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Small businesses hold the key to employee happiness

As the calendar flips to another year, many employees will consider starting the new year on the hunt for a new job. In today's changing workforce, it is more important than ever for companies to realize a salary alone is no longer enough to recruit or retain strong employees. According to a recent survey by Aflac, small businesses deserve a round of applause for their ability to keep employees happy. The report found that 85 percent of small-business employees are happy in their current job and more than half (51 percent) agree that most of or all of their happiness in their current job is because they work for a small business.¹

The keys to happiness

Nearly a quarter of participants (23 percent) stated that the feeling of importance was the best part of working for a small business.¹ Small businesses have the unique ability to make employees feel appreciated, respected and valued on a personal and professional level. In a small business environment, there are typically fewer layers between newcomers and leadership. This tight-knit structure of small businesses can create a family-like atmosphere that allows employees to feel like their opinions matter and that they play a significant role in the business' mission.

Flexibility is also vital in creating employee happiness. According to the report, 30 percent of respondents noted that flexible scheduling was the best part of working for a small business.¹ This can include working from home, leaving work early to play in a summer sports league or giving new parents an extra week of paid time off to help care for their newborn. A workplace that promotes healthy work-life balance can create happier, less stressed employees and can also increase employee productivity while on the job.

Unlocking improvements

Although small businesses are excelling at keeping employees happy, there is always room for improvement. In a small-business community, money does not seem to be the only motivator. In fact, 65 percent of small-business employees indicate that an improvement in their benefits offerings would make them a happier employee.¹ By offering a robust benefits plan that includes voluntary benefits, small businesses can ensure their employees are able to find the right benefits to meet their individual needs. Learn more at aflac.com/smallbusiness.

Aflac herein means American Family Life Assurance Company of Columbus.

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¹ The Aflac 2016 Small Business Happiness Survey, fielded by Lightspeed GMI in the United States between March 14 and March 21, 2016. Accessed Oct. 4, 2016. <https://www.aflac.com/business/resources/aflac-for-small-businesses/aflac-in-action.aspx>