

What Does the â??All-Inâ?• Employee Look Like?

Description

I heard a story this week from someone who attended a high school awards ceremony where they gave an â??All-Inâ?• Award. It was given to the senior who consistently exuded positivity, enthusiasm, and a willingness to jump in and help when needed. The presenter mentioned that this person brought her â??Aâ?• game even when her idea was not the one the team decided to go with. This student had an uncanny ability to get things across the finish line.

Many of you probably already provide something similar to an â??All-Inâ?• Award to recognize employees. It seems to be a great way to combat negativity and skepticism, which are highly contagious. When these kinds of attitudes get a foothold, theyâ??re really harmful to workplace relationships. Theyâ??re the antithesis of engagement, teamwork, collaboration, helpfulnessâ??all the things you want your culture to encourage.

What gets recognized gets repeated. The idea is to shine a spotlight on employees who exhibit the behaviors you want to see more of. The more you give the award the betterâ??every month might be a good start, or you might even want to go for once a week if you have a lot of employees. You can decide the frequency thatâ??s right for your company.

The award doesnâ??t need to be limited to one person. In fact, you want to have as many â??All-Insâ?• as possible. You might do an â??All-Inâ?• Team Award as well. The goal is to have a whole organization thatâ??s â??All-In.â?•

The point is that emphasizing the right behaviors over and over goes a long way toward creating an â??All-Inâ?• culture. This is the kind of culture high performers are drawn to because it enables them to do their best work. This will give you an edge in attracting and retaining good talent.

Itâ??s helpful to clarify what an â??All-Inâ?• employee looks like. And every time you give an award, spell out what the person or team did or regularly does to get chosen. Here are some of the traits that come to mind:

- â??All-Inâ?• employees are team players, not rugged individualists. They arenâ??t hung up on being the winner or getting the credit. If their idea isnâ??t chosen, theyâ??re okay with it. They

jump in and help anyway.
- They assume good intentions rather than expecting the worst and reacting with suspicion or defensiveness.
- They have an owner mindset. They anticipate potential problems, bring solutions to existing ones, and do what it takes to get the job done well.
- They show up with optimism. They donâ??t complain or spread negativity. They tend to believe it *can*be done (and theyâ??re usually right).
- They donâ??t worry about the power gradient. They leave titles at the door and focus on getting the job done right.
- Theyâ??re committed to learning. They know it will make them better, and they treat it like a lifelong job.
- They are open to feedback (even if itâ??s not what they want to hear). They are also willing to give feedback (even when itâ??s hard).
- When they make a mistake, they admit it. They apologize when they need to. Their focus is always on how to improve themselves, their behaviors, or their work process to prevent the misstep from happening again in the future.
- They practice empathy. Theyâ??re able to put themselves in othersâ?? shoes, which means they know when people need a word of comfort, a helping hand, or an attitude of grace.
- They meet people where they are.
- They show love and respect to the people they work with.
- They donâ??t perpetuate workplace drama. They donâ??t gossip or exclude or look for reasons to be angry with coworkers. Instead, they seek to defuse situations and restore harmony.
- They are goal-oriented. They thrive on challenging themselves.
- They donâ??t make excuses. They focus on getting things done on time and well.
- Theyâ??re natural innovators. Theyâ??re always looking for a better way. When they have a bright idea or a best practice, they willingly share it with others.
- They have a generosity of spirit. They pass along compliments, share credit, and never miss a chance to lift up someone else.

Now, this list might make you think, *No one is THAT perfect*. Itâ??s true. We are all works in progress. We all have flaws and moments of weakness. But when we pay attention and really get to know our people, we can usually identify those who are great employees most of the time.

It always pays to accentuate, celebrate, and perpetuate the positive. It creates the kind of energy and engagement we need to stay at the top of our game even in challenging times. The more we recognize and reward our â??All-Inâ?• people, the more of them we createâ??and the more likely we are to keep growing and getting better together.

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