Just Be Straightforward

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Amidst a time of economic upheaval, employees are searching for any sense of security they can find. As headlines are released daily about plant closures, layoffs numbering the hundreds, and mergers putting jobs at risk, workers are asking themselves: am I next?

Offering incentives only portrays a company's instability and hints to employees they need to go looking for work they can depend on. If a company wants to hang on to its employees, lower risk of turnover, and maintain whatever stability it has left, it needs to be straightforward with its employees and simply pay them a fair and decent family wage.

At their core, incentives are an encouragement for workers to change their work habits, to "up their game," so to speak. Sure, during economic prosperity, incentives can be positive and fuel increased success. During trying economic

times, however, asking workers to change their work habits tells them the company and its employees must do something different now than done in the past in order to thrive. It sends the message that the company's foundational goals and missions—how it operates at its core—are shaky.

What's more, incentives only put added pressure on an employee. The economy has put enough stress on hardworking folks in the way of finances and job security. Offering incentives instills the message to your employees that their success is contingent upon the company's as a whole, and holding employees responsible for a business's success or failure is unfair. The incentives are bound to increase tension between coworkers and lower morale in the workplace overall.

Even employees motivated by incentives like production goals tied to bonuses, or stock options aligned with company success, arguably hold a different outlook these days. They are no longer looking to get ahead. They are just trying to stay afloat.

Rather than offering incentives that add pressure, fuel competition among colleagues and portray overall instability in the workplace, companies should put their effort toward making their employees feel as secure as possible. Paying them a decent wage will ease their minds, improve morale, and let them know their hard work is valued and needed.

Workers want to believe their workplace is stable and secure. Let them know the company will ride out these tough times with them by staying true to the company's core missions. You will lower your risk of turnover, your employees with feel secure and as a result, the company as a whole will be more stable.

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