


Print Coverage

'Perks or Peers'

Publication: Times of India - Times Ascent

Date: January 25, 2017



Perks OR PEERS?
Good perks or a congenial working environment: what is more important for employees?

75 per cent of employees go into job search mode because they don't find the office environment congenial enough

compensation." According to Rajeev Bhardwaj, VP HR, Sun Life Financial Asia Service Centre, the dichotomy between good perks and ambience is a "typical case of one thing working better in the short term and the other having greater positive impact in the long run." He spells out, "Good perks attract employees to an organisation especially if they are switching jobs from a workplace that does not offer any incentives other than compensation. A free pick and drop facility, complimentary lunch, company laptop or even mobile phone are important perks that make an organisation attractive to a job seeker. However, a good work environment helps retain employees and keeps them from desperately looking out for jobs."

employees go into job search mode because they do not find the office environment congenial enough and are not enjoying their work because of it. An organisation where managers offer polite feedback rather than being abusive; where employees are trained to help each other rather than pull the rug from beneath each other's feet; where an employee is made to feel valued as a human resource rather than being made to feel expendable is essentially a place with a good work environment."

Employees desire a feeling of belongingness in the office as they spend a majority of their time there. Shubhayu Sengupta, senior vice president - human resources, HGS India, says, "Employees now look for companies that are ready to advocate for them and create a "we" environment at the workplace. While employees expect benefits and perks, they also feel the need to be valued and appreciated. If we appreciate our employees, they will work harder and be more loyal towards the organisation."

According to Lohit Bhatia, business head, Staffing Solutions, Ikya, "It is a toss-up between good perks and a good work environment. Good perks are definitely an instant hit with employees. But in my opinion, this feeling is often temporary and, with time, has a diminishing impact on employee experience. But no matter how enticing your perks or rewards programmes are geared towards individual employee needs, these do not translate into a great employee experience unless backed by a good work environment."

Organisations have not failed to read this trend among the employees and that's why, they are trying to innovate with regards to workplaces. Collaborative and open workspaces are becoming the norm. "A great job title and a compensation package will definitely bring talent into your organisation, but what makes people stay is the team, the manager and the organisation's culture," concludes Bhatia.

Rajat loves his office. He has a flexible work schedule, nice peers and an even nicer boss! What more could he ask for? Yes, one complaint that often goads him to switch his job is the less than satisfactory salary that is credited into his bank account at the last working day of every month. Still, Rajat loves working in the same organisation and if his level of dedication and sincerity is anything to go by, he is going to stick around for years.

Like Rajat, millennials today prefer a sound and independent work ambience. According to Jagjit Singh, chief people officer, PwC India, "Work culture is everything. The values, beliefs and ethos of the firm, open and inclusive working environment, leadership behaviour and role modelling are all part of the bigger employee value proposition. It should be the effort of any company to give the very best of what employees may need - whether it is flexibility, development, enablement, defined career paths or competitive

Jadav.Kakoti@timesgroup.com