

CANADIAN HOME BUILDERS' ASSOCIATION'S STATEMENT ON PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYER-EMPLOYEE RELATIONSHIPS

Introduction

Human resource management in general and the proper employer-employee work arrangements in particular have an ethical basis. They also have a business basis. The following principles and guidelines on employer-employee work relationships are based on the premise that good ethics are good for business.

Rationale

The ethical/business rationale for the principles and guidelines is summarized below:

1. An employer's ability to recruit and retain employees is dependent upon an employer's attractiveness to employees.
2. An employer's attractiveness to employees is dependent on the employer meeting employees' needs, interests and expectations.
3. Meeting employees' needs, interests and expectations will increase employee loyalty, commitment and morale.
4. Employees who are loyal, committed and have high morale increase company productivity, add to the "bottom line" and help a company to achieve long-term economic viability.

Employers should recognize that their employees' needs, interests and expectations have changed in recent years, and will continue to change. While pay is important, many other factors affect employee satisfaction. The following principles and guidelines reflect changed needs and interests of employees, as well as their expectations of the work environment, and will have positive results for employees and the companies that adopt them.

While the principles and guidelines apply to company employees, the spirit of many of them extends to people who are employees of sub-contractors to companies. Companies should encourage their sub-contractors to adopt them as well because of the benefits outlined.

Principles and Guidelines

Companies and their leaders should exhibit the following principles and guidelines. The size of companies may affect their ability to implement some guidelines and how they are implemented. Some of the principles and guidelines pertain to actions by employers to create a corporate image or reputation without reference to employees; others pertain to specific actions for employees. Both increase company attractiveness and employee satisfaction.

1. **Treat employees fairly and equitably.**
 - a. Provide equal opportunity to employees and make advancement decisions on the basis of merit.
 - b. Explain the company's core values, vision, objectives, goals, successes and challenges to employees and show how individual employees' jobs contribute to the performance of staff teams and the company overall.
 - c. Evaluate performance against objective, job-related criteria and provide constructive feedback.
 - d. Place employees in positions that are appropriate to their skill and ability level.
 - e. Recognize and reward good performance.
This includes providing appropriate compensation in financial and non-financial terms. It can include creating career pathways for high-performing staff. It can also include "softer" measures such as expressing appreciation personally and informally, or acknowledging achievements in more formal ways.

- f. Maintain a safe and healthy workplace.
This includes developing safety policies, providing safety training, and measuring and reacting to safety performance. It can include the development of a wellness program and encouraging life-work balance.
 - g. Become involved in community-based activities and make them an integral part of company behaviour – not just for external visibility.
This can include supporting various community charitable projects, particularly those that relate to employees' interests.
2. **Treat employees with respect and dignity.**
 - a. Respect individual rights.
 - b. Encourage and conduct timely communication with employees.
This means dialogue, i.e., two-way communication in which the employer seeks input.
 - c. Show trust.
This includes open communication and transparent behaviour.
 - d. Behave in a supportive manner.
 - e. Support and/or care for the interests of employees.
This can include preventing harassment and discrimination, and establishing employee-relations procedures.
 3. **Forge a common purpose:** Company leaders should emphasize a company's core vision and adhere to company values.
This also requires an assessment of employees' "fit" with the core values of the company.
 4. **Provide opportunities to employees and encourage them to achieve.** This can include the following incentives and actions:
 - a. Encourage employees to be entrepreneurial, to take initiative, to work creatively and to be innovative.
 - b. Provide autonomy with accountability.
This requires clear definition of the required end result and some flexibility in the methods or approach used.
 - c. Promote and recognize high quality work.
 - d. Provide opportunities for advancement.
 - e. Provide opportunities for training and development.
A number of approaches are available, including mentoring, on-the-job-coaching, project work and classroom training. It includes financial assistance to pay for training costs.
 - f. Create a climate of learning for both professional development and personal growth.
 5. **Involve employees in decision-making.**
This will increase an employee's feeling of responsibility for, and engagement in a company's efforts and imbue a sense of ownership of and commitment to a company's endeavours.
 6. **Provide a sense of belonging and camaraderie.**
This means providing a cooperative work environment, encouraging teamwork and holding functions that increase bonding.
 7. **Assess and hire employees who fit with the company's culture, are competent and likable.**
This contributes to employees' desire to work with people they respect and who respect them, builds cohesion and the sense of belonging or fraternity referred to above.