NEW 2015 MINNESOTA PLUMBING CODE

Price: $98.00  Member price: $78.40

The new Minnesota Plumbing Code took effect January 23, 2016. The new code is substantially different from the existing plumbing code and is worth owning in order to install to the new provisions.

Some of the updates to the Minnesota Plumbing Code include:
- Completely new layout
- All Shower Drains must be 2"
- All Residential Dishwashers must have Air Gap fitting mounted above counter
- Water Heater relief valves cannot discharge into the water heater pan
- All testable backflow assemblies must be tested annually including Double Check Valve and Pressure Vacuum Breaker assemblies
- Single Wall Heat Exchangers are now allowed
- Flexible water heater connectors are now allowed
- Push fit now allowed on CPVC, PEX and copper
- Drain, Waste, Vent, and Water sizing has changed
- Third party product certification required per the product standards listed in Chapter 14

As Chapter 4714 of the Minnesota State Building Code this is being enforced as law effective January 23, 2016.
Thank You
Golf Extravaganza Was a Success!

This year’s MN PHCC Golf Extravaganza was a complete success! Our amazing golf event planning committee was Kelly Michel from Michel Sales, Mike Kirsch from Schu Marketing Associates, Bill Cutter from Rep Rite Burk & Associates and Jessica Bartram from IntrinXec Management Inc.

On behalf of the MN PHCC Board of Directors, I would like to personally thank this fine lady and these fine gentlemen for their outstanding efforts to organize this tremendous event. We budgeted to host 100 golfers and we ended up with 140! We had great prizes and great proxy games. Overall it was a great day on the TPC Twin Cities golf course, host of the 3M Championship since 2001.

I would also like to thank the TPC Twin Cities course staff. They didn't miss a beat. The food was excellent and the service was outstanding.

Thank you also to all of our fine sponsors that made this event possible! If you missed this year's outing, be sure to mark your calendars early for next year so that you will not miss such a premiere event!

UPDATE FROM THE BOARDROOM:
Your Board will meet in November for our quarterly meeting – updates to follow in December. A Strategic Planning Session also will be held in November – more to follow in December.

Membership: Our plumbing CE classes are in full swing. Please check our website, www.mnphcc.org, for upcoming CE times and locations and also for fall training classes with our different Associate members and industry partners.

Finance: Wrapping up the third quarter of 2016, your MN PHCC association is solidly operating in the black, thanks to all of your support. From our industry partners, to our Associate members who sponsor our different events, to our contractor members that realize the enormous benefits of being a PHCC member and continue to pay their membership dues. Thank you! It is an exciting time in this new chapter of the MN PHCC!

Events: Mark your calendar for the MN PHCC's 121st Annual Convention & Vendor Show Feb. 8 – 10, 2017, at the Minneapolis Marriott Northwest.

THANK YOU TO OUR ANNUAL SPONSORS

Jeremy Carlson is the MN PHCC president. He can be reached at jeremy@carlson duluth.com.
We remain busy here at MN PHCC headquarters! Here’s an update on some key items that we have been working on.

**Education, Medical Gas & Plumbing CE Classes**

There are dozens of educational opportunities outlined on our event calendar on our website at www.mnphcc.org, including, but not limited to:

- Only ONE four-hour medical gas continuing education class is scheduled for Friday, Nov. 18 – sign up TODAY if your certificate is expiring!
- MN PHCC member discounts on classes through Auer Steel and Johnstone Supply!
- Plumbing CE classes are scheduled in Fargo, Bloomington and Grand Rapids. Master Plumber licenses expire at the end of the year, so be sure you have your credits in!

**Strategic Planning**

The MN PHCC Board of Directors is meeting next month to identify the direction that the association will take during the next approximately 18 months. Details will be unveiled at the Annual Convention.

**2017 Convention & Vendor Show**

The 121st Annual Convention & Vendor Show is taking place Wednesday – Friday, Feb. 8 - 10, 2017, at the Minneapolis Marriott Northwest. We have some incredible sessions lined up, as well as roundtable discussions to allow you an opportunity to collaborate with your industry colleagues. Attendee and exhibitor registration will be launched in December, and details will be in the December issue of the *Contractor* and on our website. Stay tuned and we look forward to seeing you in February!

Jessica A. Bartram is the executive manager for MN PHCC. She can be reached at jbartram@intrinxec.com.

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**BOLD MEETS GUARANTEES**

**DSG IS MINNESOTA’S NEWEST KOHLER® DISTRIBUTOR**

Dakota Supply Group is proud to be the newest KOHLER® distributor in Minnesota as we bring together BOLD plumbing products with our distinctive Customer Service Guarantees.

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information@dsginc.biz | www.dakotasupplygroup.com
Geothermal Tax Credit Set to Expire

A 30 percent tax credit for geothermal heat pumps is set to expire at the end of this year.

PHCC - National will participate in a coalition geared to support legislation (H.R. 5167) that in essence would extend the credit until 2021. The tax credit will be a component of the overall budget (omnibus) talks when Congress goes back into session in mid-November. Remember, Congress recently passed a continuing resolution to keep the government funded until Dec. 9, and must pass another resolution or pass a more comprehensive budget (omnibus) past that date. Stay tuned for more details.

Celebrate National Apprenticeship Week

From Nov. 14 - 20, the Department of Labor will join industry, education and workforce leaders across the country to celebrate the second annual National Apprenticeship Week.

President Barack Obama proclaimed the week of Nov. 2, 2015, as the first Annual National Apprenticeship Week, also referred to as NAW. Across the nation through over 300 events in 47 states, communities large and small recognized the important role apprentices play in offering employers an opportunity to develop a highly-skilled workforce to help grow their business, and career seekers the chance to earn a salary while learning the skills necessary to succeed.

PHCC—National Association and PHCC Educational Foundation encourage members and chapters to participate in this event. As an ApprenticeshipUSA leader, the PHCC Educational Foundation encourages you to do your part in promoting the value of apprenticeship training. It’s the perfect time to hold an open house at your business, participate in a career fair, organize a skills competition, and reach out to prospective workers through blogs and/or social media.

For more information, visit: www.dol.gov/apprenticeship/NAW/.

Upcoming Industry Events

Look for more events and information on our website at www.mnphcc.org

NATE Gas Heat Certification
DATE: TUESDAY, NOV. 15
LOCATION: JOHNSTONE SUPPLY
1401 W. 94TH ST.
BLOOMINGTON, MN
MN PHCC members receive a discount!
For more information: www.mnphcc.org

ASSE 6010 Medical Gas Installer RE-Certification Course
DATE: FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 18
LOCATION: EAGAN COMMUNITY CENTER
1501 CENTRAL PKWY
EAGAN, MN
MN PHCC members receive a discount!
For more information: www.mnphcc.org

EPA Certification
DATE: TUESDAY, NOV. 22
LOCATION: JOHNSTONE SUPPLY
1401 W. 94TH ST.
BLOOMINGTON, MN
MN PHCC members receive a discount!
For more information: www.mnphcc.org

Lead Risk Assessor Refresher Training
DATE: THURSDAY, DEC. 1
LOCATION: MIDWEST ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTING, LLC
2520 COON RAPIDS BLVD., SUITE 250
COON RAPIDS, MN 55433
MN PHCC members receive a discount!
For more information: www.mnphcc.org
Three generations of workers form most of the modern-day workforce:

- Baby Boomers: members born 1946 - 1964 who are 52 - 70 years old;
- Generation X: members born 1965 - 1980 who are 36 - 51 years old;

Right now, Boomers make up approximately 40 percent of the workforce, Gen Xers 30 percent, and Millennials 25 percent.

That distribution will shift as more Boomers leave the workforce and more Millennials enter it. In two years, Gen Xers and Millennials will constitute most of the workforce. By 2020 it will be comprised of approximately 50 percent Millennials, 25 percent Gen Xers and 25 percent Boomers.

As these shifts occur, it’s important to recognize differences between the generations and use that knowledge to shape your management style so that you can increase your business' success and provide for the future.

**GENERATIONAL MYTHS**

The first step to managing different generations is letting go of any misperceptions about them. Here are a few common myths that one generation might believe about another.

- **Gen Xers and Millennials aren’t motivated and are unwilling to work hard.** Millennials and Gen Xers may not want to work the long hours that are more characteristic of Boomers because they crave work-life balance. But they’re willing to work hard and put in more hours in a flexible schedule to fit in that work. They also want to take on challenges and develop their skills.

- **Millennials want a trophy for everything.** The common refrain is that Millennials are entitled and want a participation trophy for every little success. In reality, Gen Xers are more likely to think that everyone on a successful team should be rewarded. And both generations prefer a manager they can trust over a manager who recognizes accomplishments (although both should be part of the package).

- **Boomers don’t understand new technology; Millennials want everything to be digital.** Something all employees share is a desire to learn. Millennials might prefer more informal communications to be digital, but for discussions of career goals and performance and training, they prefer meeting face to face with their manager.
It can be easy to fall into those traps. Question your assumptions when presented with employees of different generations and determine their strengths instead.

**GENERATIONAL REALITIES**

Keep in mind that workers of all generations share a desire for trustworthy leaders, opportunities to learn, respect and consistent feedback, while disliking change. Some of those values might just manifest differently. More knowledge about the generations can suggest what employees in each can bring to the table and how best to manage them.

- **Boomers** tend to see hard work as the way to advance; have a love-hate relationship with authority; prioritize work over personal life; and to be competitive.
- **Gen Xers** tend to see efficiency as the way to advance; be self-directed; be skeptical of rules; have strong technical skills; and crave work-life balance.
- **Millennials** tend to see good ideas as the way to advance; work well in teams; want to help create the rules; want to help create the rules; and be adept with technology.

A reminder: These characteristics shouldn’t be used to make generalizations about the generations, but as tools.

**HOW TO MANAGE THE GENERATIONS**

Embrace those differences when shaping how to best lead your employees. Below are a few areas for application.

**Training:** Regular educational and training opportunities benefit all employees, but different generations may embrace different delivery styles. Baby Boomers might prefer more traditional methods like PowerPoint presentations and handbooks that have characterized the workplace for years. Millennials and Gen Xers might prefer more interactive and technology-based learning methods. Also, Millennials are motivated by special assignments that fall outside their job description.

**Mentoring:** If possible, cross-generational mentoring can be a boon. You can assess a younger employee’s needs and goals and match the employee with a more experienced worker. Older workers can help younger workers develop their skills in the field, as well as pass on institutional knowledge. Younger workers can offer a fresh perspective and share any new technical skills. Younger workers appreciate collaboration and are more likely to want to learn from those older than they are, rather than their peers, who may represent competition.

Another benefit of mentorship is that as Boomers retire, the business will retain institutional knowledge and crucial skills.

**Benefits and Hours:** Often, a higher paycheck isn’t the number one priority for workers. If possible, offering more flexible work schedules can be beneficial for each generation for different reasons. Boomers might stay on longer if they’re able to dial back hours but still work. Millennials and Gen Xers could get more of the work-life balance they crave.

Also if possible, offer Boomers full healthcare benefits even if they work part time. That can serve as a bridge to retirement for them, and you’d be more likely to retain these employees. Gen Xers and Millennials are more skeptical that Social Security will cover their needs at retirement, so they might value a 401(k) plan.

**Reward Systems:** Boomers might prefer the more traditional monetary reward or public recognition of success. Gen Xers might appreciate simple recognition, whether publicly or through an email, as well as time off. Millennials might also prefer the time off or validation through increased responsibility and training. Millennials appreciate frequent evaluations.

**Performance Management:** In general, supervisors who do performance evaluations should consider employees individually, taking their strengths and weaknesses into account – some of which may be tied to their respective generation. Having frequent informal and formal discussions with employees can best help you tailor your evaluations and help employees both improve and share their needs. Don’t assume anything about an employee based on their generation, but keep in mind what the individual might want.

**Communication:** Facilitate open communication, through strategies such as frequent discussions individually with employees. Employees will be more likely to share ideas, concerns and their needs. Older workers will feel more like partners, and younger workers will see this as further collaboration.

Also, don’t apply the same communication style to every employee. Boomers might prefer to communicate by phone or in person. Millennials have grown up in a more communication-heavy environment. More informal communications can take place digitally, but Millennials do tend to prefer to set goals and receive feedback in person. Mixing and matching communication styles can better ensure that you’re on the same page with all your employees.

**EMPLOYEES AS INDIVIDUALS**

In the end, all this boils down to considering employees as individuals. Each employee might be at a different stage in life – about to retire, new to parenthood, or just entering the workforce. The myths discussed in this article don’t apply, and some of the characteristics may not be relevant to every single employee of a generation. Keep potential differences and how they can add to (rather than subtract from) your business in mind, but then get to know your employees. Learning what individual employees might want and need and tailoring your management style accordingly will better ensure that your business runs smoothly into the future.
Before I attended the Disney Leadership Institute, I never thought much about culture. I didn’t care much about it. I was wrong.

Like many company leaders, I thought culture just sort of happened. It was what it was. The people at Disney showed me how misguided I was.

A company’s culture is really just shared values. These are the values of owners, leaders and the rest of the team. A value, such as “honesty,” results in certain behaviors. Value honesty and you will not lie or try to deceive a customer. Value honesty and you will not cheat your employer. Value honesty and you will be upfront with those you work with (though you can still be tactful). When one values honesty, certain behaviors are expected.

Behaviors are actions. From actions, come results. Working backwards, behaviors drive results. Since values imply certain behaviors, values also drive results. Culture, as the collection of shared values, must also drive results.

When the people at Disney explained culture this way, its importance seemed obvious to me. I mentally starting kicking myself. If culture is something you just let happen, then your company’s results are also something that just sort of happens. If you are blessed with a good culture, you can expect good results. If the culture gets corrosive, results will suffer accordingly.

The unstated key is the values must be “shared.” When values are not shared, the culture is disjointed. It appears that people are working at cross purposes. Nothing is more frustrating for a leader than leading people with values inconsistent with your own. If you find yourself complaining about employees and wondering why the heck one of them did something or what was another one thinking, then your values are probably not in sync.

What can you do about it? Start by identifying the values you want within your company. This is not a solo process. Involve your leadership team. In the end, though, you do need to agree with the values selected.

Once the values have been identified, define accompanying behaviors. Especially for the most important values, think of hypothetical situations that reveal desired behaviors. Bring up the hypotheticals during interviews. For example, you might ask a prospective hire to recall a time when he was given too much change. What did you do? If he cannot think of a time, create a situation. Ask, “If you’re at a local convenience store that’s known for its high prices and realize after you leave that the clerk gave you a quarter too much, what would you do?” “What if it was a dollar?” “Ten dollars?”

Culture is too important to just let it happen. It should be designed. It is designed by identifying the shared values for the company and hiring to those values by doing your best to verify
The unstated key is the values must be “shared.” When values are not shared, the culture is disjointed. It appears that people are working at cross purposes.

candidate behaviors that are consistent with the values. When this happens, less management is required. You will not need to watch people if they are governed by the right value set.

After returning from the Disney Leadership Institute, the Service Roundtable’s leadership team identified our corporate values during our annual planning retreat. Here they are …

Service Nation Values: These are the 12 values of Service Nation. They are shared values of our team. They represent our culture. They are a requirement to be one of our teammates.

Integrity: We do the right thing. We do the right thing naturally, without being told to do it.

Honesty: We tell the truth. We do not lie, cheat, steal or tolerate those who do.

Creativity: We make new stuff. We build. We add things to the world that did not previously exist.

Innovation: We find ways to do things better. We are adept at applying new technology and utilizing existing technology in new ways. We revolutionize.

Community: We enable relationships. We create environments where relationship building thrives.

Profitability: We make money for ourselves and help others make money for themselves.

Growth: We improve year after year. We improve as a business. We improve as individuals.

Fun: We smell the coffee … and the roses … and the wine. We make business enjoyable. That’s why jerks need not apply.

Self-Direction: We take initiative. We are self-starters who see problems and fix them, who see opportunities and exploit them.

Service: We put others first.

Results: We get the job done.

Flexibility: We work as a team to balance the demands of work and life.

It was not an easy process to settle on these. It required several iterations. Once they proved acceptable to everyone, we made posters and placed them around the office. Each month we pass out a “value card” that stresses one value.

The process was healthy for us. It will be healthy for you. Moreover, once your values are identified and your culture is designed, you will find your company becoming more harmonious, more nimble and more efficient. It’s the difference between a crew boat where everyone is pulling oars at their rhythm and one where the rowers are in sync.

Matt Michel is the Chief Executive Officer, The Service Roundtable. This article was reprinted with permission from ContractingBusiness.com.
Heating Up
Winter Sales for

Let CenterPoint Energy’s water heater rebate program warm up your winter sales with valuable customer rebates and sales incentives for you.

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  - $100 for ENERGY STAR® qualified with ≥ .67 EF
- Tankless water heaters
  - Up to $250 for ≥ .82-.89 EF
  - Up to $350 for ENERGY STAR® qualified with ≥ .90 EF
- Indirect storage tank water heater
  - $200 rebate when installed with 91% AFUE or greater condensing boiler

For more information and to submit residential rebate applications online, visit CenterPointEnergy.com/RebateScoop.

Commercial rebate offering
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  - ≥ 88% thermal efficiency

Commercial contact
David Poretti
612-321-4386 or 800-234-5800 ext.4386
David.Poretti@CenterPointEnergy.com

For additional information about commercial rebates and for fill-and-print rebate applications, visit CenterPointEnergy.com/CommercialTradeAlly.

Increase your profit with dealer incentives
- Get cash back for every rebate processed listing your company as dealer:
  - $15 – Residential water heaters
  - $25 – Commercial water heaters

ONLY A FEW WEEKS LEFT!
Send your completed 2016 rebate applications by Dec. 31st.
Include your six-digit dealer ID for faster rebate and incentive payments.
Residential rebate offerings

Tank water heaters
- $70 for .62-.63 EF
- $85 for .64-.66 EF
- $100 for ENERGY STAR® qualified with ≥.67 EF

Tankless water heaters
- Up to $250 for .82-.89 EF
- Up to $350 for ENERGY STAR® qualified with ≥.90 EF

Indirect storage tank water heater
- $200 rebate when installed with 91% AFUE or greater condensing boiler

For more information and to submit residential rebate applications online, visit CenterPointEnergy.com/RebateScoop.

Commercial rebate offering

$200 rebate per 100,000 Btu input natural gas water heater; ≥88% thermal efficiency

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Cultural Shift
Movement Needed for Skilled Tradespeople

Whether we are trying to make America “Stronger Together” or “Make America Great Again,” there exists a national catastrophe that requires nothing short of a national cultural pivot: something akin to Theodore Roosevelt’s “Square Deal” or Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s “New Deal.” In both cases, a national crisis required a transformational shift in national priorities to protect the health and safety of the American people. As was true in 1910 and in 1933, we now need a national movement to attract and educate enough skilled tradespeople to fix the declining economic health of the construction trades industry and crumbling infrastructure.

While the narrative is slowly changing from “college readiness” to “career readiness,” we have to overcome what has been a cultural norm in which “for two or three generations, the focus has been to go to college, get a degree and in doing so you will ensure a brighter future with more access to employment.” (Joshua Wright, “America’s Skilled Trades Dilemma: Shortages Loom as Most-In-Demand Group of Workers Ages,” 2013)

However, according to the Association for Career & Technical Education (ACTE), 85 percent of the jobs in America do not require a college degree, but do require post-high school training. Tangentially, “according to a study from the Brookings Institution … the ‘volume and frequency of student loans increased significantly’ from 2002 to 2012, with loans spiking 77 percent. The price tag for attending even an in-state, public, four-year college leapt by nearly 32 percent in the same period.” (Leah McGrath Goodman, “Millennial College Graduates: Young, Educated, Jobless,” 2015). Anthony Carnevale, a director and research professor for Georgetown University’s Center on Education and the Workforce notes that “we have a debate raging in this country right now over whether universities are supposed to teach for enlightenment or to prepare students for the job market.” (Goodman, 2015)

The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that construction is projected to add 790,400 jobs by 2024. The U.S. Department of Labor estimates that the plumbing, heating and cooling industry will need 21 percent more plumbing and HVAC technicians respectively by 2022 and that does not take in account replacing retiring Baby Boomers! That represents 138,000 jobs available over the next six years. This need only grows when “(adding additional workers) needed by the manufacturers of plumbing products, the engineers needed to design those products and plumbing infrastructure systems.” (Gerry Kennedy, Ph.D., EVP Emeritus, PHCC).

“As reported by NPR in October, 2.1 trillion gallons of drinking water are lost in the U.S. each year due to decaying, faltering, decrepit infrastructure.” (J. D. Heyes, “Broken Water Main Floods Streets of Drought-Parched Los Angeles; Plumbing Keeps Breaking as Cities Devolve to Third-World Status,” 2015) “A study by the American Water Works Association estimates that it will cost $1 trillion just to repair water pipes. A 2011 study by the Urban Land Institute said another $2 trillion is needed to repair and upgrade America’s network of roads and bridges.”

Much of these realities are hard to reconcile given the dichotomy between the high unemployment rate of college graduates, climbing tuition rates, the high number of available skilled-trade jobs that go unfilled and the desperate need to fix a decaying infrastructure that threatens the health and safety of our citizens. TV personality Mike Rowe expressed in an interview with TheBlaze TV’s Andrew Wilkow that, “We’re lending money we don’t have, to kids who will never be able to pay it back, for jobs that no longer exist … “That’s crazy, right?”

We need a movement: a cultural shift in which parents, guidance counselors and others do not view vocational skilled-trades education/apprenticeships as a second option to going to college. With the right policy reforms and resetting national priorities, skilled-trade education can lead to additional education and career advancement. The DOL reported on Sept. 21, 2016, that “Today, 91 percent of apprentices remain employed after completing their programs, with average annual starting wages above $50,000. The return on investment for employers is substantial, as studies indicate that for every dollar spent on apprenticeship, employers receive average of $1.47 return in increased productivity.”

We need to re-establish vocational education that was dismantled in much of the country. We need to achieve greater diversity within the skilled-trades industries to include more women, minorities and at-risk youths: all seeking that same level of importance and respect. We must overcome stereotypes and understand that as Rowe points out, “Our civilization is held together by people who keep the lights on, pipe connected, and who keep it warm in the winter and cold in the summer … Our relationship with these people is critical and that part of our workforce is fundamental to society ...” (Candace Roulo, “Mike Rowe Joins Home Services Companies to Promote Skilled Trades,” 2015)

Michael R. Copp is the Executive Vice President of the PHCC - National. This article was reprinted with permission.
APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS & REQUIREMENTS

Complete rules and requirements can be found at www.mnphcc.org/auxiliary-scholarship-rules.

The following items must be provided in their entirety. Incomplete or late submissions will not be considered.

1. Completed application
2. A picture of yourself that would be used for publication should you be awarded with a scholarship
3. A letter identifying your career goals, passions and other information you would like us to know about you
4. Choose a minimum of two of the following:
   • A letter of recommendation from a school staff member
   • A letter from a person, not related to you, who knows you personally, attesting to character and relating other pertinent information
   • A list of community activities, Scouts, volunteer programs etc.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE

Submissions must be postmarked on or before Monday, January 9, 2017.

Send your completed application and all other required material to:

Jenni Carlson
MN PHCC Auxiliary
435 Rustwood Lane
Duluth, MN 55804

QUESTIONS

Regarding the application process can be sent to angiephcc@msn.com.

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name:
Address:
City: State: Zip:
Phone: Email:

PARENT(S)/GUARDIAN(S) CONTACT INFORMATION (if applicant is under 18)

Name:
Address:
City: State: Zip:
Phone: Email:

NAME OF MN PHCC AUXILIARY SPONSOR

Sponsor must be a MN PHCC Auxiliary member in good standing for at least the past two years and meet the sponsor requirements as described on the rules website.

Name:
Address:
City: State: Zip:
Phone: Email:

Signature of Member:

UNDERGRADUATE / TRADE SCHOOL INFORMATION

Name of undergraduate/trade school you will be attending or are currently enrolled at:

Address:
City: State: Zip:

Dean / Advisor’s Name: Enrollment Date: Antic. Grad. Date:

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE ABOVE IS TRUE AND ACCURATE

Applicant's Signature:

Parent/Guardian Signature: (if applicant is under 18)
IF ONLY ...
A subtle hint of “if only” lurks just beneath the surface for those who desire to see all generations empowered beyond the stereotypes.
If only technology was not a burden for older generations, but a vital resource.
If only young people learned to master the social business savvy of older generations.
If only it were possible to empower both the young and the old at the same time to become more productive, engaged and innovative in the workplace … you can probably guess where I am going next … this is possible! And not in 20 years from now after painstakingly laying groundwork for organizational reform - but now - in simple, mutually beneficial “reverse mentoring” relationships.

A SIMPLE SOLUTION
Reverse mentoring is exactly what it sounds like. Traditional mentoring turned on its head. It is a form of employee development in which a more experienced employee actively seeks the counsel of an employee with less overall experience but with a fresh perspectives and skill sets. As a Millennial leader, this concept of reverse mentoring is exciting! Getting the opportunity to meet with senior leaders in my organization who are not only interested in what I have to say, but are invested in implementing the information I share is a powerful tool for building loyalty and inspiring me to stay where I am valued. Not to mention teaching the execs a thing or two.
Reverse mentoring also:
• Helps to engage, retain and promote younger talent. It creates a two-way conversation allowing supervisors to learn what workplace conditions younger employees seek in order to advance themselves along with the interests of the company.
• Begins to close the knowledge gap.
While the idea is that managers can learn about life outside the corner office, another outcome is reduced turnover among younger employees, who not only gain a sense of purpose, but also a rare glimpse into the world of management and top level leaders.

A FEW HOW TOS
Now that you know the value of reverse mentoring, there is nothing to stop you from implementing a successful DIY (Do It Yourself) reverse mentoring program. Here is a basic action plan to get you started:
1. Define the goal(s): Ensure you know what you want to get out of the relationships before you begin so that success is evident. Also identify the key stakeholders and describe what their involvement will look like.
2. Pair up mentors and partners: Do not be afraid of diversity. Often the best matches are mismatches.
3. Plan the launch: Host an orientation session with all members, set the ground rules, share the goals/objectives, equip each person to teach and be taught, and cover logistical details.
4. Prioritize and persist: Follow-up and tracking are crucial to ensure the program is effective, so be diligent in checking on progress. Some success indicators include:
   » Are people taking the time to meet and work together?
   » Are the partners satisfied with the progress?
   » Are they benefiting from and enjoying the partnership?
   » What ideas do they have to improve the program?
5. Measure progress: Include a means of evaluating the program’s success. This could include questionnaires, surveys, interviews and/or observations of the meetings. Do not be afraid to make changes if challenges are identified.

So if you are looking for innovative solutions to address the generation (and technology) gaps in your organization, just remember: when fresh, unbiased perspectives are mixed with detailed knowledge and strategic skills, the possibilities are endless.

Taylor Fitzpatrick is the Millennial voice of The Learning Café, a consulting firm co-founded by Diane Thiefieldt (dthiefieldt@msn.com), which is dedicated to helping organizations develop, engage and retain the talent of every generation (www.thelearningcafe.net). This article is reprinted from Insulation Outlook magazine (www.InsulationOutlook.com), copyright 2016 National Insulation Association.

When fresh, unbiased perspectives are mixed with detailed knowledge and strategic skills, the possibilities are endless.
Please read the rules and requirements prior to completing an application. They can be found at www.mnphcc.org/pp-scholarship-rules.

Incomplete or late applications will not be considered.

Full Name ____________________________________________________________ Age: __________________________

(Please Print)

Address ________________________________________________________________________________________________________

City ___________________________ State ____________ Zip ________________

Home Phone Number ______________________________________________________________________________________________

PHCC Contractor Member or Past President sponsoring you

______________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Relationship to you ______________________________________________________________________________________________

Phone Number __________________________________________________________________________________________________

What school do you plan to attend? ________________________________________________________________________________

Address ________________________________________________________________________________________________________

City ___________________________ State ____________ Zip ________________

When do you plan to enroll? ______________________________________________________________________________________

High School Attended ______________________________________________________________________________________________

High School Graduation date ________________________________________________________________________________________

I hereby certify that the above is true and accurate.

Applicant’s Signature ________________________________________ Date ________________________________

Information must be postmarked by Monday, January 9, 2017 to be considered.

Send the completed application and required materials to:

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Questions?
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or by telephone at (612) 290-4742.
Incentives can be a boon for your company. If they are tied to company goals and are designed and delivered effectively, they can increase company success, as well as employee satisfaction and retention.

Good incentive programs encourage the employee behaviors you want; bad programs can do more harm than good. Incentive program design and implementation is serious business, and requires time and effort.

This article outlines planning process considerations and offers suggestions from a couple of experts. Beth A. Dobkin, a business coach with Quality Service Contractors, and Lawrence Snow, president of Valley Plumbing and Drain Cleaning, provided key insights into implementing incentive programs that can motivate employees and help you reach business goals.

TIPS FOR DESIGNING AN INCENTIVE PROGRAM

There are a number of important considerations in designing an effective incentive program.

1. Establish an annual set of criteria that is most important to your business, then identify the goals and behaviors you want to support through the incentive program.

Start by identifying behaviors that enhance the value of your business and support the achievement of established company goals. These are the basis of your incentive program.

It's important that you establish goals and communicate them to your employees so that you end up rewarding the behaviors that support those goals. Dobkin emphasized that an incentive program must be connected to company culture – without a connection to a central belief system, there's no employee buy-in.

Also, without that clear connection, it's easy to fall into the trap of supporting counter-productive behaviors. Dobkin gave the example of a plumbing company that promotes a customer-first culture. If that company has an incentive program that conditions a bonus on increased sales – and only increased sales – that core value can be lost, because an employee may want to sell customers something they don't need. That company could still create an incentive program that focuses on increased sales, but it could instead encourage employees to offer customers three potential choices, which would likely increase sales but also educate customers and give them more options.

2. Determine specific performance standards and measurements.

Dobkin highlighted the importance of establishing specific performance standards and measures - Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) - for the desired employee behaviors. She offered the following examples of KPIs:

- Reliability
- Home inspection completion rate
- Add-on sales percentage
- Efficiency rate
- Truck preparedness

3. Clearly communicate the program to employees, and do it in writing.

This involves making a clear connection between the company's goals and the incentive program. Dobkin stressed that there will be more employee buy-in if employees understand that connection. For example, if you want to promote premium customer service, communicate how the encouraged behaviors benefit both customers and the company.

Communicate the goals and rules of the incentive program in writing so everyone is officially aware, and both you and your employees are held accountable for following through. This will increase employee trust and performance under the program.

4. Make the program fair.

Lawrence Snow said you must make the incentive program fair to everyone so both lower and higher performers have the opportunity to achieve something if they want work for it. His favorite incentive programs don't have winners or losers, but rather focus on plateaus – so employees receive specific rewards for reaching each level of performance. You can keep a program fair by emphasizing individual targets.

Dobkin said you can't assume everyone has the same capabilities, similarly suggesting that employers base rewards on individual performance. She cited the example of conditioning a bonus on an employee accomplishing a specific percentage improvement over their past performance. For example, if the same benchmark of $30,000 in sales is used for all employees, those who haven't ever reached $20,000 in sales previously will likely be discouraged and not commit to even attempting to reach that target. But if the goal is to increase individual sales by 5 or 10 percent, any employee can be in the running for a reward and will be encouraged to pursue it.

5. Get creative!

Snow and Dobkin talked about the value of variety in rewards to keep employees engaged. Dobkin said the companies that are most successful with incentive programs switch things up continuously, for example, refocusing programs quarterly, or changing a portion of the program each month. Of course, it's important to be transparent in communicating with your employees each time you tweak an incentive program.
Dobkin talked about the exception to this rule: incentives that will always work well, based on the profitability of the item being sold. For example, plumbing technicians might test the water while on job sites, and separate from original jobs, sell customers water treatment systems when hard water is discovered. Those sales are the right thing for both the customer and company. Incentives for such sales also represent a way for lower-achieving employees to receive a reward.

6. Integrate small, incremental rewards.

Dobkin and Snow both emphasized that short-term, smaller rewards are more effective than longer-term, larger rewards. Snow said that with a high performance threshold mandated for awarding a big vacation at the end of the year, the same employees might always win, so other employees would be discouraged from trying to reach that goal. Dobkin said employees want immediate gratification and the end of a year is too far away. You want the incentives to be fresh in your employees’ minds.

7. Make sure the incentive program has specific thresholds before employees are in the running for the incentive.

Dobkin said that it’s necessary to set a base level of KPIs for employees to qualify for the incentive program, and then you can set further performance goals. That way, an employee who is rewarded does the basic job correctly and then goes above and beyond. For example, for employees to qualify for a $500 bonus for increasing sales, they must be on time to work, must have a specific close percentage on jobs, and can have no more than one call back. If employees meet those three qualifiers, they can be in the running for the bonus.

8. Share results, and do so frequently.

Post results so everyone knows how they are doing at all times, and has the chance to improve their standing. Snow suggested using technology – employees could be involved in a text messaging group, for example, and you could send out a text when an employee hits a target. He also mentioned that time cards could be color coded to reflect how well employees are meeting their targets.

Snow suggested if possible, hold weekly meetings to share success and address opportunities, augmenting meetings by posting results on a whiteboard, updating where different employees stand. If you don’t follow up with employees consistently, they won’t reach targets because they’ll forget about the program.

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Dobkin likewise talked about the importance of sharing results so that employees know where they stand, can encourage one another and are motivated to improve. This results tracking is also crucial for managers, who need to be aware of what employees are accomplishing so they can coach and provide resources and support.

You’ve clearly communicated the program to your employees, so don’t go back on that commitment. Dobkin said employers should set the bar at the beginning of the program, and stick to the benchmarks, otherwise employees will be defeated before they even start. There is a history of distrust of employers regarding incentive programs, because they often don’t communicate the programs well, or are perceived not to follow the program rules. Since part of the goal of incentive programs is to increase employee satisfaction and retention, that’s counterproductive.

Remember to do the following when designing and delivering incentive programs:
• Make sure you encourage the right behaviors
• Keep differing employee capabilities in mind
• Connect the program to your company’s culture and communicate that connection
• Make the goals and rules clear (and write them down)
• Measure results precisely
• Frequently present the results to employees

Do this and you’re more likely to create an incentive program that accomplishes the objectives, cited by Dobkin: promoting company culture, reinforcing employee performance standards, supporting business growth and encouraging the entire team to succeed!
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