

June 11, 2013

What Makes Someone a Great Employee?

I got a little choked up last week when I visited a New Brighton nursing home and saw one of our job seekers in action. Jaye has been working as a receptionist there since mid-March. This nursing home is busy, really busy. In the 30 minutes I was there, I bet 20 people came to the front desk seeking directions, room numbers, or people. Jaye deftly handled them all; including prepping a mailing, answering the phone, and responding to employee requests.

She did it all with kindness and genuine compassion for the people with whom she was interacting.

I knew she would be a great employee for someone. But like so many of our job seekers, it's hard to convey these personal qualities, on paper or even in a job interview, that make someone not just capable, but truly an asset to the organization.

Hiring good people is hard. No manager really knows if a new person is the "right fit" until after they're hired and working. In the seven months I worked with Jaye, I wanted to be able to go up to someone and say, "This is the person you need. We've worked together, and I know!" Almost no one is willing to take such a chance. In the work world, we are blindly committed to the idea that "the most qualified" person "on paper" is the person who deserves the job.



Hard at work....

It's only later that we discover that it's the intangibles...attitude, work ethic, loyalty...that make someone a truly great employee.

Most of Daily Work's job seekers don't look good on paper; they have been out of work, sometimes for years. They don't have all the skills they need; they might have a thick accent, or they're too young or too old. I can tell you that many of them have been through great personal strife, and like Jaye, they keep their good attitude, and they work hard and keep trying. These are the people employers **should** review more carefully, because in many jobs, it's a lot harder to teach the intangibles than it is the hard skills.

One of my dreams for Daily Work is that one day, we have strong enough relationships with employers that when we say "Trust me, I know" ...they listen.

You can help more people like Jaye get back to work. Daily Work is driven primarily by volunteer power. And we have incredible opportunities listed below.

3 Ways YOU Can Make a Difference

First: Daily Work is driven primarily by volunteer power. Here are some opportunities to give back:

- Volunteer job coaches (one year commitment)
- Computer coach to provide one-to-one instruction
- Expert speakers for our new job club
- Volunteers to serve on our board of directors, fundraising or program committees
- Connections to potential employers for job seekers
- Connections to HR people who can give us advice or training.

Second: If you are unable to donate time, we are also seeking in-kind donations as well. Perhaps you have some of these items just laying around and wish to give them new life, or you could add them to your next shopping trip.

- Forever Stamps
- Copy paper
- New black and blue pens
- Sealed breakfast or lunch snacks for job seekers
- Bottled water
- \$5 gift cards to Caribou, Target, Subway, Office Max or wherever \$5 matters.
- Small, wireless printer
- Locking file cabinet(s)
- Ergonomic office chairs
- Water cooler with hot and cold water
- Industrial coffee maker with hot water

Finally, if you are unable to donate your time, you can always donate financially. To donate, visit <http://givemn.razoo.com/story/Daily-Work>. For as little as \$50 dollars, you could provide copier services to job seekers for copying resumes, informational resources and more!

Please call Julie at [\(651\) 204-3043](tel:6512043043) or e-mail her at julie@daily-work.org, if you are interested in donating your expertise, time, or helpful items. Help us build our dreams to help others realize theirs!

Perspectives on Job Seeking

In the past few weeks, an intern, an employee, and a volunteer wrote blogs which discuss the job seeking process.

- Tiffany Xiong, an intern at Daily Work, provides in her blog, "Failing Meaningfully" encouragement to the struggling job seeker: <http://daily-work.org/failing-meaningfully/>
- Ethan Williams, an employee at Daily Work, narrates his own struggle as a job seeker in "I Know What You Are Going Through." Through wit and cynicism, Ethan found himself and his way to Daily Work. Read more at: <http://daily-work.org/i-know-what-you-are-going-through/>
- Lubna Khatoon, a volunteer at Daily Work, got a job! In her blog, "I GOT THE JOB," Lubna provides suggestions and perspectives from a former job seeker. <http://daily-work.org/i-got-the-job-by-lubna-khatoon/>

These three amazing people provide encouragement, tips, and humor as they meander the job seeker world. This is what makes Daily Work so unique, we know how to help because we have all been there or are job seekers ourselves.

If you want to share your knowledge and suggestions as a job seeker, past or present, consider volunteering your time and point of view by calling Julie at [\(651\) 204-3043](tel:6512043043) or e-mailing her at julie@daily-work.org.