

The Top 10 Burning Questions about Creating Corporate Wellness

By Greg Kinnaird

The Australasian Management Centre conducts a series of Innovation Forums on a quarterly basis with a "hot topic" relevant to the busy CEO, HoD, CFO and HR Manager who are responsible for getting results. The theme for the current Innovation Forum was "Creating Corporate Wellness" with over 100 captains of industry attending.

Greg Kinnaird (Managing Director) of the Australasian Management Centre facilitated the Innovation Forum. This included the question and answer session at the conclusion of the Innovation Forum. He made the commitment that he would respond to the Top 10 Burning Questions about Creating Corporate Wellness. This month, read about his thoughts and suggestions to the first two burning questions.

BURNING QUESTION 1

How do you value the choice of working from home versus the need to deliver...or to be seen in the workplace to be delivering...and is there a need for culture change?

The essence of telecommuting (working from home) is about offering staff a flexible working environment. In terms of business, telecommuting is purely the "inputs" and delivery can be seen as the "outputs". It is the workplace leader's responsibility to ensure that clear parameters and performance indicators are set in order to monitor the individual's performance.

For example, if the job role required a person to have client contact (i.e. customer service) with an average telephone call duration of 6 minutes (i.e. 10 contacts per hour), then the workplace leader could then expect a "delivery" output of 30

contacts from a person working from home for three hours.

Variations to this will need to be discussed for continuous improvement purposes with the employee and the workplace leader when that person returns to the workplace.

Trust, ethics and integrity are vital ingredients for people to work from home. The workplace leader will also be highly skilled with delegation, communication and motivation techniques.

Is there a need for cultural change? In a word – yes.

Working from home means changes in workplace technology, processes, people and structure. People still like to "socialise" with their workplace colleagues. People also like to take advantage of a given situation that could be at the detriment of the workplace. The effective workplace leader will need to make sure that they are firm, fair and consistent with all their actions and behaviours.

BURNING QUESTION 2

What challenges do you have to overcome implement "job swap" type arrangements to drive succession planning?

The greatest challenge to implementing "job swap" arrangement is changing the mental mindset of workplace leaders who perceive that they are going to lose a "competent" person and to be given an "incompetent" person who will be taking their place.

The second greatest challenge is to get individuals to give up their comfort zone to try something new. They often perceive that there is risk attached to learning new skills or that the new person taking over their role will do a better job than them and therefore creating job insecurity.

To overcome these challenges, it needs to be led from the top. The better the working relationship between Heads of Departments, the higher the chance of success of implementing effective "job swap" arrangements.

It also needs to be communicated that the "job swap" arrangement is there to support the future direction of the organisation and, with the aging workplace population becoming a major issue, multi-skilling and multi-tasking will be essential for the success of the organisation to provide products and services to its internal and external customers.

The Australasian Management Centre suggests going to the following link to view an article titled "Succession Planning Process Checklist for Owners" http://www.ceonline.com.au/content/expert_talk/16/409. ■

Greg Kinnaird's book, "Make Create Innovate – A Quest for Innovation at Work" is available in all leading bookstores throughout Singapore. It will later be released in Malaysia and Australia throughout 2006 and 2007.



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