

- 2021 Board Meetings Dates
- Great Leaders pg. 1 & 5
- No March General Meeting

2021 Board Meeting Dates

February 11th

Board Meeting only this month.

March 11th

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April 8th

Board Meeting only this month.

May 13th

Board Meeting only this month.

2021 Planning Meeting

We will be planning future meetings so when we are able to meet all together, we will have topics in place.

Further discussion to be made at our February 11th ZOOM Board Mtg.



Happy Valentine's Day

Great Leaders grow their companies with intentions and purpose ... FLACCPA

How Can You Spot Great Leaders? They Do Any of These 5 Things Daily

BY MARCEL SCHWANTES, FOUNDER AND CHIEF HUMAN OFFICER,
LEADERSHIP FROM THE CORE@MARCELSCHWANTES

As a company sets out to grow and scale, it must enact strategies that will bring in new employees while still caring for the current ones. One of those successful strategies? Prioritizing a culture of "meaningful work."

That's what I learned from Lynn Herrick, chief operating officer at GreatCall, a connected health company for active aging.

Herrick says that meaningful work is the key pillar of her role at GreatCall, defining it as the foundation on which employees build compassion and empathy to provide the best possible service for their customers.

Herrick shared five steps to grow your company with intention and purpose.

1. Know your priorities.

In a leadership role, you must know the type of leader you want to be and the culture you want to instill in your workplace. Take the time to realize what qualities are most important. Once you've figured that out, develop a plan for making those qualities part of your company's everyday mission.

2. Stick to your guns.

Any company experiencing growth will look to implement new initiatives, shake things up, and make necessary changes to reach the next stage. In periods of growth, make sure that your voice is being heard and that you're advocating for endeavors that will make your workforce more successful. While change is necessary, make sure the changes are moving your initiatives forward, and that the changemakers in your organization are aligned.

3. Emphasize communication.

Periods of transition are often when employees are most insecure about their position and future with a company. To ensure your company grows in a way that makes everyone feel valued and informed, take time to talk to employees. You must include everyone in important decisions and let them know of significant changes. The less communication, the more employees will fill in the gaps themselves -- often with the worst-case scenario. In short, take the necessary steps to keep everyone in the loop.

QUESTION:

When wearing masks in the workplace, what is deemed "inappropriate?" Some employees are using their masks to show their affiliation for or against political or social causes (i.e. #BLM, Back to Blue, or "Make America Great Again," etc.). How can the employer differentiate how to determine what is acceptable and what is not acceptable?

ANSWER:

Outside of any messages on masks that are harassing, threatening, or unlawfully discriminatory (i.e., based upon any protected characteristics such as race, sex, color, religion, age, etc.), what is appropriate or inappropriate for the workplace is largely determined by the employer. For example, if the employer wishes to prohibit employees from wearing "#BLM, Back to Blue, or 'Make America Great Again'" masks (note that an employer is not required to do this), it must then uniformly and consistently apply a clear rule on what types of masks are permitted in the workplace, to all employees, and which would likely include prohibiting employees from wearing any masks (you may wish to also include attire generally) that conveys messages on matters employees care about, or perhaps prohibiting any attire that conveys a message whether it contain text, a picture, or a symbol. Admittedly this can get a bit tricky given that certain categorizations can be broad and general, which in turn can create discrimination risk. Of course, as noted above, the employer need not permit any attire that contains harassing, profane, discriminatory, or threatening messages. However, if the employer were to restrict employees from wearing an article of clothing that includes certain political statements, social messages or other beliefs, opinions, etc., this can be a slippery slope. As an example, would a shirt or mask displaying a peace symbol constitute a social or political belief and thus be banned?

Typically to effectively meet its objective of prohibiting certain "controversial" messaging on attire, including face masks, the employer may find that only an "all or none" approach will ensure that all employees are treated fairly and in a non-discriminatory manner. Indeed employees may come to the workplace possessing any number of views, opinions, beliefs or practices related to politics, religion or other sensitive or controversial topics, some or all of which may be different from those of their coworkers. The employer would do well to take steps to ensure that employees do not use company premises or work hours to espouse ANY such opinions and viewpoints (even if through their attire), particularly if offensive or disruptive, and to instead focus only on their work and objective work-related discussion when they are there.

To this end, as noted, the employer is within its rights to revise its dress code policy to specifically reference face masks and other articles of clothing that may include direct or indirect messaging. We recommend having local counsel review or draft any revised policy on this topic to ensure it meets your objectives while remaining compliant with applicable law (within our format we are unable to draft or review documents). Should the employer seek to restrict employees from wearing any articles of clothing, masks included, that espouse a message or endorse a political candidate, social movement, religious group, etc., but allow messaging in other cases, this can be potentially problematic given the variability. Indeed if one employee shows up with a different cause or interest represented on a face mask or other attire, and some number of employees have been allowed to wear attire supporting other messages, then generally this needs to be tolerated (though certainly not if there were to be a profane, discriminatory, or threatening message worn).

Continued on page 6

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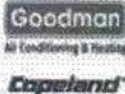
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4. Advocate for employees.

In a large company, it's easy for individual voices to get lost in the shuffle. Use your power to make sure everyone is getting a say, check in with your employees, and don't assume that you know how they feel. As your company grows, the changes made will embody the opinions of all your employees. Often, the people on the frontlines have the best ideas for your customers and rarely are they asked to share these ideas with changemakers.

5. Make sure values align.

When considering a merger or acquisition, the executive team must ensure cultures and missions are aligned and that values are shared at its core. This way, you're given room to grow and are able to prioritize a meaningful workplace while scaling. If you don't get the cultural piece right, the acquisition will likely suffer.

Companies should strive to find a balance between growth and culture. Herrick is a firm believer that meaningful work should be the foundation of a corporation and can be used to build employee loyalty and scale a company successfully. She remains committed to making that vision a reality.

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Masks in the Work Place – What’s Acceptable?

Employers need to have very clear boundaries in their written policies to this effect as to what is and is not prohibited. As noted, typically the employer will find that it becomes an “all or nothing” proposition in order to ensure all employees are treated fairly and in a non-discriminatory manner. As a best practice, any new or revised policy should make clear that only neutral attire (including masks), void of any messaging or symbolism, etc. (including as to messages on matters employees care about), is permitted. While a policy prohibiting the espousing of views may engender considerable resentment from employees, particularly those who may wish to communicate their opinions, beliefs, affiliations, etc. on their apparel, as noted, an “all or none” approach mitigates against potential discrimination workplace concerns and ultimately may result in fewer morale issues (even if initially some employees resent it). The employer should ensure that any new policy language is clearly communicated to all personnel, and then uniformly applied and enforced as to all employees. The policy should stipulate the consequences for noncompliance, which should be meted out consistently when infractions occur.

Further, if employees come to work and behave unprofessionally or argue with each other, including about non-work matters, then the employer may and should still proceed with enforcing its normal disciplinary policies, ensuring that employees continue to behave in a professional manner during work hours and are productive, as they can be subject to a disciplinary consequence if they fail to do so.

The employer additionally has an obligation to ensure that the workplace is free from discrimination and harassment based on protected class status, including race, color, religion, gender, national origin, and disability, to name a few. If the employer becomes aware of workplace misconduct, then it absolutely should take prompt, remedial action to correct whatever impropriety it knows or discovers to be occurring.

Ultimately, the employer is arguably within its right to establish a neutral dress code policy that is fair and consistently applied to all employees. That said, given that such policies may be met with employee resentment, as noted the employer may wish to have local counsel assist with reviewing or drafting such a policy on this topic, to ensure it meets the employer’s objectives while remaining legally compliant.

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Upcoming Meetings!

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Board Meeting only this month.

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June 10th

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