

Your Company Culture



EXPERTS: Paul Spindel, Paul Spindel LLC

Ramona Mathany - Founder, AllStar Labor & Staffing

Pam Brady - HR, Portland Bottling Company

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Marty Nash - President, Dave's Killer Bread

Beth Olenski - HR, Dave's Killer Bread

Gina Shilhanek - HR, Oregon Food Bank

RAMONA MATHANY:

We include second chance candidates in our firm because there is an incredible population of people that are skilled and trained coming out our prisons and our jails weekly. 10,000 per week in the US and they are a wonderful population to employ. I really have seen some incredible stories about restoration in these people lives. I visit them every week in prison and i get to see them coming out of prison and i get to see them getting jobs and i get to see them with their families, and the way they parent and the way they go live their lives forever more. Some of them have been embedded in our world for the last 6 years since we started AllStar Labor and Staffing and i would say they're just like you and me. They just needed another chance.

PATRICE STANKAVICH:

It's a great opportunity. Currently i see it as a competitive advantage. There is a huge pool of candidates that are not being tapped into, who are skilled and ready to work. Who have support systems that many other folks may not have. Right now i feel like it's a competitive advantage for me and my employer to be able to tap into this nearly untapped pool of candidates. But I also imagine I will be comfortable losing that competitive advantage if more and more people will be able to tap in this huge pool of people.. Who are the individuals ready to work? Who can make our company even better than it is right now? Imagine the right person with the right job.

MARTY NASH:

Dave's killer bread is planting the seed and it does not have to be with just the baking industry. It could be across all different companies. And it doesn't matter who you are, Or what you were doing, or what your purpose is, We've got this resource called a second chance employment that will offer all sorts of opportunities regarding the people resource of your business.

PAM BRADY:

The situation at Portland Bottling in regards to our Second Chance employees is there really is no difference between them and everyone else. We're a great team. We work together, we play together, outside of work we attend weddings with one another, baby showers all kinds of things. It's more like a family than a community where there are folks we haven't been incarcerated and Second Chancers. There's not any difference at all.

GINA SHILHANEK:

I think it just behooves us to know what are we going to do about conflict or what we can do about it after the fact. Why not be more progressive, why not seek to understand from the beginning? There is guidance and there are laws around employing folks with backgrounds too, and we are vigilant about that and making sure that our public is safe, our volunteers are safe and things like that. Sometimes people have fears around that but we most certainly really wanted to be more progressive and inclusive. If we are already talking about it, then it's an open dialogue and then the fears are gone.

PAUL SPINDEL:

As managers if we embark on a program where we're bringing in a lot of people and giving them second chances, how are we looking at them in the workplace? Are we going to be more strict on them then we would be on anybody else if they do something? Do we all of a sudden say "oh see I knew this was going to happen." When there are 3 other employees who have been doing that for the last six months and they haven't noticed it. Because they are not paying attention that way. So that is on us. We have to own that as employers. To make sure we give them the fair shake, the same as we would treat anybody else in the organization from the expectation and behavior perspective.

RAMONA MATHANY:

Society has to get over that perfectionism idea that you just go to school all the way through you get your college degree you go out and you get a job and you never make a mistake and so you hold other people to that same standard, that's a little bit crazy if you think about it. We need to have a little understanding and compassion that people come from a different world than we come from and give them an opportunity to live in our world.

MARTY NASH:

I came to Milwaukee, walked on the production floor and immediately, I knew this is for me. And once I stepped on that floor, I began to see in the passion of the people. And it was actually amazing because they come by and shake your hand. They took pride and tell you what they were doing. It did not matter whether it came from mix oven racks it does not matter. It was amazing. And you can feel it. Can I tell you that story because people when they come to our facility, talk about the passion of the people. It's just a little bit different. So I often tell people that there are three things that sold me. One- the story, two, the brand but the most deciding factor is three, the people. Amazing! And that's how I ended up at Dave's killer bread.

I have never had a job that's been so gratifying and meaningful and i wouldn't have thought of that coming in. But being able to see the difference, just being able to watch other people be given a chance, and what they can do once given the chance is incredible.

BETH OLENSKI:

It's about that what i call a company culture. I really call it corporate community. This is the term that i think about. It's about who do you want to be as a company. And if you really care about surrounding yourself with like-minded people, all focused on the goal, then you are going to be a successful company. It's not so much about the individuals and where they have been in the past. It's much more about staying clear goals, And surrounding you with people who really believe in those goals.

PAUL SPINDEL:

It is interesting and i do work with a lot of companies and some of them are more intentional about their culture than others. And the ones that are not all of a sudden wakes up and go, huh look what's going on with our company. And that's because they were not clear. They did not start with what company do we want to be? What kind of interactions do we want our people in this company with have with each other? What kind of work environment do we have? And really managing into that vision every day. The leaders of that company modeling that behavior. That starts with generating culture.