



Suggestions for Increasing Staff Morale

If you give employees proper attention and meet their needs staff morale will increase.

Seek ideas from your staff and the most important question to ask is, *"What do you need to make your job the best it can be for the members and guests and more efficient and satisfying for you?"*

Employees who respond positively are better workers than those who respond negatively; maybe thinking that changes will create more work, their suggestions won't matter, or they simply have a bad attitude.

It is very discouraging when "outsiders" come in and make changes without input from employees who know what is and is not needed. That's why, when consulting, I stress to the locker room staff that I want to make conditions better for them, ask for their input and let them know I will share it with the general manager. It's just as discouraging to then ignore their input afterwards.

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COMPENSATION

Full time employees need to make a good living with benefits. Guests at The Greenbrier would ask Don "Chief" Crump (52 years of service) why their own club has trouble keeping employees. Don's answer? "What do you pay them?" Part time employees can be satisfied with an hourly wage, uniform golf shirt, employee meal and comp golf.

A private club in Kentucky hires retirees for volunteer part time positions offering 50 percent off food, one round of golf for each day worked, discounted guest green fees and substantial savings in the pro shop. Being employed at The Greenbrier was encouraging as we were receiving the extra gifts from outings, a \$99 employee room rate, daily meal in the cafeteria and golf.

My loyalty to Butler National increased all the more when former GM, Matt Morgan, said to me, "Lock the clubhouse after the last member leaves. Finish your work and

clock out. Then if you want to use the steam, sauna and whirlpool It's OK. Just be careful. Order a pizza if you like and watch the ball game. I don't mind."

He also included a service charge for us on Monday outings to cover the 200-plus pairs of shoes we did. I was also extremely grateful when a member placed me on his company's ticket list for Chicago Bulls and Chicago Blackhawks games and for free golfing privileges at Big Run Gold Club, owned by the club's best tipper.

Overworking is unhealthy but will happen. Continually overworking yourself and your employees will cause irritability and have them begrudging members coming to their own club. I recommend that any club hosting a tournament be closed the day afterwards. While I agree that locker room managers need to work each day the club is open during the peak season, it's wise to have assistants open and close. If the assistant works a 15-hour-day then they need to either be off the next or start later.

KNOWING WHAT IS EXPECTED

It's important that the staff members know in detail what is expected, receives training, if needed, is given frequent informal reviews, and if necessary, a second or even a third chance with the understanding that those who don't do a good job will be replaced.

How hard is it to get and keep good help? It's a question we all face. But when you do have good help, do all you can to keep them. I know of three clubs that have named rooms after employees with their photos prominently displayed.

Christmas parties, employee outings, birthday presents, years of service pins and an occasional sleeve of balls or a golf shirt also go a long way in increasing staff morale as does a simple, "Thank you. You're doing a good job. Is there anything I can do for you?" **BR**