

Why star employees deserve recognition

By Jackie Nalubwama

Some renowned business moguls have often stressed the importance of an employee to their companies or organisations. A case in point is British mogul Sir Richard Branson of Virgin Group, whose model is putting employees first, then customers and shareholders last.

In an interview with inc.com, Branson explained why he chose this model:

"It sort of should go without saying — and it's surprising that it still doesn't go without saying at some companies — if the person who works at your company is 100% proud of the job they are doing, if you give them the tools to do a good job, they are proud of the brand if they were looked after and treated well, then they are going to be smiling, they are going to be happy and, therefore, the customer will have a nice experience," Branson says.

He adds in contrast, if an employee is not given the right tools, not looked after, not appreciated, then they will not work with a smile. This leads to that employee mistreating the customer.

"So, my philosophy has always been, if you can put staff first, your customer second and shareholders third, effectively, in the end, the shareholders do well, the customers do better, and yourself are happy," he says.

Happy employees

One way of making sure employees are kept happy is by recognising their contribution or efforts by employers because this goes a long way in boosting their productivity.

Mustafa Fagayo, the human resource administrator at Federation of Uganda Employers, reveals that recognising performing employees has advantages.

He says recognising employees motivates them to work more; it gives them the drive. "They feel appreciated and an integral part of the company," Fagayo says.

He points that recognising performing staff also breeds grounds for healthy competition among the rest of the staff. Fagayo says from competition, employees work in a way that leads to them tapping into their talents and creativity.

This they do so that they can win the enviable prize of recognition.

Fagayo also highlights the fact that recognising best

performing employees is a recipe for team building, which is beneficial to an establishment.

"It builds teamwork because it is always mentioned when a person is getting an award. They say that the best employee is a team player," explains Fagayo.

As a consequence, other employees will realise the importance of working as a team and work towards it.

Joshua Mwesiga, the director of human resource and administration at Uganda Development Bank, says recognising best-performing employees boosts productivity and bolsters a hardworking culture in an organisation.

"It re-energises those that have been recognised to even do more and also encourages others to emulate them," he says.

Mwesiga says due to recognising the best, it inculcates a culture of high performance among staff at the work place.

"It fosters a culture of high performance in employees," he says. He mentions that being recognised as a best performer can also create an emotional bond between the employee and the establishment, which leads to goodwill towards the establishment.

Inspiration

Zipporah Nandobyo, the human resource manager at Canaan Sites, says recognition of the best performers is good because it inspires them. "There is no better way for an employer to inspire employees than showing them that he or she is sincerely grateful for their efforts," she says, adding that recognising the best performers is one such example.

Creativity

Denis Nyangweso, the human resource manager at Equal Opportunities Commission Uganda, also believes in recognising best performers at the workplace as a creative tool.

"In the first instance, it creates competitiveness because all staff want to be recognised and those that have been recognised want to stay on the top, which brings out creativity and innovation," he says.

Nyangweso says creativity and innovation ultimately grow a company or organisation's productivity because the employees are putting out their best. He, however, cautions that the recognition process needs to be transparent for it bear fruit.