

The Great Singapore Sale (GSS) – Discount the Shoes, not the People!

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GSS is probably, after the National Day celebration, the most recognized and welcomed annual event in Singapore! With signs everywhere declaring that everything is discounted, it got me thinking how people in corporate are regularly discounted too: creativity is stifled, disproportionate attention given to poor performance, dedication and loyalty are rewarded with re-engineering.

Since it's GSS season, I thought I would encourage people managers to think about exactly that – **G**ratITUDE; **S**tRENGTHS; and **S**UPPORT.

Gratitude

Showing gratitude is the easiest and fairest way to make deposit with the emotional bank account; in times of crisis, you'll have plenty of credit to draw from! A thankful environment will also have a more conducive, trusting and efficient atmosphere. Here's how you can boost your gratitude quotient:

- Say "thank you" sincerely at the end of the day; thanking them specifically for something they have done to help you is even more powerful.
- Thank people also for not doing what could have been harmful. For example, "thank you for not getting mad with Accounts over that issue, I know you could have justified it and it was helpful of you to keep cool and let it go".
- Demonstrate your approval enthusiastically, catch people doing things right and tell them.
- Take a lead, when people complain or make negative comments, point out something about the issue they can be grateful for.

Strengths

Strength is something one has a natural talent for and enjoys doing. The art is to place people in roles where they get the opportunity to do what they do best. It sounds basic, but is often missed and many

people do not seem motivated. Here's what you can do:

- Ask him about his proudest accomplishments inside or outside work. Notice what technical competencies, type of environment and personal values these scenarios have in common.
- Make observations on what he seems to be able to do effortlessly or even takes for granted. Someone talented in something often believes anyone can do it!
- Let him know that you appreciate his talents, and find out from him how you can both take best advantage of it; make more use of it, help him get even better at it, provide more opportunities to use it?

Support

Having a supportive work environment is crucial to their happiness and well being. Studies have shown that people who feel approved of and supported are able to take on much more stress. Some ideas on how you can be more supportive of your people:

- Talk to him about his dreams and ambitions, help him discover how his work may contribute to that journey.
- Allow him to thrive on his strengths and minimize areas of his weaknesses or has little interest.
- Within reasons, encourage risks taking, allow mistakes and always ask what he's learnt.
- Be a good coach yourself, as every interaction becomes a potential learning opportunity.

Discount the goods, but never the people. Goods go out of fashion and depreciate over time; people, however, can be nurtured! Managers can make a big difference by demonstrating gratitude enthusiastically, helping to optimize individuals' strengths and providing support generously.

We say...

Focus on their strengths and not their weaknesses. As the Chinese saying goes, "A gem is not polished without rubbing, nor a man perfected without trials."

Be thankful for what they have contributed to the organisation. A simple acknowledgment will do the job. Motivated and engaged employees will benefit the organisation in the long run.

To find out how you can motivate and engage your employees, please contact us at 6732 3123 or custcare@lhh.com. Visit our website lhh.com.sg!



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