



Hang In There, Spring Is On The Way!

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Client Spotlight:



Service Contracting of Virginia, Inc.

Service Contracting strives to provide customers with a high quality product, on schedule, at a price that is fair to all.

In 1976 Service Contracting started a small paint subcontracting business out of the basement of a home. As the business matured our company moved into drywall systems, ceilings, and floors.

Their strong beliefs in honest, responsible business practices and keeping the client's best interest at heart has given us the privilege of working with some of the premier designers and builders on both a local and national level.

Service Contracting of Virginia, Inc.

4973 Stepp Place
Dublin, VA 24084
(276) 728-9962

<http://www.servicecontractingva.com>

Pleasure in the job puts perfection in the work. – Aristotle

If you have been following this last month and half's Tuesday Tech Tips, you are well underway to growing your business using the tools to collect and store information in your sales pipeline. Improving those practices will promote business growth, allowing you to hire and restructure to meet those needs. Now, more than ever, is when you must retain your employees so they might guide your new recruits and give their feedback on any faulty processes holding you back.

We all know that happy employees are motivated employees and they tend to stick around to be good mentors, however, an article in Quicken's docstoc, [10 Surprising Facts About Employee Happiness](#), explains some really great information that we should all keep in mind. As managers and business owners, I will be sharing with you tools and tips that can help you achieve a positive culture, ready for growth.

- 1. Stress is the nation's most underestimated business expense—it costs American businesses \$300 billion every single year.**
 - *This heavy loss is due to stress-related absenteeism, drops in productivity levels, and employee turnover – chipping away at growth throughout the year*
- 2. Be careful with the AC—being cold can intensify feelings of isolation.**
 - *Being cold can increase the feelings of loneliness, while consistently high temperatures make workers feel sluggish – 65 to 70 degrees is ideal*
- 3. Hourly employees are happier than salaried ones.**
 - *Hourly workers tend to focus on the concrete “worth” of their paycheck*
- 4. A noisy workplace can unintentionally trigger erroneous releases of adrenaline.**
 - *Loud workplaces raise levels of adrenaline and prolonged exposure can reduce motivation and cause trouble sleeping*
- 5. The No. 1 reason employees leave isn't money or opportunity.**
 - *Their primary reason for leaving is to escape work-related stress*
- 6. Optimal levels of employee motivation are achieved when they are challenged—but within reason.**
 - *An individual's task must be difficult yet achievable, and be both perceived as a challenge and objectively be a challenge (based on their skill level)*
- 7. Flexible schedules unequivocally boost satisfaction and performance while reducing turnover.**
 - *Employees whose work schedules conflict with their family priorities are three times as likely to quit their jobs – significant reductions in costs are realized due to schedule flexibility*
- 8. Breaking up the day with any sort of physical activity can improve your productivity (even more than it improves your mood).**
 - *No matter the intensity or duration of the exercise, improves performance when it comes to increasing output, managing time-sensitive demands and being generally tolerant*
- 9. Employee commuting is directly linked to worse health and steep business expenses.**
 - *The further people commute, the higher their body mass index and blood pressure – affecting the company's healthcare costs. They also tend to get sick more often.*
- 10. Office layout matters—greater employee proximity and fewer barriers increase job satisfaction.**
 - *Being within close walking distance to other employees and having fewer physical barriers is critical for increasing impromptu and face-to-face employee interaction.*

Spring is the time of plans and projects. –Leo Tolstoy

Did you know...

...Net Neutrality concerns all of us!

What is net neutrality, you might ask? According to Wikipedia, "Net neutrality (also network neutrality or Internet neutrality) is the principle that Internet service providers and governments should treat all data on the Internet equally, not discriminating or charging differentially by user, content, site, platform, application, type of attached equipment, and modes of communication."

Basically, there's a huge war being waged over Internet content and who can access it. Larger telephone companies and Internet Service Providers are currently lobbying to be able to restrict access to content or to allow their content providing websites or those providers that pay for preferential access to be more rapidly accessible than smaller, independent content providing sites.

In January of 2014, the DC Court of Appeals ruled in favor of Verizon in a net neutrality case and struck down portions of the FCC Open Internet rules that say telecoms should treat all Internet traffic the same.

In response, the FCC is now working to reinstitute net neutrality with new rules to make it a stronger concept and less vulnerable. These rules would mean ISPs could not block content, discriminate toward content providers, or be non-transparent about their network management practices.

Here are some great resources if you'd like to read more about it!

- en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Net_neutrality
- www.fcc.gov/openinternet
- www.savetheinternet.com/net-neutrality-101

The face of the Internet could be changing drastically – we urge you to be an informed consumer and make your voice heard!



Freedom is what we do with what is done to us. – Jean Paul Sartre

5 Smart Ways To Do a Better Job As An Employee

Doing great work in a job you love increases your happiness and personal satisfaction. Many people, especially after their annual reviews, resolve to do a better job "next year". But a broad resolution to do better rarely helps unless you take specific steps to improve how you work. Here are 5 specific things you can do now to do a better job.



1. Invest time daily to deliberate about the bigger picture.

Before you jump into your daily tasks, spend a few minutes considering how your work will be used and by whom. Until you understand the scope of what you're doing, it's impossible for you to be creative in your work. Sure, you can connect the dots and perform the assigned tasks, but the end product of your efforts will be far less valuable than if you took a few minutes to consider why you're doing what you're doing.

When you know how to do something, you have a skill that you can replicate to do the same thing again and again. But when you understand how and why something works, you not only have a skill, but you also can adapt your skill to changing situations.

2. Plan wisely before you execute. Some people spend a great deal of time planning but never execute anything worthwhile. Others jump right in without planning and often hit roadblocks.

The best and most successful employees think daily about the bigger picture, not just about the tasks they have to execute that day. They create a plan, execute, measure progress and obstacles, tweak their plan, and continue executing. Careful planning helps you succeed and your successes help you grow and become even more successful.

3. Find ways to help your colleagues succeed. Smart employees share credit for successes because they realize that nearly every project, even if it's ultimately done by a single person, is a team effort. The best teams in the world share a common trait: they embrace a collective vision and want to do something great together. They want to leave a dent in the universe. Great leaders promote these traits.

4. Provide constructive feedback, but always offer a solution. People find it much easier to criticize others than to offer solutions. But critics are a dime-a-dozen and rarely valuable unless they also offer solutions. Before you criticize, ask questions. Before you ask questions, think about what you want/need to know. And always strive to offer a solution.

5. Be a volunteer, not always a draftee. If you're regularly finding that your manager or boss asks you to do things, that's natural. But if 100% of your job consists of doing things others ask you to do, you're missing important opportunities to grow. In fact, if you measure your success by how well you performed the things you were assigned by someone else, you're holding yourself back.

The most effective employees are volunteers. They volunteer responsibility and accountability before it's delegated to them. They volunteer to mentor a new employee, help a colleague with a project, research a new product or service, etc. Sure, they will often do things their boss or manager asks them to do. But they also look for opportunities to help even when they're not asked.

Adapted from Crowdspring's Article "5 Smart Ways To Do A Better Job In 2014"

PRONETS, Inc. Charitable Causes

Twin County Humane Society

PRONETS Operations Manager began volunteering at the Twin County Humane Society. She helps take care of the many dogs & puppies in the area that are displaced & looking for new homes. We would like to encourage you to get involved & help this wonderful cause too!

Get more information at their website: <http://www.twincountyhumanesociety.org/>



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PRONETS • 307 Meadow Street • Galax, VA 24333

Call: 276-236-8226 or 888-544-7544

Email: info@pronetsinc.com

