

Loyalty Is A Two-Way Street – Don't Get Stuck in It

In today's fast-paced and competitive world, we all feel the need to get a jumpstart on the **competition** and get ahead in the fastest way possible. After graduation, when we get our first jobs, we put in a lot of hours in the office. To show our eagerness, our ambition, our passion. Personal life takes a backseat. When we get a promotion, we chase after the next one. And the next. And the next.

We marry and have kids. And in our desire to give our families the best of everything, we put in even more hours and work even harder. We miss a lot of personal **events** but argue that our family understands and will always be there. We forget that we can't just be fired from our jobs, we can be fired from our families, too.

"We must work to live, and not live to work." When the job is no longer there, what will be left? If we let our jobs define us, who are we when the job is gone?

Unfortunately, the **number** of hours you **put** in at work, and all the sacrifices you make won't automatically be rewarded with company loyalty. The sad truth is that most companies see their employees as dispensable. That, if you are not willing to work hard **and** give in to the demands of the job, they can easily give the position to someone else. They see their employees as working drones, tools, that will be used and then discarded when their usefulness has gone.

What is made are employees who see their jobs as a means to an end. They won't go the extra mile when needed because they feel unappreciated.

"Employee loyalty begins with employer loyalty. Your employees should know that if they do the job they were hired to do with a reasonable amount of competence and efficiency, you will support them." – Harvey Mackay

To keep their employees from leaving, many companies now profess that their company is like a family, of which each employee is a member. If so, how do you show them that they are valued?

You must...

SUPPORT

TRUST

APPRECIATE, and

RESPECT them.

Your employees are the STARS of your company. Like a well-coordinated body, you may be the head, but without arms, legs, and everything else, you will fall. *“Always treat your employees the way you want them to treat your best customers.”* (Stephen R. Covey)

SUPPORT. Supporting your employees involves paying them as they deserve for the work that they do, providing them with the tools and equipment necessary for them to perform at their best, and, most important, making sure they have **right** work-life balance.

Employees give you their loyalty when they feel you care about their professional development. Enrolling them in seminars, workshops, and advanced continued **learning** to make them feel appreciated. They realize that you care about them beyond their employment with you.

TRUST. You hired your employees because of their skills and what they can do. Trust them to do their jobs and don't micromanage them. Trust that you can teach, train, and mentor them, and they will grow beyond their present capabilities.

APPRECIATE. Employees know you appreciate and value their contributions when they feel heard, rewarded for their hard work, and promoted when the situation calls for it.

RESPECT. As employers, it is extremely important to afford your employees with the most basic respect. Treat them as human beings and not machines that will merely do your bidding. Respect their opinions, ask them for their input, and involve them in decisions that pertain to their positions. Challenge their abilities, and encourage them to push beyond what they are used to, for their own growth and actualization.

It is not easy finding a company who **values** or even wants, your loyalty. Most of the time, higher-ups think they don't need to exert any effort to win you over. Since jobs can be scarce, they feel you will be so thankful to have a job, that you will do anything and sacrifice everything to keep it. Not so. High employee turnover negatively affects efficiency, productivity, and profitability.

The truth is, you also have to look out for yourself. You can take great care with your job, doing it to the best of your ability, and ensuring you don't commit mistakes, but they can still let you go. Without thinking twice. And then, where will you be?

Your job doesn't define you. Don't sacrifice your personal life, health or values for a job that doesn't do the same. Loyalty is a two-way street. Don't get stuck in a jam.