

About The People Practices Program

Building Employee Engagement,
Commitment & Success in Community Services

Beyond a Paycheque

One of the first things new employees want to know when considering a new job is the answer to this question: What's in it for me? What will this employer offer me that will help me grow professionally and personally, make me more financially stable, keep me well and engage my mind and heart? What does the organization offer employees to attract, develop and retain them above and beyond a paycheque?

"Generally speaking, employees are attracted by pay and benefits, retained by opportunities for development and engaged by how they feel on the job." (*Brady G. Wilson, Juice, The Power of Conversation, BPS Books, Revised edition: 2009*)

It's true that many factors can determine how people feel on the job. Most North American organizations strive to address job satisfaction and increase employee engagement to varying degrees because of the impact this engagement can have on people's performance and their lives. "Job satisfaction is important not just because it boosts work performance but also because it increases our quality of life." ([PSYBLOG, Understand Your Mind, Published: 19 July 2011](#))

At Community Services, GM, [Name Removed] has put time, energy and focus on supporting employees and giving them opportunities to participate actively in building engagement, commitment and success. She calls this program: the People Practices Program.

Engaging Employees through the People Practices Program

The People Practices Program provides a range of activities that help build employee engagement, commitment and success in Community Services. This program is designed to create a healthy organizational culture which attracts, develops and retains engaged, committed and successful employees. This booklet lists and explains lots of examples of these activities to illustrate the benefits of People Practices and to inspire your participation.

About the Advisory Committee

All employees contribute to creating a healthy workplace culture; however the people who have a mandate to drive this program are the members of the People Practices Advisory Committee.

These members meet six times a year, and serve a three-year term, with staggered recruitment and membership. Recruitment usually occurs in the spring, through an open, transparent process with a June 1st deadline and membership beginning in September.

Created in 2003, the advisory committee includes employees at different levels from across the Department, including:

- 6–8 front-line/support employees
- 1–2 supervisors
- 4–5 managers/directors

- Organizational Development Specialist
- Departmental Initiatives Coordinator
- General Manager (lead)

The advisory committee's mandate is to:

- Champion the People Practices Program
- Help the GM and Community Services better understand how employees feel by offering their individual perspectives
- Provide input, advice and suggestions for improvements to Program elements
- Review the annual operational plan for the People Practices Program
- Help recruit new members
- Create opportunities for mutual recognition, celebration and fun

Some People Practices initiatives such as Summer Splash and Years of Service Awards have subcommittees dedicated to their events. Each director/manager chairs and/or mentors a subcommittee to encourage ownership of the subcommittee by the People Practices Advisory Committee.

Program Goals

Program goals are to:

- **Create a supportive workplace** where employees feel like they matter as people and where support for them is visible.
- **Promote healthy working relationships** where there is mutual trust, respect, open communication, up-front problem-solving, inclusive decision-making, and employee involvement processes.
- **Enhance capacity for learning** where employees engage in ongoing learning and development and can thrive in a climate of change.
- **Provide opportunities for mutual recognition, celebration, and fun** where employees can take pride in their successes and get to know one another in relaxed, department-supported social settings.

Lining up next to the Top 100 Employers in Canada

Canada's Top 100 Employers annual competition (also known as 'the Top 100') demands that employers identify all their activities and practices around employee recruitment and retention when they apply for consideration. Then, "employers are compared to other organizations in their field to determine which offers the most progressive and forward-thinking programs [for employees]." (Top 100 site: <http://www.canadastop100.com/national/>, 2012)

Community Services aims to achieve these standards and eventually to be recognized as a preferred employer in the municipal sector. By placing all the practices and activities that comprise People Practices into the categories set out in the Top 100 criteria, the department is saying: "These issues are important to us." As a result, the People Practices Advisory Committee selects practices and activities according to how well they support the Top 100 criteria, and reviews them annually for continual improvement.

The Criteria for Canada's Top 100 employers include:

1. Employee Communications
2. Work Atmosphere & Social
3. Training & Skills Development
4. Performance Management
5. Physical Workplace
6. Community Involvement
7. Health, Financial & Family Benefits
8. Vacation & Time Off