Why You Should Encourage a â??Get MAD Todayâ?• Program with Employees

Description

All employees make a difference in the lives of others. In certain fields, this is easy to see, just by the nature of the job. But the truth is, every leader and employee in every industry makes a difference in the lives of coworkers, customers, or both. All jobs are potentially meaningful. Itâ??s up to leaders to help employees understand the difference they make.
When employees feel like they are making a real difference, it can be a huge motivator for them. It makes their work less transactional, and they are far more willing to engage and become high performers. When employees find their work more fulfilling, it helps prevent stress and burnout.
Weâ??ve all had a hard year. People really want to feel good again! And helping employees connect to the difference they make is a great way to achieve that goal. As leaders, here are some foundational things we can focus on to build a culture that celebrates making a difference.
1. Get everyone thinking about whatâ??s right, not whatâ??s wrong.
2. Reward and recognize people for the things they do that make a difference.
3. Engage others in looking for and recognizing the difference-makers.
The goal is to get people in the habit of noticing the difference they make. Really infuse it into your companyâ??s culture. Over the years, Iâ??ve seen companies come up with really creative ways to do this. Here is an example that hits all three of the above items:
I was invited to a food service ceremony at a healthcare organization. They did something really catchy. They had an initiative called â??Get MAD Today.â?• The â??MADâ?• stood for â??Make a Difference.â?• The way it worked was they set aside a week where employees were supposed to identify coworkers who really made a difference. They would write each personâ??s name on a piece of paper, along with a description of what they did that made such a difference, and put it in a big jar.
It didnâ??t have to be a food service employee. They could write down the name of a nurse or a transporter or a doctor. And hereâ??s the kicker: They also put their own name on the paper before they put it in the jar. They were told that at the ceremony names would be drawn and the winners would get a prize. The more people you recognized, the more chances you would have of winning. So all these people would show up to see the names being drawn. Once the names were drawn, the entries were put up on a board for everyone to see. Note they recognized the difference-maker AND the person who noticed the difference-maker and submitted an entry for the contest. This not only celebrated those making a difference but helped hardwire the habit of recognizing and complimenting it! This was a double win!
I love this concept because it really helps people to recognize the good that exists all around them instead of automatically focusing on what isnâ??t so good. It can create a cultural shift toward positivity.

An environment thatâ??s mostly positive makes people happy, engaged, and productive.
It also creates a fun way to reward and recognize people for the good things they do. Recognized behavior gets repeated.
Finally, ideas like â??Get MAD Todayâ?• get people focused on harvesting and sharing stories that showcase all the ways they make a difference. This really is one of the best things you can do for your culture. Iâ??m a big believer in the power of storytelling. Stories connect to the heartstrings and make things â??realâ?• for the listener.
This is just one idea for keeping people aware of the difference they make. See if you can come up with others. Everyone craves that sense of meaning and purpose. Itâ??s the leaderâ??s job to make sure they stay connected to it. This is what keeps people going in the good times, but especially in the tough times. When we know our work makes a difference, we can get through anything.

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Author
quint-studer