

# The Stroco Perspective

March 2010 Issue



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## Guess that Plane!



**Note:** Scroll to the bottom to find the answer and some additional fun facts.

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## Investing in Human Capital:

### A Chronicle

There is a silent investment that business owners, managers, and employees take for granted every day. It is arguably the most important asset that we possess - human capital. Some experts suggest that we spend nearly 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of our adult lives working. Effectively, this "work-life" aspect will be a determining factor as to whether or not we, and those who work for us, will be able to enjoy the other 2/3<sup>rd</sup> that is left in life to the fullest. Based on these assumptions, it would then make sense that as employers, our "work-life" goal should be to work as efficiently, intelligently, and compassionately as possible in order to reap the highest return on our human capital investment.

Whether you manage people or operate in an independent capacity, your surrounding environment will have tremendous impact on your ability to operate at your maximum potential. If you work in a negative and toxic culture, you will have poor results. If you are provided support and positive affirmations, you will be able to grow and develop as a person and work well together in a team environment.

At Stroco, we strive to create a culture that is "somewhere that you would want your kids to work." It is a simple statement with huge meaning. If people can leave everyday as a better person than when they arrived, then we have created an environment where everyone can maximize the return on their "work-life" investment. Living by this statement means that we can be constantly improving, stay competitive in our industry, and develop people to be more successful than they ever thought possible.

Investing in human capital is a circular system that requires both internal and external development and recognition. Our culture is the environment that allows this investment to prosper and benefit all who choose to embrace it. Our people are the ones who execute and lead us to our end results. The goal is to make sure that everyone is getting the returns that they expect and deserve so that they can truly enjoy the other 2/3<sup>rd</sup>'s of life that is really important.

Sincerely,

**Keri Welhart**  
President/Owner

**Kris Welhart**  
General Manager/Owner

## Keeping Life In Perspective:

### Healthy Work Life = Healthy Home Life

"You...you complete me."

-Jerry Maguire

The word "complete" is defined as "having all the necessary parts, elements or steps". For a business to be complete the following elements are needed...a product and/or service, supporting processes, a place to operate & people to run the show. Of these listed elements, the one that all others rely on is the PEOPLE. Finding "people" is not hard...but finding the right people is one of the most challenging tasks for a business. Therefore when the right ones are found, it is critical to retain them because they will serve as the lifeline of your operation. Employee retention is not rocket science...however it does take time, thought & a little relationship management.

Much like personal relationships, workplace relationships need nurturing and attention to be 100% complete. An easy way to accomplish a sense of completion is by providing recognition when recognition is due!

The importance of investing time and energy into recognizing human capital in today's workforce cannot be underestimated. Not only does it contribute to the ultimate success or failure of a company and all its employees, it plays a significant part in the success and failure of our society as a people. Let me explain. For most people, the '*check my job at the door*' mentality is not easy to achieve. Therefore, consciously, unconsciously or sub-consciously, whether we like it or not... there are sentiments from the workplace which are carried home and transferred directly into the home life. Like a domino effect, these sentiments will then affect moods, behaviors, actions and personal relationships. Because of this simple truth...employers have the opportunity to make the world a better and brighter place. Paying attention to even the smallest of accomplishments will inspire and motivate people to strive for excellence in their work and home lives.

There is a common myth that it is the sole purpose of the employee to strive to impress the employer and do so without reciprocation. However, in our ever changing culture the opposite is now becoming equally as critical when growing and fostering a successful business. The workforce of the 21<sup>st</sup> century desires recognition, opportunity for advancement and a strong sense of belonging to something bigger than themselves. This is why employee appreciation is becoming a new requirement for companies worldwide who intend to succeed in an unruly economy.

Friday March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2010 marked Employee Appreciation Day! In 1995 Bob Nelson, owner of Workman's Publishing created the occasion as a method to focus on employee recognition, for at least one day out of the year. Fifteen years later, companies all over the world are taking the acknowledgement of their employees seriously and are doing so with a wide array of programs.

Free lunches, office parties, thank you cards, performance awards, surprise celebrations...OH MY! These are some of the common ways in which companies recognize their employees for a job well done and it doesn't end there! [Click here](#) to get some great ideas for appreciating your employees or co-workers on a daily basis!

It's clear from these examples that appreciation can come in all

shapes and sizes, from simple "thank you" emails to week long celebrations. A company doesn't have to break the bank to show how much they truly value their employees.

### **Recognition as a Part of the Daily Workplace Regimen:**

#### A Day in the Life of a Stroconian

Yes, Stroconian. You read it correctly. This is the term that the employees at Stroco Manufacturing have given themselves. It's unified, strong and makes them a part of something bigger than themselves.

Rob Saunderson of Incentivemag has identified the "*Top 10 Idea Provokers for Employee Appreciation Day*" and Stroco Manufacturing has certainly embraced these ideas. I will highlight a few of the provokers and relate them to what employees of Stroco Manufacturing are exposed to on a daily basis.

**Listen Compassionately.** Stroco Manufacturing has adopted a family oriented culture and the importance of maintaining this culture is communicated every day. There is not a Monday that goes by that you don't hear the chitter chatter about everyone's weekends. Everyone makes it a point to listen to their fellow co-workers, not just about work related issues, but they get personal with each other. The break room is always filled with employees laughing and carrying on good conversation. A good friend of mine once described the workplace as, "a bunch of people walking into their separate caves, rolling a bolder over the entrance, then hiding and peeking out every so often to check and see if the other people have left yet." Well, that's not typical at all for Stroco Manufacturing. They are a family unit that has been conditioned to care about one another and meet those expectations on a daily basis.

**Offer Development Opportunities.** "You can play whatever role you want in this company." This is the mindset that has been established for Stroco employees. Things are always changing and people are allowed to grow into their talents. If something isn't working, Stroconians offer their opinions openly and honestly in the hopes that it will help improve current processes. As a small company, Stroconians wear a lot of different hats and tackle different responsibilities every day. New talents emerge on a regular basis and when applicable they are used for the betterment of the company. Stroco even plans to develop a Job Shadowing program! This will allow all current employees to spend one day shadowing other departments within the organization. Everyone will get the chance to really understand and appreciate what their fellow Stroconians are up to on a daily basis.

**Feeling Visible is Essential to Feeling Valued.** Gathered together in a Mardi Gras themed huddle all 17 employees, donned with bright colored beads (shirts mandatory) and plates full of sugar coated treats, anxiously await their first induction into...dun dun dun...quarterly meetings! The business development department has implemented a new way of sharing information with all employees by hosting themed quarterly meetings. This is a chance for the owners to share vital information with employees related to things directly affecting them. Some common topics include on time delivery, scrap amounts, quality system improvements, business objectives and any important news that needs to be discussed. This unified type of meeting shows Stroconians that regardless of what department they reside, they are still a critical asset to the company and that the business culture at Stroco is really one that is focused around the employees. Happy employees generate happy customers...and

there is cake involved!

**Gettin' Their Stroco On!** There are also a number of other ways in which Stroco appreciates its employees. These include, but are not limited to, an open door policy every day, donuts for breakfast, pizza or wings for lunch, a holiday Christmas party every year - they go all out! They celebrate Thanksgiving together with a home cooked meal, the Wall of Fame is located in a common area for all to see, a well kept decorative working space, monthly birthday celebrations and small gifts are given to employees that go above and beyond. Kind words are common among the employees; they never skimp on thanking others for a job well done and "Good Jobs!" are frequent and unabashed. Good deeds aren't restricted to the work place, either. Employees aren't hesitant to help one another move or provide rides if their cars break down.

Employee Appreciation Day was Friday March 5<sup>th</sup>, but imagine for a moment what it would be like if every day was employee appreciation day? One might imagine a workplace where employees enjoy coming to everyday. A workplace comprised of co-workers who work hard not just for themselves but also for each other. A healthy place where each individual feels they can make a difference and that their contribution is valued.

On a final note, I would like you to imagine that coming to work every morning felt like boarding the NASA X-15 and rocketing toward a destination of empowerment and possibilities. Can you picture it? Don't let the daily grind blur your vision. Remember that you would not be in orbit at your workplace destination without the help and hands of those individuals around you! Appreciate one another...appreciate yourself. Here's to a happy and healthy work life...and to that happiness transferring into your home life for you and all those around you!

## The March Plane:

### The Lockheed Martin F-35 Lightning II Model

#### Fun Facts



1. The F-35 is a stealthy 5th generation fighter plane.
2. The F-35 conducts air to air & air to ground combat missions simultaneously.
3. The first F-35 flight occurred in December of 2006.

4. The F-35 is a single engine plane manufactured in 3 variants:
  - Conventional take off & landing - U.S. Airforce
  - Carrier Variant - U.S. Navy
  - Short take off & vertical landing - U.S. Marine Corps/UK Royal Air Force & Royal Navy

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