



Replace once a year corporate retreats with ongoing employee empowerment initiatives

May 23, 2011 - Long Island

Jerry Siegel, president of JASB Management Inc., a leading business management consulting firm specializing in integrated leadership and organizational development, has strong advice for businesses planning their next annual retreat. Cancel the plans to save both time and money.

According to Siegel, corporate retreats are overrated, costly and deliver little lasting value. His recommendation to businesses is to instead invest in employee empowerment initiatives which research has proven deliver considerable and continual benefits.

"Many independent studies support what anecdotal data has long suggested, which is that empowered employees represent a win-win for businesses and employees alike," said Siegel.

"Businesses with empowered employees gain tangible advantages."

A study by Bersin & Associates, an Oakland, Calif.-based research and consulting firm found that 46% of organizations with empowered employees are more likely to be strong innovators in their market, 34% are more likely to get to market before their competitors, 33% are more likely to report higher customer satisfaction, and 17% are more likely to be market share leaders. Organizations with empowered employees also have higher employee retention rates and lower incidences of inefficiency and waste of company resources.

"Well-intended business executives plan corporate retreats as a way to bond with their staff, prompt an open dialogue and develop action items intended to achieve specific goals," said Siegel.

"Unfortunately, however, once the retreat is over, the momentum starts to fall off, along with the focus on achieving goals. This is in direct contrast to the strategy behind employee empowerment initiatives which become integrated into an organization's day-to-day operations."

According to Siegel, empowered employees are much more likely to contribute to their business with new ideas and higher productivity. "The right employee empowerment programs build confidence in employees. These programs encourage employees to communicate more openly, and take ownership of their ideas and work projects. They become more accountable and start to act like leaders who are able to engage fellow workers in various activities," said Siegel.

Think of it this way. A corporate retreat is like a family holiday. There is a lot of preparation, costs and excitement building up to and during the event, and then it is over. In contrast, there is family dinner every night where communication flows, ideas are exchanged, new plans are made and then discussed again. Everyone has the opportunity to participate, remain engaged and contribute to the family life.

Siegel suggests that employee empowerment initiatives are important for all organizations regardless of their size, industry or staff demographics. He noted that employee empowerment initiatives require setting clear goals which, he said, for many companies is the hardest part.

"Goal-setting is not an easy task," said Siegel. "Many companies need help developing goals and

are wise to rely on a trusted advisor, industry associate or advisory board. Goal-setting is a skill and a process. When performed properly, the goals delineated are measureable and specific which then can be achieved by empowered employees."

New York Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540