovation into your printing business

- **Foundation:** Document the purpose of what you want to achieve—everything should be assessed by the mission.
- **Stimulation:** Review how ideas are being evaluated to bring about solutions. Where are people getting the sparks for their inklings? Is there a funnel or database of ideas to continually explore? Research has proven that the quantity of ideas, how ideas are stimulated, and enjoyment of the task generate quality results.
- **Skills:** Innovation is a systems-thinking discipline. These disciplines are essential to commercialize



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thoughts. A concept doesn't have to be perfect, but it must be clearly communicated with predictable outcomes.

- **Adaptability and Sonar:** Look for change and listen to what other industries are doing as if they are sonar pings of the world. Take moments throughout the day to perceive occurrences as catalysts for new thought. Breakthroughs often come from someone who took the time to notice and act on things that occur every day.

Progress does not come from new machinery or efficient production. These are facilitators of productivity. Progress comes from innovation, and innovation comes from everyone: the press operator, a franchise quick-print shop, digital graphics production staff, etc. The origin of unlooked-for potential resides in the diverse minds and passions of people. Lift up and encourage employees with disciplined methodologies that deliver predictable outcomes and participants will develop unlooked-for potential to excel. When one person succeeds, others become successful. When others create success, more are



motivated to achieve, thus creating perpetual forward momentum. When this happens, the printing industry is emboldened to continue its global leadership to champion emerging markets and invent new products that support fresh revenue opportunities.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dave Crawley is a certified innovation professional and published senior executive for brand creation, management, corporate intelligence, marketing, new product development, and reputational risk. He is a Professor of Practice at the University of Houston College of Technology. His experience is varied, from launching Frito-Lay Russia and being Deputy CEO for Y&R to leading Hewlett-Packard international teams to introduce software-as-a-service population-based computing technology.



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TYPES OF WORKPLACE MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS

Mentors may be found anywhere. A workplace mentor can be a supervisor, colleague, from a different team in the company, or in another organization all together.

Mentorship can take many forms:

MULTI-GENERATIONAL

Pairing younger employees with those more senior

INFORMAL

Relationships may begin organically or as friendships

PEER

Designated employees introduce new hires to company culture

FORMAL

Structured company programs to foster professional development

"REVERSE MENTORING" PROGRAMS

Younger employees share experiences with senior colleagues who may need to tap into their generation's knowledge base and technological expertise.

HOW TO CREATE A CULTURE OF MENTORSHIP

1

Allow leaders to be accessible to entry-level employees.

2

Send the message that everyone should give and receive help openly and regularly.

3

Designate time and space during the work week for mentorship to signify its importance.

4

Identify those who excel at a particular skill and create opportunities for sharing i.e. Lunch & Learns.

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Hitting It Out of the Park: Ten World-Class Hiring Practices

Cheryl Jekiel
CEO,
Lean Leadership Resource Center

Think about your best employees. What do they do? They stay at your company. They fit and contribute to its culture. They succeed in their jobs.

When you get the right people in the right jobs at the right time, it's transformational for your company. Conversely, getting it wrong is costly and a burden on your existing work teams.

Recruiting and selection is the critical element to bringing in the talent you need. Many segments of our economy are experiencing a growth curve. But many companies aren't able to keep up with their growth because they don't have the people to do the work. They're struggling to get the talent they need, so they're having to say no to great business opportunities.

It's the problem you think you'd like to have... until you have it!

To keep growing, you need to step up your game at recruiting, selection, and on-boarding to bring in the talent that you need. Below are the ten best practices that I've found in companies that have had great success in optimizing their hiring processes.

1. Recruit proactively. Proactive recruiting increases the level of talent we're accessing and helps ensure critical hires can be made expediently. In a traditional reactive recruiting model, somebody quits and HR scrambles to replace them with the first candidate that

fits the bill. The position is usually filled faster rather than better, with a huge lag between when a person leaves the company and when they're replaced. Proactive recruiting doesn't rely on seeking people who are job hunting. When you recruit proactively, you develop relationships with current working people who are happy in their jobs.

The key is to have a forecast of who you're looking for. Once we know who we're looking for, we can network toward a future opening. Having meetings and maintaining contact with candidates means that when an opening comes along, we're ready because we've been building relationships with prospects all along.

2. Link internal and external branding. Most people understand that the strength of a brand makes the customer recognize the company. When we see the McDonald's arches, we automatically think fast food and might have fond childhood memories pop up. What most people don't understand is that an internal brand is just as important as that external brand. We need to take the essence of the external brand and build an internal brand along with it. The same things that make customers want to buy from you make people want to work for you. When branding is strong enough, people can feel it and they want to be a part of it.

3. Tap the genius of your internal teams. Recruiting problems are often handed off to HR as if they can deal with it alone, when in reality, employees across all

functions can and should participate in the process. Often the people with the best ideas for recruiting are your own employees. The people that are the best fit for your company know where to find more of themselves. Use them! Start where the business problem is. From there, create teams of your best employees and have them brainstorm ideas. This approach helps figure out what's really happening and generates a range of potential solutions for you to pick from.

I once worked with a company that was opening a new facility in Texas far away from public transportation. We needed a hundred new employees but had no idea where to get them. If we couldn't get enough good quality people, the next product launch couldn't happen. We made sure the current employees understood what was at stake and built teams to figure out some solutions. They generated lists of ideas about what to do, where to look for people, and how to create transportation options. They even came up with better approaches to on-boarding and training so that the people we hired could get into place earlier and easier. The project was a huge success.

4. Display recruiting metrics to track progress against goals. In Lean cultures, it's important to set the goals the team is working toward and publish these with visual displays to track progress. Traditional HR recruiting metrics are quantitative: they focus on turnover and time to hire. These metrics don't get at the qualitative aspect of hiring, which is a very human, service-oriented piece of business. If you go to a restaurant or any other service-related business, your level of satisfaction depends on your own viewpoint. It's not as important for a restaurant to be 10% cleaner as it is for it to be clean to your satisfaction. It's the same with recruiting. If you only measure turnover and time to hire, you miss out on this human piece. In other words, we need to give new hires a satisfaction survey. Looking at the qualitative aspect of hiring creates opportunities to improve based upon this information.

5. Achieve more success using well-developed processes. Our hiring process needs to hold the same

information throughout. The best way to do this is to use checklists that correlate to the original job design at every stage of the recruiting process. For example, when you're trying to fill a leadership position, you need to define the characteristics of the leader that you're looking for. Traits could include anything from "experience empowering teams" to "has competencies in coaching" to "high emotional intelligence."

Once you have these traits defined, create a checklist for every step of the process that reflects these characteristics, including job descriptions, job requirements, interview questions, and final ratings of candidates.

6. Prevent mistakes with selection testing. Testing can save time and money and can even decrease turnover. According to Russ Day, who specializes in high level selection processes, a valid test can enhance productivity by as much as 20–120%, depending on the complexity and scope of the job. Depending on the type of position you're looking to fill, some selection tests will be more appropriate than others. For leadership positions, emotional intelligence tests can be very effective. But there are also cognitive ability, personali-

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ty, and aptitude tests that may be relevant for the position you'd like to fill. The key is to choose the right tests and make sure you aren't relying solely on test results to choose candidates.

7. Use technology for an extra boost. A lot of extra work goes into the all-manual or half-manual systems many companies have. Applicant tracking IT systems decrease the valuable time it takes to reenter applicant information in these manual systems. With applicant tracking systems, you create a database of potential candidates similar to a customer relationship management system. You continually populate the system with people who would be interested in your company and send regular communication to them. This is especially important if the job you would need to fill requires specific, rare qualifications, like a master sommelier. The larger the volume of potential candidates you have, the more time an applicant tracking system saves. Since it communicates with your human resources system once an applicant's information is entered, you never have to do that unnecessary rework again!

8. Take advantage of non-traditional sources for recruiting. Traditional recruiters conduct all of the search for you and narrow the field to six or seven

final candidates out of the 50 or 60 they found. You walk away with one candidate and end up paying the recruiter's fee as a percentage of the new hire's salary. When you hire in this way, you lose out on a valuable bank of candidates. With a non-traditional approach, you don't. You pay a recruiter a flat fee per hour to find someone and you get to retain all the candidates they found. You add them all to your applicant tracking system for future networking to fill openings.

9. Treat on-boarding as mission critical. The job isn't done once you hire someone. Usually if companies do recruiting and selecting well, they drop the ball with on-boarding. Poor on-boarding creates high turnover and unnecessary expense. To improve this process, take the team approach I talked about earlier and apply it to on-boarding. A few years ago, I worked with a plant that was struggling with a turnover problem. We created an employee team to figure out what better on-boarding could look like. One of their best ideas was to implement a buddy system where the best employees would become a buddy for a new hire. The new hire would shadow their buddy for a few days, eat lunch with their buddy the whole first week and keep checking in with them after that. They also suggested

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increasing the time for the training period, allowing new hires to better retain the information they learned.

10. Choose a sustainable and consistent approach.

Most of the companies I've met that are working on their hiring process struggle to make sure it's being done consistently. They may have consistency issues across different locations or different managers, or maybe they struggle to maintain the system during the busier times of the year. A recruiting and selection system takes almost as much energy to tend to as it takes to design. The system needs to be well-communicated and employees need to be trained to it in order for it to work for long periods of time. Often, people are trained at the launch of the system, but those hired a year later never are. Once you've developed a great way to do recruiting, you need to build in systems to help sustain it, or you've wasted your time.

No matter what business you're in, people are at the core of it. Recruiting and selecting is people-centered work, so it matters. We have to design and maintain

sustainable systems that create people-driven value for our businesses, because your business is only as good as the people who work for it.

I'm not proposing you start all ten of these practices tomorrow. Pick something you can work on that makes sense for your business and start there.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Cheryl M. Jekiel is the CEO of the Lean Leadership Resource Center (LLRC) which helps CEOs of innovative companies and organizations who view their people as a competitive advantage to weave Lean principles into the fabric of their company culture. Ms. Jekiel served as Vice President of Human Resources at Flying Food Group, LLC and Chief Operating Officer at Parco Foods, LLC. As the author of *Lean Human Resources: Redesigning HR Practices for a Culture of Continuous Improvement*, Ms. Jekiel brings a tremendous passion for continuous improvement and is committed to building HR for Lean enterprises as a recognized field of work.

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