

*Western Banker Magazine: HR & Training Digest*

Issue #29 – August 2015

## Managing Employee Expectations

*By Scott E. Byorum, Nationwide Real Estate Tax Service, Inc.*

*“To win in the marketplace you must first win in the workplace.” ~ Doug Conant, CEO of Campbell’s Soup*

Any business larger than just the business owner – which is every bank – has employees, and this makes running the business effectively exponentially more complex. Not only is the bank CEO working to meet his or her own expectations and logistics management, they are working to meet the expectations of other stakeholders as well.

Though quite challenging, it can be boiled down fairly simply. The bank needs talent to operate efficiently. That talent needs the job the bank is offering. The challenge emerges in the logistics of the relationship. So position, hours and compensation are negotiated and then it’s happily ever after, right?

We all know it doesn’t work that easily. It might start off well, but all too often the relationship diverges, even under the best of circumstances. So what goes wrong? Bank management can lose sight of employee management as they begin focusing more and more on the bank itself. Employees can lose focus on the bank as they turn more of their attention on themselves.

In essence, both parties lose sight that they form a dynamic, symbiotic relationship. In order to make that relationship beneficial, both parties need to benefit from it. That means both parties need to understand what is expected of them and work to meet that expectation. When you break it down, lay it out and communicate it, the process becomes so much easier to understand and simpler to work with.

**Business Expectations** – The employee needs to:

- Be willing and capable to do the job, with a good work ethic
- Have a desire to learn and adapt to change
- Understand the bank, its mission and guiding principles
- Know their role within the bank to accomplish business goals

**Employee Expectations** – The business needs to:

- Provide training for the job description as necessary, and also when it deviates
- Provide purposeful supervision under fair policies and measured guidance
- Communicate respectfully and provide opportunities for feedback
- Provide ethical leadership by example

The glue that binds these expectations is something that everyone knows about, but not something that everyone does well, or puts a high priority on, even if they think or say that they do.

Communication needs to hold an equal position in the business model – if not an elevated one – to its other elements. Communication sells the bank to the customer; so, too, does it facilitate the efficiency and quality amongst the people who work there.

- Communicate the business and employee expectations
- Communicate the business model, the bank's mission and the roles
- Communicate the operations and how the bank's products and services are sold and used by customers
- Communicate the business challenges, the successes and the setbacks
- Communicate how to add value and grow revenue and control costs
- Communicate opportunities and support for individual development
- Communicate with frequency

One of the best ways a bank can strengthen the employer-employee bond – while at the same time energizing and engaging employees to achieve business goals – is to align employee performance to results. When the bank does well, employees are rewarded and motivated to make sure those rewards keep coming. Communicate this. The reward can be monetary, but it can also be other things that people like. Find out what people like.

Additionally, employees become engaged when they are well-trained and given input and choice over their jobs and/or schedule. Provide avenues for this kind of feedback, if possible. Employees want to know that they are being listened to and even small contributions provide a sense of investment and ownership.

Only through effective communication are employee and business expectations known and business goals achieved. Likewise, when communications are lacking, deceptive or stale, a business will not be able to retain critical talent, business operations will be disruptive and poor customer service will follow in the wake of a demotivated workforce. Bank management has an incentive to engage employees so that employees will be engaged in the business...and everybody wins!

*Scott Byorum is the director of business development at Nationwide Real Estate Tax Service, Inc., an author and a certified Instructional Designer. He can be reached at 800-528-7803 or [scott@nationwidecompliance.com](mailto:scott@nationwidecompliance.com).*