

Your Best Publicity Asset? Your Staff

Employees can make a big impact even when they're not at work.

By Russell Trahan

When hiring staff, think beyond the job skills they bring to the office. Consider their out-of-office networking skills, as even simple interactions after hours or on weekends can make a big difference in engaging new customers. Your staff, like your board members, are essential components of your publicity efforts. They're often people's first impression of your organization once the lights go out for the evening. Online, in person, and over the phone, your staff should recognize their value away from the office. Here are four tips to help employees understand their role in your organization's overall PR efforts.

Foster the Social Ovation

Along with your organization's online presence, your employees can boost your impact in the social media arena by broadcasting organization-wide or individual accomplishments through their personal profiles. This can be as simple as sharing a blog post or promoting an event.

Staff members can gain new support for your organization, especially if they're so pleased with their contributions and the level of work coming out of your offices that they want to show it off. Recognize and applaud their performance in-office, and they may be compelled to share it out of the office — chiefly on their social media platforms. A fulfilled employee is one who enthusiastically shares your organization's achievements. Word-of-mouth is often the most powerful form of promotion, and your staff can be the premier vehicle for this type of reputation advancement.

The Business Card Is Timeless


Even with a shift toward internet-centricity and social media, the business card remains a fundamental networking component. All employees should have business cards on hand — which should contain their array of online links and contact information as well as some brief information about your organization. Any chance interaction outside the workplace can shift into a professional conversation,

and a swap of business cards Saturday night may result in a new supporter Monday morning.

Maintain a Convention Game Face

Chances are you'll send staff representatives to a conference or convention at some point. Conference networking is an imperative skill that your employees need to possess. They should understand the value of simple, conversational engagement with others. It can be the easiest route to increased organizational support at the event's conclusion.

E-mail Etiquette Has No Day Off

With the culture of connectedness ushered in by laptops, tablets, and smartphones, everyone in your organization is within reach at any time. When receiving work-related e-mails or texts while away from the office, your staff should be aware that in-house etiquette still applies. They shouldn't let themselves slip into the kind of casual text-speak they might use with friends and family. Improper e-mail decorum is an immediate strike against your organization's credibility, so make sure you instill in your workforce the importance of proper electronic communication. 

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Engage Your Employees

For more ways to harness employee enthusiasm to market your organization, see these articles at NonprofitWorld.org:

How to Ignite Entrepreneurial Spirit in Your Organization (Vol. 20, No. 5)

The Peer-to-Peer Fundraising Evolution (Vol. 30, No. 4)

Overcome Organizational Indifference (Vol. 24, No. 2)

Four Steps to Effective Networking (Vol. 30, No. 1)

Use Employee Ownership to Motivate People & Gain Revenue (Vol. 22, No. 4)

Why Your Employees Are Losing Motivation — and What to Do about It (Vol. 29, No. 4)

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