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Six Principles for Becoming an Employer of Choice

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Employers are looking for a new approach to reach their business goals. The ability to attract, optimize, and retain top talent is a vital component to achieving this objective. In her presentation at this year's WorldatWork annual conference, Sandy Asch, author of *Excellence at Work--The Six Keys to Inspire Passion in the Workplace*, addressed how employers can transform and reward employee performance and offered six things employers can do to become an employer of choice.

First, Asch identified a number of questions companies can ask themselves to determine if their employees view them as an employer of choice.

- Do your employees love to work for your company?
- Are employees deeply engaged?
- Are employees' full potential being realized?
- Are employees planning on staying with your company?
- Are communications open, honest, positive and future-focused?
- Are people proactive and see, own, and act on problems quickly and efficiently?
- Are truth telling and risk taking encouraged and rewarded?
- Is there a high level of cooperation and collaboration?
- Are people respectful and seek to bring out the best in each other?
- Is there a healthy work-life balance?
- Do employees have energy and passion?
- Do employees trust and respect their managers and feel valued and supported?
- Are your leaders trusted and respected?
- Are employees treated fairly?
- Are employees regularly rewarded and recognized for good performance?
- Are there opportunities for growth and development?
- Are employees encouraged to contribute and make a difference?
- Are employees proud to work for your organization?
- Would your employees recommend your company to their friends as a good place to work?

Most employers would likely find that they are lacking in at least one of these areas. As such, Asch provided six "principles for excellence" that employers can adopt to become an employer of choice.

1. **Use your word wisely.** It is important to communicate with employees with honesty openness, and respect. Communications should focus on what is possible.
2. **Be accountable.** Employers should act proactively and be committed to truth telling, focusing on the question behind the question rather than offering excuses or explanations.
3. **Focus.** By focusing on independent goals, employers can extract the greatest value from the efforts of employees.
4. **Mine the gold.** Employees and managers should strive to bring out the best in their employees, and be committed to collaboration and cooperation.
5. **Strive for balance.** Employees will be vital and energetic at work as a result of a balanced life. Employers should therefore give their employees the opportunity

to refresh and renew.

6. **Lighten up.** Perhaps the most difficult of the six principles, employees should not take themselves so seriously. Employers and their employees should seek to bring laughter and joy to the workplace and look for opportunities to make other people's day.

Asch stressed that these principles must be adopted by everyone in the organization from the top down. The model is designed to create new habits and a fresh mindset in a system that is peer enforced and led by enlightened leaders, transforming an organization into an employer of choice and allowing employers to attract and retain top talent.

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