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Libsys Inc.

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When Libsys was started in 2002 it was very difficult to convince people to join the team. Founder Siva Yarramsetty took a novel approach: "Whenever anyone came with any career related issue we always gave tips that would help employee to shape his/her career, irrespective of whether he/she would join Libsys or not. This friendly attitude helped us in gaining trust from them. When it comes to building a relationship we have always kept profit aside and the Libsys team has always tried to work as a family and help in every possible manner. This friendly behavior has helped us

achieve good relations with all of the people and companies we have worked with till now. We are focused more on building relationships and because of this strategy we are able to generate business even in this economic downturn." The company conducts monthly Think Tank meetings where all employees are encouraged to write questions related to work ethics, personality development, or improving their skills. Over a period of time employees started performing better by learning quickly and communicating well with their colleagues. "As the Economy grows the demands of people changes," says Yarramsetty. "I think the modern workforce has become all the more aggressive and more focused in this competitive market. Since this world is getting more technology driven, their company should connect emotionally their employees so they would produce higher performance with better results."

M. A. Mortenson Company

Elk Grove Village

www.mortenson.com

For M.A. Mortenson Company, building its organization with the talent needed during a period of significant business growth provided the firm with a welcomed challenge to double its size. How did they respond? "We increased our resources in talent acquisition and placed a company-wide focus on hiring talented team members that would align with our goal of providing a far superior customer experience," says Tom Gunkel, president and CEO. The orientation process was also redesigned to focus on helping newly hired team members understand Mortenson's culture, values and strategic direction. Another strategic move was ensuring team members had all of the required training needed for their positions. These steps proved to be the right ones -- team members had a successful start and the skills needed to help achieve customer satisfaction objectives. "If we were to start over today we would invest earlier on developing talent development processes," says Gunkel. Among the employee needs noted during this time is a greater desire for work schedule flexibility and time off to attend to personal needs. Mortenson responded by initiating a generous Paid Time Off plan to allow team members to manage time off including saving some of their PTO time to take a sabbatical of up to eight weeks every five years. One thing that hasn't changed in Mortenson's workplace: Employees who want to work for a reputable company with solid values and leadership that can be trusted and counted on for providing a path and direction. "People want and need to be proud of their work and find purpose in making a positive contribution for the betterment of society," adds Gunkel.

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Milhouse Engineering and Construction, Inc.

Chicago

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Workforce recruiting has been the top challenge Milhouse Engineering and Construction, Inc. has faced. The firm has responded by creating a job matrix that helps find qualified candidates for each division, by comparing resumes received to job descriptions and organizational needs. Over the years, Milhouse has found the relationships with other professionals within its organization have grown. "Of course the longer you are with a company, the more relationships can and will be built," says CEO Wilbur C. Milhouse III. "I believe the 'tipping point' for this change in relationship came from the company's initiative to create more of an engaged culture within our workforce. With HR being a major team player behind the concept of engagement within the organization, I have noticed there is a unified thought of togetherness and camaraderie being established." One thing he'd do differently as it relates to HR Strategies? "Make sure proper policies and procedures were in place within the department. This would ensure effective communication will occur at all levels within the organization." The executive has observed changes through the years, one being the retirement of Baby Boomers who are being replaced by Generation Y force. "With this age group the thought process and work ethic is totally different. It has been said today's youngest workers are more interested in making their jobs accommodate their family and personal lives," says Milhouse. The result has been flexible jobs, telecommuting options and the ability to go part-time or leave the workforce temporarily for family needs. Milhouse continues: "Generation Yers do not expect to stay in a job, or even a career for too long, which means without a strategy in place by HR to meet the people, process and technology created by the changing workforce, companies run the risk of irreplaceable resources walking out the door." What hasn't changed? Employees need to feel appreciated for their hard work and efforts. "Employees want to be trained and developed as well as engaged and recognized. I don't think these needs and wants will ever change," says Milhouse. "The bottom line is, as an employee we all want to feel that we add value to our organization."

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