

SPECIAL REPORT SMALL BUSINESS WEEK

mobilize employees. Salary alone will never mobilize or retain talent over the long-

HOW TO COMPENSATE WITHOUT CASH

Entrepreneurs should listen to employees to learn what benefits they value and work on non-financial compensation constantly until it becomes part of the company's way of life, BDC's Nathalie Gélinas says. Here are three types of non-financial compensation to consider.

FLEXIBILITY. A flexible workplace is increasingly in demand. You can offer flexibility in terms of time (variable work hours) and space (opportunities to work outside the office).

TRUST. Employees like to have responsibility, work in a harmonious environment and be trusted to make decisions. At the same time, you should hold employees accountable via solid performance appraisals.

SELF-DEVELOPMENT. Entrepreneurs should think about how to help employees develop themselves. The result will be more a productive and motivated workforce.

term. Businesses should be creative about finding ways to attract and engage talent."

At Prima, the employee-friendly workplace became a beacon for smart, enthusiastic workers who helped propel the company's explosive growth.

"The key to our success is our work culture," Ms. McLaughlin says. "We listen to employees a lot. People always talk about the customer experience. We have developed the employee experience. It means people don't want to leave."

Prima also has a performance reward system that awards points that employees can exchange for services, thus reinforcing the company's commitment to helping employees maintain work-family balance. Perks include tax preparation, lawn mowing, babysitting, movie/dinner combos and more.

"Our office is completely different from anything else in the area. It's really made a difference in attracting people," Ms. McLaughlin says.

Prima's success shows that while pay is important, it isn't what makes employees happy at work, Ms. Gélinas says. Employees want flexibility, trust and the chance to develop as part of a team, she adds. "We spend a lot of time listening to customers to serve them better. We also need to listen to employees."

— Special to OBJ

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— INFORMATION SUPPLEMENT —

Make the most of your diverse team

Cross-cultural competency training can address your productivity challenges

Written by Leo Valiquette

Study after study has illustrated how diverse teams outperform in the workplace. The benefits go right to the bottom line of organizations looking for a competitive edge in a globalized economy.

That is, if an organization's managers know how to effectively manage their diverse teams.

How well can a baby-boomer work with a 20-something grad? What about a Canadian-born product manager with a new software engineer on the team, fresh from Romania, or Vietnam, or Brazil?

Gender. Ethnicity. Age. Diversity in whatever form offers a wealth of perspective businesses can turn to their advantage to innovate, connect with specific groups of consumers and reach new markets.

Businesses across the National Capital Region are in the sweet spot when it comes to leveraging diversity — almost a quarter of Ottawa's population is foreign-born, hailing

from 160 countries.

But misconceptions, misunderstandings and a simple lack of awareness can easily undermine the advantages of a diverse team. Waiting until issues become obvious only serves to hurt morale and profitability.

"Managers and team leaders often struggle to understand the cultural considerations that may be slowing progress and productivity," said Henry Akanko, Director of Hire Immigrants Ottawa (HIO). "When you have diverse groups, decision-making can take longer because there are a variety of voices at the table, but those decisions are often more effective and more beneficial."

The healthy and proactive alternative is to take your team through the cultural competency training available from Hire Immigrants Ottawa.

HIO's interactive training modules cover everything from verbal and non-verbal communications, to interviewing skills, performance

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management and intercultural problem-solving.

Diane Johnson, principal of Johnson Executive Search Inc., finds that hiring skilled foreign professionals into her clients' businesses supports their growth and expansion into new markets.



"Small and mid-sized businesses need HIO's training," she said. "They need to understand the cultures they are bringing into their firms, to keep these employees happy and engaged."

To learn more about how HIO can help you make the most of your people, please call 613-683-3370 or visit www.hireimmigrantsottawa.ca

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