



One Best Practice on Boosting Morale ...Have you thought of Fish! Yet???

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No, not the aquatic animal but the Fish! philosophy that is spreading throughout organizations, non-profits, and educational environments to energize the workforce. Fish! has been championed by Suffolk University's Human Resources Department. The first Fish! kickoff involved the Registrar's Office, Student Accounts and the Ballotti Learning Center. Interested in knowing what the Fish! philosophy entails??? There are four main principles:



Choose Your Attitude



Play



Make Their Day



Be Present

With the competition among colleges and universities these days, Human Resources and the other departments that have embraced this philosophy see it as one way to increase the effectiveness of the interactions they have with their students, each other, and outside contacts. The main objectives of Fish! are to:

- Help design a workplace where everyone chooses to bring energy, passion and a positive attitude to the job everyday.
- Imagine an environment in which people are truly connected to their work, to their colleagues, and to their customers.
- Build the most effective workplace...team...department that you can!

It is also becoming a significant way of boosting morale with departments. The Registrar's Office has already incorporated these fun ideas and activities to make their workplace more energizing and as a way to boost morale (as has been reported by the Registrar herself, August 2002):

- They have a fully decorated fish bowl (fake fish, no water)
- The fish bowl collects change to be used for birthday cakes
- One person in the office has a quote of the day that is posted on their wall and is e-mailed to the staff
- Locations in the office are identified as "FISH ZONES" where people are cautioned to enter with the understanding that people in the zone are happy and willing to assist you.
- They have an office mascot, Pete the Perch, that was recently kidnapped and taken to New Orleans. In his place was a photo of him. Hints were left in the office where he could be found upon his return (in the fridge!)
- They also have "Catch of the Day, WOW's and Life Savers" ...
 - Catch of the Day stickers are given for anyone who does something special, thoughtful, supportive. Five "Catch-of-the-Days" = 1 WOW Card
 - A WOW card is given for anyone who goes above and beyond their job responsibilities
 - A Life Saver is given for out-of-the-ordinary behavior such as a new initiative.

As you can probably tell from the preceding examples, this particular department has embraced this particular philosophy and is implementing different practices to boost morale and have fun at work. Different places will do different things...whatever works for your particular environment will be just fine. The main thing is to think about doing things differently and seeing how they work.

Continuing Efforts to Spreading this Best Practice

The affection for FISH is steadily moving upstream here at Suffolk (pun intended!). Our plans for the future will include involving every office throughout the organization. Each member of our newly formed FISH club (first members dedicated to the FISH Philosophy) are charged with spreading the message to their colleagues and bringing a new member to the group. We have found the message to be more effective if a peer or colleague is passionate about FISH and its purpose and then invites the peer or colleague to the meeting. Each new member will be oriented to the FISH Philosophy and will have their offices invited to a FISH program. The program is a half day fun filled workshop which introduces FISH to the employees of that department. We have FISH related snacks and giveaways. We plan to spread the FISH message campus wide.

Why is FISH so important at Suffolk? Just ask the students and employees (our external and internal customers) if we make their day!

As the authors of Fish! have said...

"Work Made Fun Gets Done"!!