

DOES YOUR WORKPLACE HAVE AN INSIGHTFULLY-DEVELOPED, WRITTEN, EMPLOYER-SUPPORTED CAREER PATH PLAN? ASK FOR IT



All employees, irrespective of what they are doing at the moment, are more concerned about where their current position will lead them to and does it have any long-term potential that is enduring and stable. Kelley Ryan, branch manager for the Cedar Rapids Manpower Office said that "It is important for people to know what lies in their employment future these days." She says that the job candidates who come to her offices range from the entry level job seekers to those who have been laid-off and are desperately seeking re-employment. But irrespective of their diversity one thing that is common to all of them is the worry, whether the positions that they are being offered are transitory or is there any permanency about them and do they have some enduring potential. She said, "As far as career paths, they are looking for something that is going to be consistent, something that is long term and something that can provide stability for them." A recent job survey conducted by Accountemps, a division of Robert Half International, had more than half of the respondents that included 400 people between 18 years and those above 55, saying that knowing their career path mattered to them, to contentment at the workplace and that it was crucial to their overall future plans. R.J. Hammel, branch manager for Robert Half International said that knowing their career paths is important because to some it means that they know what more they have to accomplish to tread up the rungs of the success ladder. To others it is a security blanket, the comfort of knowing that they are in a stable employment zone. Hammel says that lack of a clearly defined path makes the employee indifferent and casual about his work and it is in the interest of the employers to ensure that the employee knows where his future is headed, so that it inspires him to create and work towards specific career-path development plan creating a win-win situation for both the employee and the employer. Hammel's advice to managers is to talk to the employees, address their concerns and ask them what their goals are for the future and then see if the company can do anything to help the employee to achieve their aims and objectives. "If you don't know what your employees desire, their aspirations may not match up with your planning," he said. Not communicating with your employees may lead the employees to believe that they have no stable future at the firm and they could leave and this could include some of the company's more valuable employees. One major difference between the older and the younger workers is that the younger workers need an appraisal of their work, they desire feedback. "The younger the generation, the more often they want feedback. The older the generation, the less often they felt they needed that feedback," said Hammel. Knowing the career path is important to both the employee and the employer. It helps the employer to know of the employee's desired objectives and what he is eventually aiming for. For the employee, it will help him gauge if his current position will provide him with the necessary competence, skills and a sense of direction towards his career goals and milestones.

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