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## Deal or No Deal

“What would you do if you won a million dollars?” This question is frequently asked by TV host Howie Mandell on the game show, *Deal or No Deal*. Though the answers vary, everyone wants to come away a winner. During the show, contestants face obstacles (the Banker, the advice of others, their own thoughts) along with temptations. Contestants must decide whether to continue to play the game or take the deal. Either way, they are hoping their decision pays off and brings them satisfaction and comfort.

Selecting or staying with an employer involves many of the same characteristics as the game. Some individuals actively and openly search for satisfaction by frequently switching jobs and taking every opportunity to try new things. Others prefer to stay in their comfort zone by doing routine tasks with little or no change to retain stability. Then there are those individuals who are somewhere in between and want it all - satisfaction and comfort. So, how do employers help employees find that level of satisfaction and comfort in their jobs without going to the Banker?

When companies experience high turnover, low morale, and/or decreased productivity, organizations may try to address these issues by raising pay scales, increasing or changing benefits, reorganizing work processes, creating a new mission statement or adding more staff. Though these actions are often helpful, they may provide only a temporary fix. It often comes down to ensuring the right person is hired and that his/her values align with the company's.

When both parties' values and needs are not aligned, the relationship will deteriorate and the two will part ways. How do you ensure those values and needs are aligned?

The answer is relatively simple: “Ask and evaluate.” Throughout the employer/employee relationship, it's all about knowing what each party wants and needs and communicating those openly and respectfully. In an environment where timely feedback is in place, the free flow of questions and answers leaves no doubt as to the other party's performance.

One of the best things an employer can do to ensure the right candidate is hired is to be certain that job descriptions and behavioral interview questions accurately reflect and predict the skills required to perform the job. Employers can also create an environment that motivates employees by establishing and clearly communicating fair, equitable policies and procedures. In addition, they should hold all employees accountable for performance and behavior and reward those that are performing according to standards. This requires all managers and supervisors to have the skills to effectively represent the company's standards and carry out responsibilities with confidence and knowledge.

Employees need to understand how to apply the policies and procedures to their job duties, ask questions, follow through on their commitments and trust they will receive feedback that is appropriate for their performance and behavior. If they don't, they need to know who they should turn to for assistance and guidance.

For any company to maintain and improve their performance at all levels, on-going training and feedback is essential. So the next time you hire someone or start a new job, know your expectations, ask questions, evaluate the situation and then decide whether it's *Deal or No Deal*.

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