

Strategies for Small Business Examiner

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10 ways to keep your staff happy

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Attorney Jeff Kroll believes in treating his employees well
(Photo provided by Jeff Kroll)

Attorney Jeffrey Kroll is principal at the law offices of Jeffrey Kroll in Chicago, IL. You can contact Jeff through his [website](#) and [blog](#).

Jeff Kroll is a business owner. As the owner, it's his job to make decisions, set the tone, and grow the bottom line. It's up to him to enrich his own financial security while making sure his employees make a decent living. He is the boss.

Unlike too many business owners today, Jeff understands and respects the concept that employees are not tools; fax machines and copiers are not three dimensional beings with minds, needs and lives. His employees are a valuable commodity, there to help him in his mission, to see that goals are met, and to be his aide in reaching that attainable golden ring: success.

To that end, Jeff has decided to live by the concept that his employees are human beings, with needs, ideas and abilities. He uses this to his advantage. He also understands that as the boss, it's his responsibility to make certain that his employees are taken care of, treated well, and that when they are given the ability to work at and reach their fullest potential, he and his business are all the better for it.

Today, Jeff shares with us 10 tips on how to help your employees be the best they can be. Tomorrow, we'll chat with Jeff about why he knows this is important; to his business and to the people who work for him.

1. Enable employees to balance work and personal life. Allow flexible starting and finishing times.
2. Consider telecommuting when personal issues arise. As long as their work is getting done, trust them, don't micromanage.
3. Allow for casual attire when clients are not on site, particularly in the summer when it can be uncomfortable to wear formal business attire.
4. Make the workplace a pleasant place to work with music, water bubblers, coffee/tea facilities, and complimentary snacks from time to time.
5. Involve staff, whenever possible, in decisions that affect their jobs and the overall direction of the business or department. Keep them in the loop.
6. Reward hard work, even small goals: there's no point in waiting until the year-end bonus, it won't keep anyone going for an entire year. People need short term rewards.
7. Offer to help your staff when they feel overwhelmed. If you cannot help, just acknowledging their workload can go a long way.
8. When you give constructive criticism, ask for it in return.
9. Schedule weekly meetings that are held consistently in person. Allow for open dialogue and privacy to allow the employee to speak openly.
10. Have offsite meals at least once a month for team building and to show appreciation.

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