

# TALKING ABOUT SECOND CHANCES



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JOHN TUCKER:

Sometimes I get asked, should people make it public that they are a second chance employer? I firmly believe, firmly believe that the world is changing very rapidly and it's becoming far more transparent. Consumers, customers, people are looking for the authenticity behind every organization and behind every brand. So if you're doing good things, or you're a second chance employer, or doing any other activities that are positively impacting the community, I would always encourage you to make that public now. It's a positive thing.

SARA BAIER:

If a staff member or employee complains about working with people with a second chance employment opportunity, I think the biggest thing to do is educate them. First of all, why is it important that this person is now here? Probably because he or she was the best fit she was the best fit for the job. It's about educating people, letting them know that just because somebody has a past that they regret, you know it's fine, they've got to move on and keep moving ahead.

It's tough because I don't want to disregard somebody's feelings and their experiences, but in my role of putting together the best team for what we're trying to accomplish, what I really want to tell that person really is it just doesn't matter. What I say is, talk to me about the experiences that you had so far. How well is this person performing? You've been side by side with them for the past three weeks, for the past month, how are they doing in their job? Are they meeting the expectations, let's refocus on that, it's not that I want to disregard their feelings but I do want to be refocused on us as an employer, us as a company. Let's focus on what we are trying accomplish and what we are trying to do in the future and not so much about worrying about how or where somebody came from or what their past experience is.

JEN MAXWELL-MUIR:

I think it's useful for brands to share their second chance employment commitments. It doesn't mean they have to shout it from the rooftops but there is a particular subset of consumers that really wants to know more about the brands they buy. As for how high the volume should be, that depends really I think on how much of a case you really want to make. You could talk about it on your packaging, you could talk about on your website, you could write a blog about it, you can make videos about it which we've done for our clients. You could submit an online article or other pieces to media, it really depends on how much of a commitment you want to make. How big of a role do you want to take in changing other people's perceptions? Ultimately yes, somewhere along the chain, we think it's really valuable to talk about it and express what you're doing.

JOHN TUCKER:

How do the consumers respond to the fact that we are a second chance employer? I would say the enthusiasm is overwhelming. They understand the importance of getting these people back into the workforce, they understand what it means to have a living wage job, they understand that without it, these individuals are more likely to return back to past practice, old habits, whatever it takes to survive. And guess what, they often fail and they end up back in the criminal justice system. So we have fans that just absolutely love what we are doing as an organization because they know that it has an impact on society in a very positive way.

SARA BAIER:

Having second chance values as a company and really having the entire company on board with that, it's really created a stronger culture for us. People are more caring and supportive whenever anyone has an issue. I think that our company is amazing in that way. If somebody is having hard time with something, we have a very large support system, regardless of what the problem is, and it creates a very caring inclusive culture and it's really nice to be part of something like that. With our outsourcing, having the kind of inclusive culture, I think a lot of our customers are really excited about what we do, they're really encouraged by what we do. Not only that, our employees are very very grateful and they are also very proud to work at Dave's Killer Bread.

The really interesting thing for us is to post information about our commitment as second chance employers and have so many people - like thousands of people - comment with just a link to name. So what they're doing is to make sure that somebody that they know, whether it's friends or family, sees that there's a business out there that is hiring people with criminal backgrounds. That tells us that thousands of people are connected to an individual through friends and family that is impacted by this very issue so you could see the human connection and the power of it, of actually sharing.