IHIJE INCREASED ENGAGEMENT, RETENTION AND INNOVATION WITH RESULTS-ONLY WORK ENVIRONMENT

Performance guidelines and expectations are crystallized at this technology center where a bulk of its workforce is in a call center.
INTRODUCTION

Technology and digital media company iHire provides a full suite of products and services for job seekers, talent recruiters, and human resource managers. iHire realizes that as technology and digital media change at a rate faster than ever, so does the world of job searching and talent sourcing. With a team of talented, dedicated, and excited people, iHire continues to find new and better ways to connect the right person with the perfect job.

With around 50 employees, iHire’s corporate headquarters are located in Frederick, Maryland with most of their call center staff in Angola, Indiana. The company depends on a highly innovative and engaged talent pool to keep them ahead of the technology curve. Getting and keeping the best talent in their East Coast office is challenging, to say the least, amidst a fiercely competitive war for talent. Many companies in the area offer lavish employee benefits and perks just to get talent through the door into an interview.

A major change for iHire came in 2012 with new, progressive leadership. Before this, managers described the company culture as a “command and control environment.” Many transformations came with a fresh vision from new leadership, including the decision to go ROWE.

“Innovation doesn’t always happen from 9-5. ROWE is the future of work and it’s how people want to work.”

-- Lisa Boan, VP/Human Resources

To learn more about Results-Only Work Environment, visit us at www.gorowe.com
In Fall 2012 iHire partnered with CultureRx for ROWE Team Workshop in both of their locations. On October 1, they officially launched ROWE in their organization.

Lisa Boan, Vice President of Human Resources, shares her company philosophy on employee motivation:

“We are big subscribers to Dan Pink’s theory in Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us. We know that autonomy, mastery and purpose are significant drivers of engagement. ROWE is the ultimate in giving our employees autonomy. Fostering innovation was also a big reason that we moved to ROWE. We knew the theory with ROWE is that employees strive to find efficiencies in their work. Our hope was that when they do, they (the employees who really want to) will spend that extra time on innovation.”

The goals and reasons for implementing ROWE were threefold.

First, iHire is positioned in an extremely competitive industry – employment, job boards, e-commerce. Because of this, success is dependent on the ability to innovate and provide clients with solutions they can’t find elsewhere.

Second, iHire is located in the DC metropolitan area, a region that hasn’t experienced much of the recession. Good technical people are very hard to find. Talent recruitment and retention are a top priority and Boan’s goal in going ROWE was to create an appealing culture that attracted the right kind of talent – highly motivated and productive employees.

Third, iHire didn’t have cascading objective alignment across the organization – goals and objectives were primarily developmental in nature and didn’t serve the organization’s goals.
When iHire went ROWE they put measurable objectives in place, raised performance standards and clearly outlined results and expectations for each employee – a process that was forced by the foundation of autonomy and accountability that is fostered in a ROWE.

Boan says, “ROWE enabled us to shift to a high performance culture and let employees know that standards were higher than they were in the past.”

After going ROWE they provided valuable training to managers, for whom Boan felt the transition to ROWE was most challenging. They have replaced annual performance appraisals with bi-weekly performance discussions between managers and their staff. This is an important shift, fostered by the ROWE philosophy, as annual performance appraisals are usually ineffective.

Organizational shifts include a “manager as coach” role. Historically, scheduling went through a manager. Now, it’s not the manager who sets up schedules and no one needs to ask permission to do something non work-related during traditional ‘work hours’, like a doctor appointment. The team works collaboratively to decide how customers will be served and who will be physically in the call center during specific times.
RESULTS

- Revenue is up: Total revenue is up 1%; their biggest business line revenue is up 10%
- Innovative improvements are made to iHire’s website/product suite at a rapid pace
- Poor performers are out
- 100% retention, zero voluntary attrition
- Increased levels of engagement and job satisfaction

Boan relates some of the direct results of ROWE implementation in regards to performance issues:

“When we went ROWE and put measurable objectives in place, the employees who were not performing quickly surfaced. These employees were given sufficient time and opportunity to improve and when they didn’t, they were performance managed out of the organization. Our involuntary attrition increased to 10% at that point in time. Our voluntary attrition … since we went ROWE … has remained at ZERO.”

Boan reports that potential hires do find the company culture appealing, an accomplishment that they admit is hard to come by.

They’ve put in place processes for fostering innovation and many employees’ ideas have made it onto the development roadmap as a result.

Overall, the health of the company is good with 10% growth since ROWE implementation.

To learn more about Results-Only Work Environment, visit us at www.gorowe.com
“We write most of our own objectives and are encouraged to take on projects that interest us, to use our talents beyond the confines of our job titles. We are welcome to collaborate with any department. With this type of flexibility, we take ownership of our projects and derive more satisfaction from our work. We feel valued.” -- Laurie

“I love ROWE. It is all about planning, communication and setting expectations. I know what is expected of me to get results, so I communicate with my team regularly. We just changed a big part of our process that decreased our workload (unnecessary work) and put the focus on a different area to increase better results. It is also great to be able to work with people from other departments to get the results. There are no limits.” -- Danielle
ABOUT RESULTS-ONLY WORK ENVIRONMENT

“The Results-Only Work Environment is one of the biggest ideas in talent in the last decade. ROWE is more than a nudge in the direction of more flexibility and autonomy—it’s a radical shift in the way we think about work, responsibility, and success.”

—Daniel H. Pink, author of Drive and A Whole New Mind

Results-Only Work Environment (ROWE) is a management strategy where employees are evaluated on performance, not presence. In a ROWE, people focus on results and only results, increasing your organization’s performance while cultivating the right environment for people to manage all the demands in their lives...including work.

With ROWE:

• Teamwork, morale and engagement soar, which leads to fewer workers feeling overworked, stressed out or guilty.
• Employees have equal parts autonomy and accountability.
• There is no judgment on how people spend their time, so people at all levels stop wasting the company’s time and money.

Bottom Line for your Company:

• Increase productivity, innovation & efficiency
• Talent attraction and retention
• Optimization of space
• Elimination of wasteful processes

Get CultureRx training for your team or book a speaker for your next event: visit gorowe.com/training or gorowe.com/speaking.