

Business News & Notes

Understanding Administrative Professionals

(NAPSA)—In today's workplace, growing technological advances and a demand for productivity have resulted in a changing role for the ideal administrative professional. Administrative professionals wear many hats for their employers, and their role has become more and more essential to a successful business.

A survey from the International Association of Administrative Professionals shows that almost nine out of 10 administrative professionals are responding to new job demands by contributing more to their organizations than they were five years ago. Along with greater contributions, more than three-fourths said their level of authority and autonomy for decision making has grown over the past five years.

When asked what aspect of their jobs they enjoy most, nearly half cited that the feeling of playing an important role in their organization was the key to staying satisfied in the workplace. The challenge today is for employers to retain top-performing administrative professionals through a show of recognition and long-term support. Manpower, a world leader in the employment services industry, suggests the following methods for retaining top-performing administrative professionals:

Recognize good work. Items such as flowers, gifts and cards



are always a welcome gesture, but to be most effective at retaining your best performers, employers should instead broaden their perspective on what really keeps workers engaged and committed for the long term. Companies that score highest on promoting loyalty excel at supporting employee success—both inside and outside the workplace.

Acknowledge employees' nonwork priorities. People have many commitments and interests, such as family life, volunteer work and hobbies. Employees are more loyal to organizations that view them as individuals, not just workers.

Offer work scheduling options. Enable employees to meet their nonwork obligations with work/life benefits. Options include flexible schedules, part-time arrangements, job sharing, telecommuting, extended leaves of absence and phased retirement.

Support the use of work/life benefits. Be sure that employees know they won't be resented or seen as low performers if they take advantage of work/life benefits.

Foster career development. If opportunities for skills and career advancement are hard to come by, employees are likely to look for them elsewhere. Among those surveyed, using technical skills and the opportunity for training in managerial capacities were seen as desirable areas for future growth. Promotions are part of the solution for advancement, but also consider team assignments, department or geographical transfers, stretch assignments and participation in community partnerships.

Create mentoring programs. Employees often benefit from and enjoy having a mentor in the workplace. Your employees may want to participate in a mentoring program that could include one-on-one meetings, goal setting, skill development and more.

Manpower's Administrative Professionals Web site is an excellent resource for more information on how to increase the value and reward the skills of administrative professionals. Visit www.us.manpower.com/adminpro, where you'll also have the opportunity to send a free e-card to a deserving administrative professional.