

EMPHASIZING CULTURE OVER COOL IN THE WORKPLACE

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Workplace perks such as hammocks, foosball tables, and nap pods are popping up with more regularity in companies that want to appeal to younger workers. While they may seem cool to prospective employees, it is important that businesses not confuse these draws for a strong workplace culture. Companies that want to attract and retain top talent must focus more on establishing and maintaining a positive workplace culture. In order to truly be a culture-first company, businesses must embrace flexibility, offer continuous learning and innovation, and embrace collaboration.

EMBRACE FLEXIBILITY IN THE WORKPLACE

Gone are the olden days where workers are expected to stay with a company their entire life and work 80 hours a week. Today's workers want a better work-life balance and prefer working for a company that allows them to weave in their job responsibilities while also taking care of other tasks.

In LinkedIn's *Workplace Culture Trends*, 51 percent of respondents said they are proudest to work at companies that promote a work-life



51%

are proudest to work at companies that promote a work-life balance and flexibility

44%

said benefits such as paid time off and parental leave were more important than perks like game rooms, gyms, and food

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balance and flexibility. Additionally, 44 percent of respondents who had been at their current job for at least five years said strong workplace benefits such as paid time off and parental leave were more important to them than perks like game rooms, gyms, and food.

Companies should not be afraid that greater workplace flexibility will distract their staff or create a lax environment. Overworked people are typically less fulfilled and may be less productive. This is why some organizations force employees to take time off. Those who take vacation are more likely to be productive and have less of a chance of preventing burnout. In fact,

Deloitte's Workplace Burnout Survey found that 91 percent of employees who had an unmanageable amount of stress or frustration negatively impacted their quality of work.

Offering **flexibility** shows that organizations value the work their employees deliver and trust that they will be able to deliver results while also recognizing the other important roles they have in life.

OFFER CONTINUOUS LEARNING AND INNOVATION

The world is constantly changing and at increasing speeds due to advances in technology. Workers must stay up-to-date with the latest technologies

and develop new skills in order to stay competitive.

Companies are relying on technology to help educate their staff through various e-learning opportunities. Those able to pivot in this way can provide employees with valuable resources to adapt to the changing times. This investment may help meet workers' desires as well since they will have a more expansive skillset to equip them to do their job or to be considered for a promotion. It will also help companies retain workers for longer and decrease turnover costs.

According to **LinkedIn**, continuous learning is very important to employees, many of whom would like

to see their company focus more on learning and development programs. This matches with findings by a Pew Research Centre survey showing that **73 percent of adults** consider themselves lifelong learners.

ENCOURAGE COLLABORATION IN THE WORKPLACE

In today's social world, employers must learn to foster collaboration in the workplace. Companies that encourage teamwork can make mundane tasks more enjoyable for everyone. Teamwork and collaboration also motivate employees to work together on achieving common goals and accomplishing the goals of the business.

A collaborative environment recognizes the strengths and individual contributions of each member of the team making workers feel like they belong. According to LinkedIn's *Workplace Culture Trends*, 46 percent of employees said that one thing that motivated them to stay in their current position was having a sense of belonging, while 70 percent of respondents said a bad workplace culture would prevent them from working at a company. Recognizing the value of each team member embraces individual creativity and promotes a more productive staff. This also increases employee morale and improves retention rates.

Organizations can foster various initiatives to promote collaboration, including:

- Using whiteboards
- Providing collaborative spaces
- Equipping the office with teleconferencing
- Using cloud-based applications
- Utilizing chat platforms
- Investing in video conferencing

INVEST IN CULTURE, NOT PERKS

While playing ping pong at lunch, having beer on tap or having catered meals may seem great at first glance, these temporary perks ultimately will not motivate employees to stay with a company. Today's workforce wants to feel empowered and autonomous. Through a fulfilling career and a work-life balance, workers will continue to wake up in the morning and be motivated to perform their jobs.

By embracing flexibility and collaboration in the workplace and investing in the professional skillset of its employees, companies can improve their work culture, yielding positive results in employee engagement, productivity, and retention rates.



WHITEBOARDS



COLLABORATIVE SPACES



TELECONFERENCING



CLOUD-BASED APPS



CHAT PLATFORMS



VIDEO CONFERENCING