

Beware the Recovery

By Joseph Sherren, CSP, Ho

There are many signs emerging that indicate the economy is getting stronger. Houses are selling faster and some markets are seeing bidding wars again. Employment insurance applications are declining and more jobs are being created.

All good news, right? Perhaps not. The more the economy grows and companies start hiring, the more temptation there will be for employees to leave their current positions for something they think is better.

A recent survey shows that almost 84% of employees polled by Manpower Group's Right Management, a global leader in workforce solutions, said they plan to look for a new position in 2012. Only 5% said they plan to remain in their current jobs. That is alarming.

When asked why they plan to change jobs, the primary reason given is the lack of trust and respect they have with current management. Many report that their managers are not professional and fly by the seat of their pants. They use old-school techniques such as "sink or swim" or "baptism by fire" coaching practices. These methods are inefficient, ineffective and a recipe for failure.

When I speak with business owners or senior executives, they tell me that training is not in the budget or is too expensive. One business owner actually said to me, "I don't want my staff getting any smarter than I am." After hearing that sentiment, perhaps he should realize that they already are!

Before dismissing skills development as too expensive or a low priority for managers and



From the Bookshelf

Summer is the time for lighter reading, so I switch to biographies. While everyone seems to be reading [Steve Jobs](#), I opted for two autobiographies that have been on my "to read" bookshelf for literally years! (Doesn't everybody have a bookshelf with books we buy and never get around to reading?)

Since Joe (my husband) retired from IBM, I thought it would be helpful to read Louis Gerstner Jr.'s legendary [Who Says Elephants Can't Dance?](#) The book is a compendium of business practices Gerstner gleaned from a lifetime of running highly successful companies. It's an interesting bit of introspection and makes for lively conversation during happy hour!

The other book I am reading is Katherine Graham's [Personal History](#). An unabashed autobiography of a woman who rises to be one of the most powerful people in media. Full of history and personal anecdotes, it's a

supervisors, consider the following: a Vancouver based recruiter determined that attrition costs companies on average 18 months salary for every professional who leaves and six months pay for every hourly worker who must be replaced. Replacement costs are the tip of the iceberg. Filling positions with new staff can be disruptive to other employees and clients, time consuming for supervisors and detrimental to quality and productivity, negatively affecting customer satisfaction.

The old adage that “people are our organization’s greatest asset” is now a reality and must receive more than lip service at all levels of the organization. Just as it would be irresponsible to use vehicles, machinery and equipment without proper maintenance, it would be reckless to unleash unskilled managers on innocent staff without all the latest tools, education and resources to do their jobs properly.

Employees are starting to act like consumers – being more discerning about where they would most like to work and leading to bidding wars to obtain the best talent.

How can this be avoided? Actually, it is quite simple. Managers need to provide constructive coaching and help workers develop their potential to the fullest. They need to foster a culture of concern for each individual and engage them in strategic and operational decision making. Engaged employees who are part of the process and solution are more likely to have higher job satisfaction and stay in their current job, saving the employer thousands of dollars.

Employees want to be heard and feel included in helping the organization succeed. They also want to have more flexible options in terms of employment contracts and the ability to maintain work-life balance. Managers need to be rewarded for their people skills, employee satisfaction ratings and ability to retain the top workers. To do this effectively, they need to have appropriate training and the ability to coach and mentor staff toward the achievement of organizational goals.

Now is the time for organizations to rethink their management training and employee development budgets. The new business differentiator may be the

striking and intimate story of tragedy and triumph. Perfect for summer!

Team Quotable

"There are few, if any, jobs in which ability alone is sufficient. Needed also are loyalty, sincerity, enthusiasm and team play."

*William B. Given, Jr., Chairman,
American Brake Shoe Co.*

What's Your Signature Reward?

I was talking with John Phelps, CEO of the Arizona Bar Association, about what he does to build high performance teams and how he rewards those who go above and beyond in demonstrating the values.

John pulled out a small medallion – a coin much like I have seen Commanding Officers use in the military. He said, "I have these medallions made each year with one core value imprinted: Excellence, Integrity, Loyalty, Respect, Service, Stewardship, Tradition. I carry them around in my pocket. If I see an employee demonstrating one of those values, I reward it on the spot. And they don't come easy! I'm the only one who can give them out. People will send me a note, call me or pull me aside and let me know when someone is deserving. I'll run over to their cubicle and say, 'I heard you did something' and give them a medallion with the value that they demonstrated. When you walk around the office you'll

ability to retain productive, positive, self-motivated staff and build high performance teams.

October 18 Webinar



Beyond Consensus: 3 Little Known Secrets to Achieving Solid Agreements Among Your Team Mates on Thursday, October 18, 2012 at 12 noon ET.

Have you ever been in a meeting where you think the group made a decision, only to find out that the decision unraveled days or even hours after the meeting?

Join master facilitator Kristin Arnold as she shares her group process secrets to achieving solid team agreements. After attending this webinar, you will be able to bring the group to decision that all can live with and support upon implementation.

[Register](#) for this free webinar today and you may be the winner of your own signed copy of the book, [Team Basics!](#)

About Kristin Arnold

Kristin Arnold is one of North America's most accomplished professional meeting facilitators. A consummate author, speaker, and trainer, she is on a crusade to make all events in the workplace more engaging, interactive and collaborative. [Contact us](#) for more information about how we transform your teams from ordinary to extraordinary!

see these medallions proudly displayed in their cubicles and on their desks.”

I call this a “signature reward” – it is unique to John (he’s the only one who does it in his organization), is in alignment with who he is (retired from the U.S. Army), and reinforces the core values of the organization. John also expects each of his direct reports to have their own internal way of recognizing the values and performance on an informal basis. It is unique to that specific leader vs. an organizational award such as employee of the month.

So what's your signature reward?

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