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# BUSINESS



Laurie McRae, vice-president of human resources and organizational development with InSystems in Markham says a relaxed environment is encouraged at InSystems. Dress is informal and there are lounges and game tables where staff can relax and interact away from work stations.

STAFF PHOTO: MIKE BARRETT

Job satisfaction and recognition, not money are prime employee motivators, expert says

## BRINGING HOME THE BACON

BY JEFF MITCHELL  
Staff Writer

**D**o you really like your job? Or is it just a means of bringing home the bacon? Employees' opinions on those questions could mean the difference between a contented, productive workforce, or a dispirited and grumpy staff.

Workers today want careers that challenge and interest them, as well as the security of knowing they play a valuable role in their company's success — and that they and their contributions are valued, said John Walby of the Community Business Access Centre.

The CBAC, a non-profit organization associated with Human Resources Development Canada, helps new and existing businesses access information and services to aid in their development. The office has been involved in the startup of hundreds of companies in York Region.

Mr. Walby said making the effort to build an enthusiastic and moti-

vated workforce is as important as meeting customer demands and balancing the books each month.

Providing a suitable, comfortable work environment, rewarding success and keeping open lines of communication between management and staff are among the elements that contribute to a positive workforce, he said.

Building a strong and cohesive team begins during the hiring process, Mr. Walby said. It is important to find the person who possesses the necessary skills, knowledge and education, but that's not all: prospective employees should be screened for a positive mental attitude that will figure in their workplace suitability, adaptability and acceptability, he said.

"The really successful businesses are looking for that attitude," Mr. Walby said. "Not only do you need a person with the right skills; they have to fit the environment you've already got, because that can be upset quickly."

That quest for compatibility works both ways, according to

Laurie McRae, vice-president of human resources and organizational development with InSystems, a high-tech firm based in Markham.

*'Ultimately the single biggest measure of whether employees are productive and happy is company results ...'*

She said the hiring process should be a get-acquainted session between the company and a prospective worker, during which both parties define their goals and expectations.

"Our job in human resources is obviously to screen, but also to present InSystems as an attractive place to come and work," she said.

"We do everything in our power to set people up for success."

Part of the interview process involves candidates talking with

their peers, the people with whom they'll be working and interacting on a daily basis. After they're hired, new staffers go through an extensive orientation process that further familiarizes them with the company, as well as the industry and the clientele — InSystems deals extensively with the insurance and financial services industry, providing e-business solutions — to whom they'll be supplying services.

The goal is to provide workers with a clear definition of the company's goals and targets and the role employees play in helping achieve them, she said. That way, both staff and management have a clear gauge of workers' success.

"It's all about setting targets and measuring performance against goals," Ms McRae said. "In a sense, employees become self-managing."

Because a team approach is required, employees are encouraged to spend time getting to know one another. To that end, a relaxed environment is encouraged at InSystems. Dress is informal and

there are lounges and game tables where staff can relax and interact away from work stations.

"We're not running a boot camp. It's a free-flowing environment where people can be creative," Ms McRae said.

The company has developed what it calls a total reward policy, a variety of benefits that come with employment. Among them are competitive salaries and incentives; opportunities for training and career advancement; attractive group benefits and an environment in which staff is encouraged to socialize and bond. The result at InSystems is a workforce that is loyal, motivated and goal-oriented, she said.

"Ultimately the single biggest measure of whether employees are productive and happy is company results and InSystems has a long track record of success," Ms McRae said.

Another telling statistic, she said,

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Email: Pat@PatRobinson.com Web: www.PatRobinson.com



MARKVILLE  
SECONDARY SCHOOL

Grade 8 Information Night  
Wednesday, February 13, 2002

7:00 - 9:00 pm

Grade 10 & 11 Information Night  
Thursday, February 21, 2002

7:00 - 9:00 pm

This evening will be of special interest to  
parents and students who live in the  
Markville attendance area.

### "A Journey to Kabul"

Doug Pritchard of Christian Peacemaker Teams Toronto explores the role of non-violent action in Afghanistan & Pakistan after his recent visit to that region, at the **Café Maison** in the Cornell community of Markham 7:30 p.m. on **Wed., Feb. 13**. Sponsored by Rouge Valley Mennonite Church