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# **HOW TO MAKE GEEKS HAPPY**

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# HOW TO MAKE GEEKS HAPPY

## I. IT employees — Hard to acquire, expensive to lose.

### A. How many IT workers are there?

Despite a 4% increase in overall IT jobs from last year (from 10 mil to 10.4 mil) demand for new positions is down; consequently, IT professionals aren't as likely to be on the move NOW. Those that are looking now are more likely to favor organizations that can offer more (read that security) not just hefty paychecks

1. According to IDC, about 10 million, worldwide; 2+ million in the USA
2. ITAA, 10.4 million

### B. Industry statistics of unfilled jobs

1. IDC & Info Tech Assoc of Amer (ITAA) predicts that 456,000 & 425,000 (respectively) IT positions will go unfilled in the US this year
  - a) Tech support workers will be in most demand with 200,000+ unfilled positions
  - b) 185,000 network designers and administrators (including DBAs)
  - c) 135,000 programming and software engineer positions to remain open
2. Microsoft research indicates that in the year 2000 there were 760,000 openings for MS software developers
3. TechRepublic estimates there could be well over 4 million developer openings by 2003
  - a) There were 1.6 million in 2000
  - b) 900,000 in 2001
4. Over the course of the year 17% of the employed programming workforce will change jobs
  - a) Technology support workers held the shortest average tenure (22 months) — explains the high demand
  - b) Digital media professionals showed the highest average tenure (41 months)
  - c) IT workers in non-IT focused businesses had an average tenure of 36 months
  - d) IT workers in IT focused businesses had an average tenure of 30 months  
People in non-IT companies, where IT is important but not the focus of the business may be motivated by other factors such as quality of life or the opportunity to understand the nature of the business.
5. Between shortfall and churn (employees changing jobs, and leaving or entering the workforce), more than a quarter of the IT workforce is either new on the job, or missing, at any given point in time.
6. Gartner estimates that by 2004, the average IT worker will remain on a job only 36 months

### C. Cost to replace an employee that leaves — some (not all) of the expenses you could face

1998 Gartner report on IT staff retention and recruitment found replacing an employee can be 100% to 250% of the departing person's salary.

1. Paying a new employee 15-35% more than your former employee
2. A recruiter's fee of 20-30% of the new employee's salary
3. Interview expenses
4. Opportunity cost: a learning curve cost of 50% loss of productivity for three to six months
5. Relocation fees
6. Payback of sign-on bonuses and training fees to the new employee's previous employer

## II. What does it take to sell them?

### A. Tick-off list of factors that are most successful in attracting IT professionals (according to the employing companies)

1. Benefit programs
2. Flexible work arrangements
3. Compensation
4. Opportunities in hot industries
5. State-of-the-art projects
6. Attractive locations

7. *Companies with an environmental focus*
8. *Profitability of prospective employers*
9. *Work-life balance (combining a challenging career with a life outside work is particularly important for woman)*
10. *Caliber of colleagues*
11. *Passion about product development*
12. *Surprisingly, career advancement and training are not huge attractors*
13. *Summary: culture, work-life balance, strong collaboration, learning, and money are all crucial attraction tools*

**B. What do the best and brightest really want (at least initially)?**

1. *At the time of recruitment, money is the #1 issue, but ...*

2. *Intangibles like*

If an employee trusts and believes in senior management, that is more important than anything else the company can do

- a) Trust
- b) A flexible work schedule
- c) Challenging work
- d) Great people to work with

Employees today are less loyal but people will stay if they are working with the best and brightest, and the hottest environment

3. *More than anything, developers want to learn new skills, new things: "career security:" i.e., getting the most innovative, current job training in their fields*

**C. Explain the company culture — sell the company, not the job**

**D. Hire for aptitude and attitude**

1. *Hire people who are bright, energetic, eager to learn, responsible, humble, and open, sometimes even when they have very little relevant background.*

2. *Skills can be learned and usually are learned quickly by folks like these.*

3. *Avoid hiring people who have big egos, staged personas, or who are preoccupied with personal ambition and social status—i.e., people who feel good about themselves by feeling better than other people.*

No matter what skills they may bring to the job, these people will drain energy from the organization and reduce the effectiveness of everyone around them.

**E. Do not merely manage — LEAD**

Before you can recruit for values, you have to have them. The strongest recruiting and retention tool is the sense of vision and values your company demonstrates to employees, customers, and the community

**F. Sign-on bonus (tied to length of stay)**

Toys in lieu of some cash is a good thing

**G. Training packages — professional growth is key for geeks**

## H. Old vs New Economy approach to the workplace

eBusiness, eStrategy, “business models” — they’re all DEAD as stand alone concepts. (Profit drives business growth, not business models.) So is this oversimplified view of companies. But, which of the “other” should you incorporate?

<b>OLD ECONOMY COMPANY</b>	
<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
Steadiness and predictability	Lack of excitement
Long-term career potential	Narrow job scope
Salary and benefits	No big upside potential
Clear reporting structure	Hierarchies
Defined policies and procedures	Bureaucracy
Work-life balance	Structured hours
Professional work environment	8' x 10' cubicles
<b>NEW ECONOMY COMPANY</b>	
<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
Excitement and novelty	Unpredictable
Innovation and learning	Unstructured
Entrepreneurial spirit	Undisciplined
Stock options with big upside	No clear grant guidelines (and sometimes low salaries)
Flexible job	Responsibilities unclear
Fluid structure	Matrix reporting, if any
Unlimited career potential	70-80 hour workweeks
Innovative work environment	High risk

## III. What does it take to keep them long-term (i.e., what ongoing services must you provide)?

The trick for managers is to channel the desire for knowledge into software product development. In order to accomplish this, you have to start with the development of an organizational training plan. In other words, what skills does the company need (now and tomorrow) in order to develop its systems?

Whether you’ve managed to recruit or have had to create your own good developers ... you can be assured that everyone will be after them. According to an Information Week survey ([www.informationweek.com/731/salsurvey.htm](http://www.informationweek.com/731/salsurvey.htm)), 70% of IT staffers were contacted by a headhunter this year — some of them as many as three to six times.

### A. Tick-off list of practices most effective in retaining IT professionals (according to the companies)

1. *Challenging technical environment (62%)*
2. *Career development (48%)*
3. *Learning and training (40%)*
4. *People-oriented managers (37%)*
5. *Other factors cited: quality working environment, corporate culture, valued contribution, loyalty, and seniority*
6. *Compensation is not among the top retention practices (yet bonuses were effective in:)*
  - a) *Achieving project milestones (57%)*
  - b) *Hiring candidates with hot skills (67%)*
  - c) *Fostering employee loyalty (68%)*
  - d) *Increasing IT employee motivation (73%)*
  - e) *Retaining hot-skill employees (74%)*
  - f) *Reducing turnover (76%)*
  - g) *Providing competitive pay (79%)*

B. Tick-off list of why employees leave (according to the companies)

1. *They receive an offer too good to pass up (62%)*
2. *Inadequate compensation (39%)*
3. *Lack of career development (29%) (lack of a career path strategy)*  
Although career advancement is not a big tool for attracting people, lack of career advancement is a chief reason for departure.
4. *Failure to match a competitive offer (28%)*
5. *Lack of leadership (19%)*
6. *Uncertainty about the future (19%)*

C. What employees **say** is important for making them stay at their current company

January 2001 study by USC Prof Dr. David Finegold

<[http://www.marshall.usc.edu/ceo/bios/bio\\_finegold.html](http://www.marshall.usc.edu/ceo/bios/bio_finegold.html)>

1. *Work / life balance*  
People may say that they like spending time with their family, but giving them such time doesn't make them stay with the company.
2. *Job security*
3. *Financial rewards*  
Pay for individual performance (typically salary and bonuses) did not score highly as a way of keeping employees, except for men under 30. The only type of financial rewards that increased retention for any group was rewards based on overall company performance (typically stock options).
4. *Professional career satisfaction*
5. *Degree of influence over own work*
6. *They all sound very important, right? But that's not what makes them stay, according to the study, the top three factors in retaining staff were*
  - a) career advancement
  - b) financial rewards based on company performance
  - c) innovation and risk  
High-end geeks like bleeding-edge assignments

D. Do not try to keep everyone

Rockefeller's response to the question "How many people work here?" "About 1/3 of 'em."

1. *Identify key people*
  - a) Misguided approach (focus on skills) goes like this:  
This is misguided because it confuses your most marketable employees with your most valuable employees
    - (1) Look at the people in your organization and then inventory their skills
    - (2) Compare those skills to what's hot in the open job market
    - (3) Compile a list of people that have extremely valuable skills
    - (4) These are your star performers
  - b) Reacting to circumstances (the stupid method):  
How can you possibly make good decisions when you're under the gun to respond to a competitive offer?
    - (1) Do nothing
    - (2) Wait until another employer approaches one of your employees
    - (3) Contemplate how your organization would function without that employee
    - (4) Determine that he or she is a star performer
    - (5) Try to counter the other offer
  - c) The right way:  
Look at everyone who works for you and figure out which people you could least afford to lose. Skills are important but these attributes are harder to find:
    - (1) Leadership  
Which of your people currently serve as leaders and which have the potential to do so?

- (2) Institutional knowledge  
Which of your people have been with the organization long enough to understand all of its processes and undocumented workarounds
- (3) Work ethic
- (4) Attitude  
Which of your people can get along with almost everyone on staff? You can't call someone a star performer, no matter how good their skills, if no one can stand to be in the same room with him or her.
- (5) Appreciated by your customers  
Not only can you lose important clients when you lose an important inhouse contact for your client, but not all geeks have the people skills to, or understand the value of, maintaining client relationships — people skills are invaluable

E. Have a personal training plan (and budget) for each developer (which lets them know you're as interested in their professional development as they are)

50% of executives questioned in a survey for the Information Technology Association of America (ITAA) cited lack of skilled/trained workers as the "most significant barrier" to their company's growth during the next year.

1. *Let the employee choose (like using benefit dollars)*

2. *Mentoring programs*

- a) Pairing of new hires with established players
- b) Encourages people to seek guidance from respected associates
- c) All new developers who are being asked to learn significant new skills should be assigned a mentor
- d) Give the mentors a financial incentive
- e) Key point: developers want to be part of a team that produces great products; so, build teams, not individuals
- f) Providing mentors isn't enough to create effective teams

3. *Internal training classes*

Let your developers train each other. Having them create their own classes and seminars gives your staff an opportunity to develop their writing and presentation skills and also helps build camaraderie.

4. *Seminars, conferences, trade shows*

Local seminars can help with the team building, too

5. *Self-study materials (online via a variety of Internet self-study sites)*

6. *Instructor-led training classes*

7. *Microsoft certification*

- a) Typically garner 10% boost in pay
- b) Survey of over 2000 individuals
  - (1) Which MS certification do you have (adds to 100%)
    - (a) MCP (38%) / actual = 50%
    - (b) MCSE (28%) / actual = 28%
    - (c) MCP + Internet (16%) / actual = 18%
    - (d) Seven others (18%) / actual = 4%
  - (2) What benefits have you realized from having a MS certification? (adds to 100%)
    - (a) Increased work responsibilities (21%)
    - (b) Greater respect among IT professionals (21%)
    - (c) More opportunity for professional advancement (21%)
    - (d) Higher base salary (19%)
    - (e) Add'l benefits (vacation, bonuses, etc.) (5%)
    - (f) Other (13%)
  - (3) Have you found your MS certification skills are in demand with employers? (Yes = 62%)
  - (4) Has your MS certification helped you advance in your career (Yes = 58%)
  - (5) Was obtaining your MS certification worth the time and effort (Yes = 71%)
  - (6) Was obtaining your MS certification worth the expense (Yes = 60%)

## 8. Boot camps

### F. The work environment

Retention is really a culture issue and creating the right kind of environment to attract and hold people is key.

#### 1. Why do people work?

- a) Money — to address our human needs for survival, security, comfort, and pleasure
- b) We also work to satisfy our needs for
  - (1) creative expression
  - (2) personal growth
  - (3) spiritual meaning
  - (4) human connection
  - (5) self worth

#### 2. Roger Herman, author of *How to Become the Employer of Choice*, lists these key points that employers should consider to improve retention

- a) Company reputation. How is the company viewed in its market, by its employees and by the general public?
- b) Meaningful work. Is the work presented to an employee challenging and in line with the employee's professional goals?
- c) Growth and opportunity. Is there room for personal and professional growth, and does management foster this growth?
- d) Care of people. What is the general consensus of how the company manages its people?
- e) Enlightened leadership. Does management work with its employees and offer an open-door policy?
- f) Organizational culture. What is the general "feeling" or culture the company elicits, and what is the perception of its employees?

#### 3. The physical environment

- a) Relax the dress code and allow casual clothing
- b) Subsidize health-club benefits and consider it work time (healthy developers are happy developers)
- c) Provide free high-caffeine drinks
- d) Free pizza or sub sandwiches during training sessions or for anybody still working after 7pm  
This is a low-cost perk that will actually keep developers working after hours

#### 4. The non-physical environment

- a) Provide significantly more opportunity and differentiation for top individuals  
A reasonable pay strategy is to target compensation levels at the 50th percentile. However, for your "superstar" employees, your compensation strategy should target at least 75th percentile of market practices or higher. This means that all pay programs (salary, annual incentives, and long-term incentives) must consider merit.
  - (1) create a merit increase guideline ensuring that top performers get at least twice the merit increase as the average  
Ever wonder why people ask what is the average when they get a raise? If it's 4% and you give a superstar 6% he/she isn't going to feel valued.
- b) The right environment — establishing a positive culture
  - (1) Help developers and/or engineers and/or testers and/or trainers work together
    - (a) These differing groups have different goals
    - (b) Find common topics for training
    - (c) Cross train new employees (as part of initial training)  
Allowing each group to see what the other group does on a daily basis will give everyone a deeper appreciation for each other
  - (2) Communication that focuses on mutual respect, creativity, and learning, rather than on seeking credit or avoiding blame
  - (3) An atmosphere of mutual support among employees instead of the usual scramble for higher positions
  - (4) A pervasive sense of openness and trust
  - (5) Maximize individual freedom and choice: dress code; when they come and go; work from home

- c) Establishing and nurturing a positive company culture is not something that happens apart from the main business of the company
  - (1) Build teams, not individuals  
You have to consciously work at team building in order to have development teams that create great products
  - (2) Sharing the wealth
  - (3) Employee conferences with senior management
  - (4) Acknowledging that stress and family problems are the two largest single reasons employees take days off or are sick
    - (a) According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics stress costs American businesses \$10,000 annually per employee
    - (b) A recent study by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, states that 40% of the nation's workforce is affected by stress "making it the No. 1 reason for worker disability."
  - (5) Eagles football team, under previous ownership, employed, for every game (as well as after hours), a Ph.D. clinical psychologist
  - (6) Responsible, not accountable
    - (a) Being "response-able" (able and willing to respond) to the challenges our jobs present is what we get paid for doing.  
Part of being responsible is acknowledging our mistakes, learning from them, and figuring out how to do better. When we do this, our energy goes to discovering solutions for the future, not determining blame for the past.
    - (b) When people talk about accountability, however, they usually are talking about assigning blame.  
When a mistake is made, the focus is on whose fault it is and why they did it, looking backward. When people are held accountable, they try to avoid acknowledging their mistakes, they blame others, and they spend their time and energy unproductively.
    - (c) Make a point of appreciating people for their willingness to acknowledge mistakes, and make it clear that mistakes are inevitable and expected. Indeed, much can be said from what we learn from our mistakes (vs what we learn from our successes)
  - (7) Take care of employee needs  
When people feel that their needs are treated as important, they are happier and more likely to treat the needs of others—including customers, coworkers, and owners or investors—as important too. They are also more likely to tolerate times when their needs cannot be met, if they trust that this is not for lack of caring.
    - (a) Good employee benefits, conscientiously administered, are an important expression of caring.
    - (b) Caring is also expressed through generous policies for time off, flexible schedules, reasonable workloads that don't require excessive travel or workaholic lifestyles, and prompt responsiveness to other employee concerns as well.
    - (c) There is also an important message conveyed by the physical space and amenities.
      - i) Comfortable chairs, good desks, and high-quality equipment send the message that the employees' needs matter.
      - ii) Consider buying all new employees office chairs to accommodate their individual requirements.
  - (8) Build community
    - (a) Take the team to sporting events
    - (b) Have team parties
    - (c) Have team BBQs
    - (d) Do a small, intimate Xmas party, at your home, for your team
  - (9) Foster good humor — encourage the hanging of cartoon clippings in common areas
- d) Offer unpaid sabbaticals
- e) More vacation time
  - (1) 1/6 of all American worker's don't take their allotted vacation time — don't encourage this!
  - (2) 18% of IT professionals feel they have reached burnout. Of those, four out of five blame people and decisions within their organization.
  - (3) By law, most European nations require all employees get four weeks off with pay each year. Paid vacations of five and six weeks are common in Austria, France, Germany, and Scandanavia.

- (4) In the United States, the Bureau of Labor Statistics found the average paid vacation in 1997 — the latest year for which it has data — was just under three weeks for someone employed for five years. It rose to four weeks after 20 years on the job.
- (5) Cisco, by the way, gives all of its employees four weeks vacation after one year on the job
- (6) A Geek Cruise is perceived vacation and can help here if company policy will not permit more vacation time

5. *Give regular performance feedback (quarterly reviews)*

Have you ever seen an effective sports coach give his players advice once per year?

The way to create an effective performance management process is to treat employees like customers. They need to receive feedback when and how they want it.

Often, bored or burned-out employees can be renewed by promoting or migrating them to new positions

a) Ask your employees these questions

- (1) How long they intend to stay
- (2) What they like/dislike about their job/project/teammates (without naming names)
- (3) What it would take for them to increase their tenure for one year

You won't hear a lot about money

(a) Expect to hear intangibles

Understand that 76% think their employer cares more about the bottom line than about the employee.

- i) Chance to learn
- ii) Grow
- iii) Contribute to something meaningful
  - (1) Department needs to feel it's elevating itself
  - (2) Department needs strong IT people and leaders
- iv) Be recognized
- v) Treated with respect
- (b) Be prepared to defend your old economy company against working for something "new and exciting"
  - i) Not all dot-com streets are paved with gold
  - ii) There is a risk-reward ratio
  - iii) Start ups can be 80-hour work weeks

- (4) Do you receive enough feedback to be effective in your job
- (5) How often would you like to receive ongoing feedback
- (6) What form of feedback would you like? Verbal or written? Via email?
- (7) Would you like to receive a feedback form? Supervisor, co-workers, clients, customers?
- (8) How can *I* do a better job to help you be more effective?

b) Most appraisals need to be evaluative — but put a lot of emphasis on future performance

- (1) Employees are not interested in feedback on past performance if it includes criticism
- (2) When delivering criticism, be constructive and balanced
- (3) Provide one measure of praise for each measure of constructive feedback

The only way to create an effective performance management process is to treat employees like customers. They need to receive feedback when they want it and how they want it.

6. *Put together a "Why Work For Us" brochure*

Cisco has a specially-created employment website

**www.intralect.com** — Intralect is an application service provider (ASP) that delivers technology to transform corporate Web sites into powerful, interactive recruiting tools.

G. Bonuses and incentive plans

1. *Which bonus programs do enterprises use?*

- a) Spot awards (49%)
- b) Sign-on bonus (42%)

- c) Retention bonus (25%)
  - d) Skill-based bonus (18%)
2. *Bonus policy: 50% bonus based on how the company does, 50% based on how the individual's team does*  
 Bonus policy should not unfairly favor some employees while penalizing others. Such programs ultimately demoralize much of a company's workforce.
  3. *Long-term incentive plans help create a feeling of participation and sharing in upside potential; if you don't have stock options:*  
 Should be worth the same as the annual incentive (e.g., if you offer up to a 10% bonus, the long-term incentive should be worth this much, too.
    - a) phantom stock
    - b) performance units
    - c) equity simulator plans
    - d) allow employees to buy shares
    - e) create an IPO spin-off company that provides stock options
    - f) create an incubator that provides support and funding for other companies within your core competency
  4. *One-time market adjustments*
  5. *Retention bonuses — for staying one or more years*
  6. *Innovation incentives for creating and applying new ideas*
  7. *Special-recognition bonuses*
  8. *Bonuses in the form of technology items such as palm tops, cell phones, laptops*
- H. Reward and recognition suggestions (set up a plan)



1. *Weekends at the company's timeshare*
2. *Dinner for two at a very nice local restaurant*
3. *Gift certificate to a nice hotel or resort*

#### **IV. My personal recommendations**

- A. Training budget (let the employee pick and choose)  
 The Computerworld survey of "100 Best Places to Work in IT" ([www.computerworld.com/home/features.nsf/all/bp99\\_index](http://www.computerworld.com/home/features.nsf/all/bp99_index)) shows the average number of training days in these top firms is 12.6 days a year.
- B. Ability to move to different projects  
 Even force movement; make 15% of the workforce move each year
- C. Flexible work arrangements (including flex schedules, part-time work, job sharing, seasonal schedules, telecommuting)
- D. Lotus Notes database of profiles of flexible workers to inspire/inform others of the possibilities of such scheduling
- E. Privacy rooms (not only for nursing mothers, but those that need to take care of personal needs at the office)
- F. Free assistance with dealing with life's challenges
  1. *Adoption issues*
  2. *Substance addictions*
  3. *Elder care*
  4. *Emotional illness*

5. *Legal woes*
6. *Marriage counseling*
7. *Financial problems*
8. *Once a week for an hour, have a therapist on site*

G. Concierge services — for a fee

1. *Pick up dry cleaning*
2. *Take the dog to the vet*
3. *Mow the lawn*
4. *Even plan your child's Bar Mitzvah*

H. Business casual dress

I. Utilization committee

Any discrepancies in workload are ironed out by the committee. If an employee feels she is working too hard, or if another has been idle for two weeks and would like to have a project to work on, they can go to the utilization committee. Also a good place to go for a lateral move to work on a different project.

J. In addition to training, employer paid education (along with a two-year job commitment to the company; you leave early you have a legal obligation to pay back all reimbursed expenses)

K. Tuition reimbursement (after six months of employment): employer to pay for five hours of study per semester as long as the employee receives a B or higher grade

L. Fire those bringing down productivity; if firing one in five yields a 20% improvement in productivity, you're ahead!

M. Pay attention to Superpeople: good people don't whine — they just disappear

N. Retain or hire a well-known geek expert

O. Focus on non-financial rewards and recognitions

P. Sixty to 75% of employees say they do not receive personal thank yous from their immediate bosses when they do a good job

Q. Group lunches, company dinner dance, family day at an amusement park

R. Onsite day care facilities

S. Three or four-day workweek option (12-hour days); half days off on Friday

T. Telecommuting when caring for sick children

U. Give everyone a \$200+ personal growth fund (for non-technical books, software, a wine-tasting class, whatever so long as it's to better yourself)

V. Add a morale officer, or a "quality of life" committee, or an Office for Retention to monitor and promote your retention efforts

W. Manage your employees expectations

X. The five reasons why IT staffers stay

1. *Career opportunity*
2. *Enjoyment of the work*
3. *Reward*
4. *Leadership*
5. *Availability of technology*

Y. Survey of 500 execs: 54% adjust monetary compensation to retain and attract employees. BUT only 27% adjust company policy to provide more flexible career paths

Z. Bottom line: keep employees satisfied with their work situation; don't ignore the employee

Companies that implement real-time employee development and measurement tools and have strong e-learning offerings will be the most attractive to IT workers. Many IT workers want the ability to move across departments and learn non-IT functions of the business. This will ensure that IT workers aren't limited to technology-focused jobs.

## V. What can you learn when they leave?

Companies must examine and understand why employees want to leave

- A. "We pay our people well, offer them good benefits, and get them tickets to ball games." What went wrong?
  1. *Did the manager micro-manage?*
  2. *Did the manager simply not listen?*
  3. *Does the manager hog the credit for his team? He may doll out money, tickets, and favors — but the team will still be angry and/or disappointed.*
- B. Find out why people leave. Conduct exit interviews and surveys.
- C. Often, employees leave because they do not feel a company offers them opportunities, challenges, or respect

## VI. Sources for info (p. 125)

- A. Electronic Recruiting Exchange: [www.hrlists.com](http://www.hrlists.com)
- B. The Internet Recruiting Master Series  
([http://events.network24.com/A419/sessions/Home/pages/schedule/page\\$.asp?eid=A419&sid=Home](http://events.network24.com/A419/sessions/Home/pages/schedule/page$.asp?eid=A419&sid=Home))
- C. <http://www.recruiting-online.com/newsletter/jul00.html>
- D. Try the Workforce link at [www.ita.org](http://www.ita.org)
- E. Online articles are available from IT Recruiter Magazine ([www.itrecruitermag.com](http://www.itrecruitermag.com))
- F. The IS Staffing section of CIO.com ([www.cio.com/forums/staffing](http://www.cio.com/forums/staffing))

## VII. Conclusion — Happy employees make for a successful company!

It is no coincidence that much of our stress and frustration in our working lives is due to company politics. Few mind working hard; most enjoy being challenged (so long as we make enough money to meet our needs). But we find ourselves perennially in the position of children at work, competing to please more powerful people and to manage the way we are perceived. Instead of being able to focus on genuine accomplishments from which we might experience intrinsic satisfaction, we are preoccupied with trying to get credit, avoid blame, and be rewarded in ways that would make us feel valued by those in power. We're afraid to be creative or innovative because these involve increased risk of making us or our bosses look bad. This is not fun.

What people want is a sense of convergence between work and play. They want to do what they love and love what they do. They want their work to be an expression of themselves, to feel that their work makes a difference, and to be recognized and valued for their contributions. These are not unrealistic expectations. And when they are met, everyone benefits.



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