**Contented Cows Give Better Milk:**

Your People…Your Outcomes  
**presented for**

****

**By Richard Hadden, CSP**

[richard@contentedcows.com](mailto:richard@contentedcows.com) | contentedcows.com | twitter: @contentedcows | 904-720-0870

**The Premise of this Presentation:**

**Creating a focused, engaged, and capably led workforce is one of the best things you can do for both your clinical and financial outcomes.**

**Reputation recruits… Reality retains.**

**Nothing else matters... unless:**

* Yours is an EXCEPTIONAL place to work.
* Yours has EXCEPTIONAL leadership.
* You really care about your employees.

**Contented Cow Companies:**

* Grow faster
* More productive and profitable
* Have lower turnover
* Generate more jobs
* Recruit more talented employees
* Create more wealth…

than organizations that don’t have great workplace strategies and reputations.

**Assignment:**

* Make leadership skills, values, and behaviors a primary qualification for every person in a management or supervisory role.

**Assignment:**

* If you have a manager who’s not a good leader, give them a choice: Let us help you become one, or leave.

**Personal Capability**

**Minimum Requirements**

**----------------------------------**

**DISCRETIONARY EFFORT**

**Fact – Engagement is a conscious decision.**

**Fact – Work is contractual – engagement is personal.**

**Treating people right is NOT about:**

* Lowering the bar
* Letting people do whatever they want
* Giving them stuff they haven’t earned
* Coddling
* A “program**”**

**Contented Cows are Committed**

**Assignment:**

* Hire for FIT:
  + Values and attitudes FIRST
  + THEN, skills and experience

**Generational thoughts…**

* Are you looking for *attendance?* Or *results?*
* Be clear about the inviolable standards.
* Know the difference between *requirements* and *preferences.*
* If you can find a sufficient supply of engaged people who are willing and eager to work under the current set of rules – go for it! If not, you might need to consider changing some of the rules.

**Assignment:**

* Encourage intergenerational interaction:
  + Younger workers give technical help.
  + More experienced workers share their experience, expertise, and perspective.
  + Mentoring

**Assignment:**

* Practice RE-RECRUITING
  + See the article at the end of this handout.

**Assignment:**

* Establish a clear and UNIFIED sense of mission.
  + Forget the mission statement. Your employees do.

**Assignment:**

* Ask 5-6 employees: What are our workgroup’s top 3 priorities?
  + Evaluate for consistency, among themselves, and with you, and your senior leadership team.

1.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

3.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Assignment:**

* Create, and carefully nurture an “employer brand”.
* Use your website’s “careers” section to its full advantage.
  + Establish your brand.
  + Give prospective employees a look inside.
    - Use video
    - Highlight outstanding leaders
    - Brag about your culture (if it’s brag-worthy)

**Contented Cows are Enabled to do their Best Work**

**Assignment:**

* Take creative steps to demonstrate to every employee how their work matters.

**Assignment:**

* Make sure people have what they need to do their best work.

**Assignment:**

* Eliminate one utterly stupid policy, procedure, system, or habit, under your control, that hampers the flawless execution of your mission.

**Contented Cows are Cared About**

**If you care, you:**

* Tell people the truth.
* Say thank you… a lot.
* “Sit on a footlocker”.
* Lead with compassion.
* Build a community – not just a workplace.
* Feed the troops first.

**Assignments to Say Thank You**

* Send handwritten thank you notes.
* Give people flexible work hours, even if they don’t ordinarily work on a flexible schedule.
* Surprise time off.
* Friday blowout!
* Preferred schedule, assignments, responsibilities
* The opportunity to learn something new
* Acknowledge birthdays, anniversaries, special accomplishments (in and outside of work) of your employees, and their families.
* Thank your employees’ families when the employee has to spend extra time at work.
* Find out your employee’s spouse’s or partner’s favorite restaurant; give them a gift card to go there.
* Hold a managers’ car wash.
* Do the employee’s least favorite task for a day.

**Assignment:**

* Carefully consider what you “fuss” about, especially when they’re also doing great things that may not get noticed.

**Eleven Questions Every Manager Should Know the Answers to for Everyone on Their Team – Without Asking.**

1. What is your name? (I’m not kidding.)
2. What are you really good at, at work? Outside of work?
3. What do you do for fun, at work? Outside of work? (Be careful ☺)
4. What are you lousy at?
5. What would you like to do better at work?
6. What are a couple of your strongest passions?
7. How do you get to work each day? Do you drive? Alone, or with others? Some other form of transportation? How long does it take?
8. Has there been some powerful life experience, good or bad, which impacts your approach to your work? (No need to go into detail, and if there isn’t one, that’s OK).
9. Who and what is most important to you, outside of work? (No need to pry.)
10. Is there something in particular about you, or your life experience, that especially suits you to serve some need in your work?
11. What are you having trouble with at work, that you could use someone’s help with?

**Wanna Spend Less Time Recruiting? Try Re-Recruiting**By Richard Hadden and Bill Catlette  
  
We have long maintained that one of the most important decisions any manager has to make pertains to who does and does not wind up on the payroll. So it makes sense that one of the smartest things for managers to do is to remain in `recruiting mode' at all times.

We pound this point in speeches and seminars and watch all the heads nodding in agreement, then stand by to hear the distant thuds as most of these well intentioned folks fall off the wagon. It's not unlike all those New Years resolutions to lose weight or stop smoking that even at this early date are in serious jeopardy.

In response, we'd like to offer some additional thoughts about recruiting, albeit from a bit of a different perspective. Clearly, one of the reasons we wind up behind the 8 ball in recruiting is that folks have the audacity to take their act elsewhere, and do it without much notice. Though a few of these departures bring a sigh of welcome relief, most do not.

Similarly, some of the newly departed are on their way to markedly greener pastures, but most aren't. So why are they leaving? For one (or more) of the very same reasons folks leave a marriage, or other significant relationship… They feel they've been abused, cheated, or taken for granted. Let's concentrate on the last one since it's probably the most prevalent.

It has been suggested that a key strategy for maintaining a successful relationship is to continue the courtship long after the `knot has been tied.' Assuming that there is some validity to this notion, most of us discontinue our recruiting at precisely the wrong time, before the game has even begun.

That's right, we are suggesting (no, insisting) that the recruiting process has only begun when you've found the right person and convinced them to board your ship. Before the ink is even dry on all those forms from HR (more later), another phase of recruiting (Re-Recruiting if you will) should begin,

IF you are serious about getting this hard won recruit off to a great start, turbo-charging their performance, and convincing them to stick around and stay productive for the long haul.

Following is a suggested regimen of re-recruiting measures designed to help you with this process:

**Pre-start:** Before the person's 1st day of employment, there are a lot of necessary as well as neat things you can get accomplished. Remember the axiom about first impressions.) A few starters:

Within days of their acceptance of your offer, they should receive a welcome letter from the president of your company. You prepare it, the prez will sign it, trust us. You'll knock somebody's socks off. (20 minutes)

Whether it is via the web or old-fashioned mode, get the HR paperwork taken care of before the person reports for work. When it comes to benefits enrollment, here's where high tech should be augmented by some high touch. Ask (no, insist) that someone involved with your organization's benefits administration speak with the person to ensure that they understand their benefits options, claims procedures, and the like. When they are through, test them on this knowledge to be sure they really understand it. (20 minutes)

If relocation is involved in the job change, arrange to have some groceries delivered to the person's new residence.

Nearly 20 years ago, I showed up at a new employee's home shortly after the moving van had departed. My purpose was merely to see if they needed anything. It turns out they did. With a toddler and a newborn, they were already running about 2 quarts low – on milk. I scared up some milk, bread, and a few other essentials, delivered them, and left. To this day, that guy and his wife mention the `milk thing' whenever we talk. (30 minutes/$100)

In similar fashion, see to it that their work area is set up and squared away. Whether it's ID cards, keys, computer passwords, tools, business cards, or what, this stuff can and should be taken care of before the person arrives for work.

Once someone has accepted a job, make sure they start receiving selected pieces of intra-company communication. If your company has an employee handbook, by all means send them a copy, and ask them to read it. See to it that they are enrolled in any required or recommended training, and advised as to the date(s). Invite them to come in at their convenience for a tour and to meet new co-workers.

**Day 1:** With the traditional orientation stuff taken care of already, this day should be about making sure the new person understands (really understands) the relevance of their work, and letting them get started with it.

Towards the end of the day, spend a few minutes with them to answer any questions they may have, and learn the name of anyone who has been particularly helpful to them on that day, so you can thank them appropriately. (15 minutes)

**Week 1:** Ask a different person to take the new staff member to lunch each day during this week. ($150)

**End of Week 1:** Ask your boss to spend a few minutes with the new person in order to 1) reinforce their decision to come to work for Acme Widget, and 2) offer support. (20 minutes)

**End of Week 2:** Spend some time with them in their work area to find out 1) what they have learned, 2) what help they need. (60 minutes)

**End of First Month:** Ask your HR rep to take the new person to breakfast or lunch and discuss if they are finding the new job and work environment as they had expected it to be. If you don't have an HR professional, turn to someone else you trust. ($40)

**45th Day:** Review with the new person the performance expectations for their position, and ask for their candid self-assessment regarding their performance. Coach as necessary. (40 minutes)

**60th Day:** Spend an hour working with the new person, or reviewing their work output. Coach as appropriate. (60 minutes)

**90th Day (and every 90 days thereafter):** On a rotating basis, conduct coaching sessions in which you are addressing topics either defined by the employee, or you. (60 minutes)

**Routinely:** In addition to varied social interaction with your employees, we heartily recommend that you take time to acknowledge the special events in their lives, the lives of their family members, and significant others. Those cards, notes, and phone calls take but a minute, and are SO significant to the recipient.

Oh, and another thing: Don't think you have the 10 hours and $300 to invest in the first year of re-recruiting your new folks? Better brush up on your resume screening and interviewing skills.

**Consolidated Health Services - Ambassadors for Connection**

*An excerpt from Contented Cows Still Give Better Milk, by Bill Catlette and Richard Hadden*

We’ve long advocated that managers employ something we call “Re-Recruiting”, a process whereby companies continue the courtship long after the ‘knot has been tied’ in order to maintain a successful relationship. Indispensable in getting people -- especially new hires -- Committed to your organization, Re-Recruiting, or “Onboarding on Steroids”, actually begins at the moment someone accepts an employment offer. It then continues, realistically, for the life of the employment relationship, with particularly observable bursts of activity in the first year on the job.

We know few employers who do this as well as Consolidated Health Services. Headquartered in Milford, Ohio, CHS provides home healthcare services to patients through a network of more than 35 branches throughout Ohio, Indiana, and Kentucky. Talent Manager Jennifer Steiger and her boss and VP of Human Resources Patty Szelest described to us what happens when a new hire joins the team at this growing company.

CHS has instituted what they calls their Ambassador Program in which they pair *every* newly hired associate -- whether serving in a clinical or support position -- with an experienced employee, or “ambassador.” This person’s job is to welcome the new hire, and shepherd them through those critical first 120 days in their new position.

Management carefully selects these ambassadors (who must serve willingly and by invitation) from among exemplary employees who live the company’s mission and values in their work. They wear an identifying pin at work and are recognized at the annual company awards event that names an Ambassador of the Year. This individual is chosen from nominations made by the new employees they helped during the year. Because the Ambassador’s function is not job-specific, he or she may or may not hold the same job as the new employee. Here’s how the relationship, and the process, work:

Suppose you’ve just been hired as, say, a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) at CHS, and you’re starting your new job in seven days. Your ambassador will call you and begin the conversation with something like this: “We’re so excited that you’re going to be starting with us next week. I just want to go over a few things to help make that first day an especially good one for you.” The ambassador will make sure you know how to get to your office, where to park, and review any traffic considerations. She’ll tell you where the drink and snack machines are located and that you’ll probably want to bring your lunch most days, but that one of your co-workers is going to take you out to lunch on the first day.

The Ambassador will impart information about the time and place for employee orientation, and will tell you what to expect in those first few days. She’ll likely close her part of the call by saying, “I’ll be here at the door to greet you at 8:30 when you arrive, and I’ll introduce you to the people you’ll be working with. Don’t be nervous. Everyone’s really looking forward to having you here with us. Do you have any questions for me?”

When the newly hired employee hangs up the phone and picks her jaw up off the floor, she’ll probably say to herself, “I have *never* had a call like that from a new employer in my life. I can’t wait to get started!”

And when the Ambassador hangs up, she’ll pick up a note card, specially designed for the Ambassador Program, and pen a handwritten note to the person she just spoke to. Echoing and reviewing some of what was discussed, the card bears a special logo on the front, with the words “Welcome”, and “Our team is stronger because of you.” On the back are the company’s mission, values, “People First” philosophy, and the tagline, “We are so happy you are a part of our team!”

And in case the new team member has any doubt as to how welcome they are, they’ll find something pretty amazing on their first day: an individualized poster with their name, the same tagline as on the card they received. It’ll be hanging on the wall of the orientation room, and signed by all their co-workers, with a message of welcome and encouragement from each one.

But it doesn’t stop there. The Ambassador meets with the new employee weekly during the first two months, and then once a month for the next two months. At the end of 120 days, both Ambassador and new(ish) employee have the opportunity to evaluate each other in their respective roles.

**Richard Hadden, CSP** is an Implementation Specialist with Custom Learning Systems, an author, and workplace expert who speaks to organizations worldwide about improving their businesses by creating a focused, engaged, and capably led workforce. Contact him at richard@contentedcows.com or 904-720-0870. contentedcows.com