



EMPLOYER OF CHOICE

FIVE CORNERSTONES TO SUCCESS



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ABOUT THE PROCESS

In August 2010 the Board of Directors for the Trucking Human Resource Sector Council Atlantic (THRSC Atlantic) formed a committee to engage in the development of a model to support businesses in the trucking sector in positioning themselves as “Employers of Choice”.

Working with consultants Leigh Gillis of Solid Skills Consulting and Debbie Lawrence of Abundant Living Inc., the team dedicated eight months to an intensive research, development, planning, and implementation process.

This began with in-depth interviews with companies within and external to the trucking industry. The focus was on those that role model best practices by combining strong business management and business development skill sets that respond to workforce needs.

Roundtables were held in Sydney, NS and Halifax, NS where input from industry leaders was gathered. Professional truck drivers were also surveyed to garner their feedback and input into what they saw as priorities for a company being designated as an employer of choice.

Additional research was conducted into current successful human resource practices. A lengthy literature review was completed and an overview of adult learning opportunities related to this sector was compiled.

The outcome was the development of this Employer of Choice model with an implementation strategy that focuses on five cornerstones, namely: (1) communication, (2) culture, (3) create rewards, (4) connection, and (5) competitive practices.

It should be noted that this model has been designed to work for small, medium and large companies.

THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Guiding principles are basic truths or standards that guide and underlie an organization's actions and decision making. During the process of developing this model for the THRSC Atlantic, the following five guiding principles were established:

1. The Employer of Choice model must be rooted in integrity.
2. The model must reflect best practices.
3. The model must address key human resource areas significant to the trucking industry.
4. The model must provide direction to employers seeking to advance toward Employer of Choice status.
5. The model must provide practical and easy-to-use tools.

WHY BECOME AN EMPLOYER OF CHOICE?

Why become an ***Employer of Choice***? The phrase “Employer of Choice” has received more and more attention lately, but most employers really do not understand the importance of becoming an Employer of Choice. The phrase is more than just a buzzword; it is representative of a new corporate culture. Concisely, it means that people will choose to work for you and to dedicate themselves to your success. It means that people will choose to stay with you, even when they are being courted by competitors.

In the years ahead, workforce stability will be a company’s competitive edge. In these challenging and ever changing times, which are exacerbated by a tight labour market, employers like you will be continually challenged to locate, attract, optimize and retain the talent they need to serve their customers. The most successful employers will be those who legitimately inspire talented workers to join them and to stay with them.

A company that is given the designation of Employer of Choice is typically recognized for meeting or exceeding established high standards

in several key areas of evaluation. Such areas include company culture, leadership, care of their people, providing opportunities for employees to engage in meaningful work, growth and opportunity for employees at all levels, fair compensation and benefits, employee loyalty, and performance results.

And, among the direct benefits to you as an employer are creating a more stable workforce, lower turnover, less absenteeism, greater productivity, the continuity of knowledge, more satisfied employees and customers, and a healthier bottom line!

“Simply put, employer of choice status is good business”

ABOUT THE EMPLOYER OF CHOICE MODEL

The Employer of Choice (EOC) model has been designed to guide and support companies in two distinct ways: (1) helping you assess your EOC standing, and (2) providing tools and resources to develop and strengthen your company's performance as it relates to the five cornerstones:

1. Communication,
2. Culture,
3. Create Rewards,
4. Connection, and
5. Competitive Practices

Based on company interviews, the input of people throughout the trucking industry and secondary research, what is known, is that more than anything, the average employee yearns for two things above and beyond fair compensation and job security. They are: (1) to be kept in the loop about what is happening in their company and throughout the industry in general, and (2) to be shown respect and appreciation.

At the end of the day what matters most is how your people (employees and customers) feel about their day-to-day dealings with your company.



EVALUATING YOUR COMPANY AS AN EMPLOYER OF CHOICE?

Your company's *Employer of Choice* evaluation is a two part process, which together provides your company with a total score of out 100.

Part 1 -The Employer Application
(30%)

Part 2 - The Employee Evaluation
(70%)

**Total – Your Company's EOC Score
100%**

To earn the Employer of Choice designation you must achieve a minimum score of 80%.

If the initial score you earn is less than 80%, that's okay. You always have the opportunity to re-apply to the program. Moreover, you will be provided with detailed information in your EOC Report that specifies areas for improvement; as well as practical

suggestions for you to consider, on ways to make those improvements.

Part 1: The Company Application (value 30%)

Part 1 of the EOC evaluation process is the completion of your Company Application. The information you provide in this application will allow the THRSC Atlantic to evaluate your company against established criteria associated with being an Employer of Choice.

The Company Application asks for detailed information and examples of your company practices in each of the 5 Cornerstones: Communication, Culture, Create Rewards, Connection and Competitive Practices. The same information is asked of all companies who apply to the EOC Program;

whether the company is small, medium or large.

If you have questions about completing this application or throughout the EOC process in general, you should feel free to contact the THRSC Atlantic at 902.893.8410 or through our website at www.thrsc.com

Part 2: The Employee Evaluation (value 70%)

Part 2 of the EOC evaluation is to receive input from your employees through Employee Evaluations. These evaluations will be provided to you for distribution to your employees. You have the option of having these completed in a confidential online format, a paper-based format, or both. If you require paper evaluations, these will be provided to you with self-addressed stamped envelopes.

EVALUATING YOUR COMPANY AS AN EMPLOYER OF CHOICE? (Cont'd)

In the evaluations, your employees will be asked to provide information about your company in relation to the 5 Cornerstones: Communication, Culture, Create Rewards, Connection and Competitive Practices. The same information is asked of all employees no matter their position in your company or their years of service.

The number of evaluations that must be completed depends on your total number of employees as indicated in the table below:

<i>Total number of employees for your company or terminal</i>	<i>Designated size of your company or terminal</i>	<i>Number of employee evaluations that must be completed</i>
1 to 30	Small	75%
31 to 100	Medium	50%
101 - 500	Large	25%
501 +	X Large	20%

How is my EOC Score Evaluated?

Your total EOC score is evaluated once the information from Part 1 and Part 2 is received and calculated.

The calculation process uses a scoring matrix which specifies numerical values for all questions in Part 1 (Company Application) and Part 2 (Employee Evaluations).

To receive a detailed view of the scoring matrix you may contact the THRSC Atlantic at 902.893.8410 or through our website at www.thrsc.com

What is the EOC Report?

The EOC Report is a confidential copy of your full evaluation. The EOC Report provides you with details about your overall EOC score, as well as your

sub-scores for Part 1 (Company Application) and Part 2 (Employee Assessments). You will also be provided with practical suggestions on ways to make improvements related to each of the 5 Cornerstones. For instance, consider the following scenarios:

Scenario 1:

Your Company earns a total EOC score of 80% or above. You will be designated an Employer of Choice.

Your EOC Report will include a breakdown of your score in relation to Part 1 (Company Application) and Part 2 (Employee Evaluations), as well as your score in relation to each of the 5 Cornerstones. If you receive less than 80% in any of the Cornerstones, you will be provided with information on practical ways to make improvements.

EVALUATING YOUR COMPANY AS AN EMPLOYER OF CHOICE? (Cont'd)

Scenario 2:

Your Company earns a total EOC score of 79% or below. You will not initially be designated an Employer of Choice.

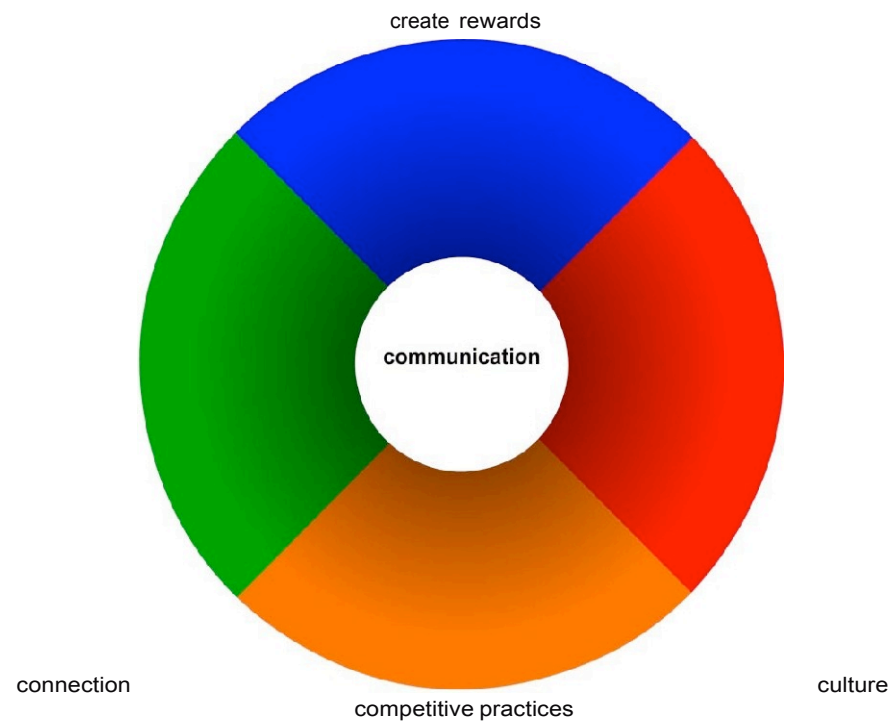
Your EOC Report will include a breakdown of your score in relation to Part 1 (Company Application) and Part 2 (Employee Evaluations), as well as your score in relation to each of 5 Cornerstones. You will receive information on practical ways to make improvements in all Cornerstones that apply to your company. You have the opportunity to reapply to the program and to continue to work toward obtaining your EOC designation

Retaining your EOC Designation

In order to retain your EOC designation, you will be required to participate in an annual review conducted in conjunction with the THRSC Atlantic. The purpose of this review is to ensure current practices and standards are adhered to so that your EOC rating is maintained.

A full review is conducted every three (3) years.

THE 5 CORNERSTONES: AN OVERVIEW



ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE AS AN EMPLOYER OF CHOICE

The Employer of Choice model is presented based on five cornerstones. Each of these is comprised of six core elements.

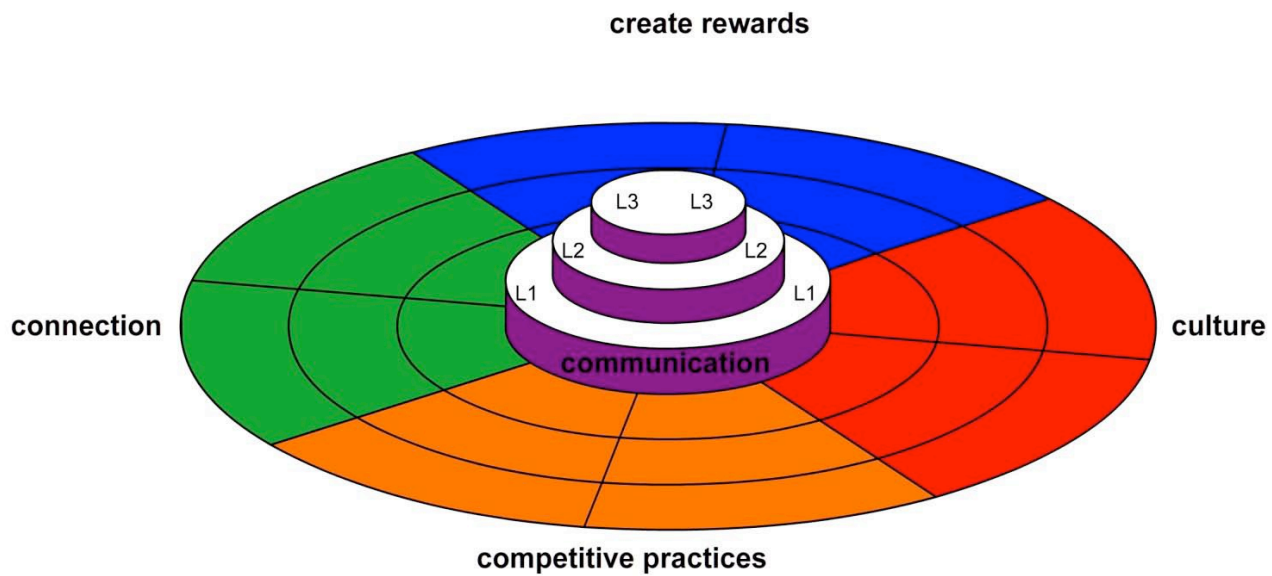
Every core element has been designated as Level 1, Level 2 or Level 3 and contains a listed series of identified best practices.

The purpose of these levels is to recognize that some aspects of being an Employer of Choice are more fundamental than others. The L1 core elements represent basic elements that every EOC company should have in place. L2 and L3 core elements are higher level practices or functions that, in many cases, may only follow after L1 core elements are in place.

*High achievement is a way of life
for employers of choice*

CORNERSTONE #1: Communication

Are our people in the loop?



CORNERSTONE #1: Communication

Are our people in the loop?

At the heart of every successful organization are open, clearly defined and well developed lines of communication. It means that every effort is made, every moment of every day, to ensure information is communicated to the right people, within the right timeframe, using the right tools, materials and methods. It comes as no surprise then that the foundation of the model for Employer of Choice is communication.

To support you in achieving and maintaining clean, clear and concise lines of communication, six core elements along with corresponding best practices are presented.

Demand strong communication.

In an employer of choice organization, highly effective interdepartmental communication is essential.

No compromise.

CORNERSTONE #1: Communication

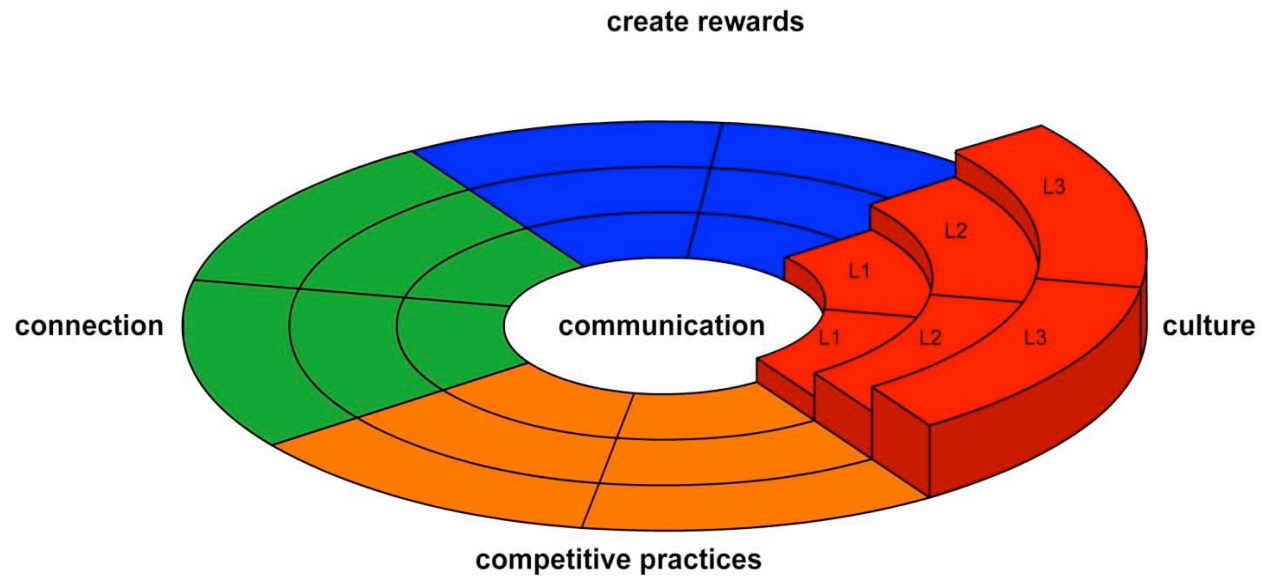
Are our people in the loop?

6 Core Elements and Associated Best Practices

Face to Face Communication (L1)	Job Orientation (L1)	Employee Policies & Procedures Handbook (L2)	Employee Company Orientation (L2)	Feedback Mechanisms (L3)	Other Communication (L3)
Team, division & staff meetings	Job description	Company information	Full tour of company and buildings	Internally driven social media/blog tools	Current and updated website
Open door policy	Job SOPs	Policies & procedures	Introduction to other personnel	Company emails	Newsletters, print or online
Knowing who to go to for what	Job training manual	Health & safety	Information about company structure, culture & policies	Timely response to employee emails, text, messages	Optimizing use of social media tools externally & internally
Checking in with new employees		HR policies	Thorough completion of all HR paperwork		
			Health & safety protocols		
			Information about rewards programs & incentives		
			Full review of the employee manual		

CORNERSTONE #2: Culture

What do we stand for?



CORNERSTONE #2: Culture

What do we stand for?

Organizational culture is the one thing that all employees work within, but which they can very rarely describe with accuracy. That is because culture so often relates to how people *feel* in their workplace, whether it is a “good” place to work or not. And, a workplace becomes a “good” workplace when its culture fits with its people.

Culture is what makes an EOC company; it is what drives your employees to willingly perform to high standards and it is what sets the tone for company practices and systems. A company with a strong, positive organizational culture, no matter its size will:

- ◆ Provide outstanding service.
- ◆ Attract, motivate and keep talented employees.
- ◆ Inspire innovation and successfully adapt to change.

An EOC company cannot be an employer of choice without a positive culture. Within the Employer of Choice Model, culture represents the driving force that supports the other four cornerstones.

To support you in identifying, developing and promoting your company culture, six core elements along with corresponding best practices are presented.

Workers have choices, so they choose the employers and cultures that are most comfortable for them.

CORNERSTONE #2: Culture

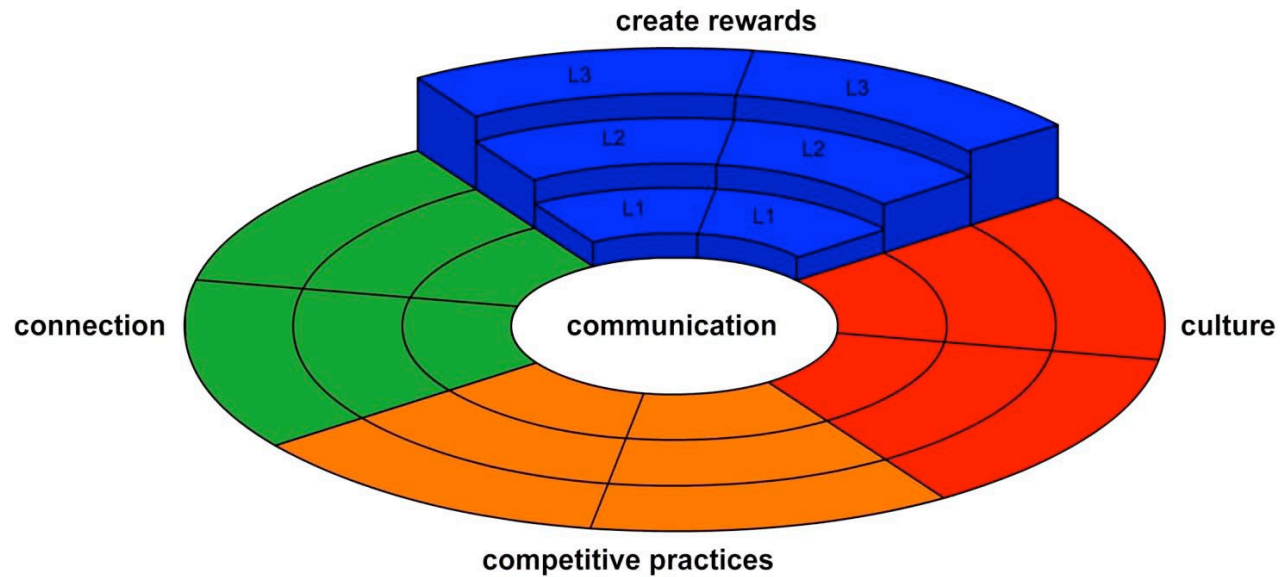
What do we stand for?

6 Core Elements and Associated Best Practices

Welcoming, Respectful & Safe Environment (L1)	Celebrating Achievement (L1)	Sharing of Information (L2)	Training and Development (L2)	Environmental Action (L3)	Community Involvement (L3)
Positive and welcoming signage	Company milestones or anniversaries	Internally driven social media/blog tools	Commitment to life-long learning	Go Green initiatives	Formal company charity
Employee lounges, kitchens and rest areas	Team & division achievements	Briefings or text info	Job-specific orientation training	Promotion of eco-awareness and knowledge building	Time-share volunteer work
Safety culture	Company sponsored events	Company emails	Compliance training		Joint sponsorships
	Important employee accomplishments		Safety training		Learning organizations
			Leadership skill development & training		
			Mentorship/coaching programs		
			Cross training & job shadowing		
			Organized educational upgrading		
			Health & wellness skills development		

CORNERSTONE #3: Create Rewards

What is the value-added for our people?



CORNERSTONE #3: Create Rewards

What is the value-added for our people?

Every employee wants to know that they are valued by their employer. EOC Companies *demonstrate* the value they hold for their employees in very real ways. Demonstrating value means doing more than offering competitive pay. It means creating value-added for your employees by offering different forms of remuneration that hold a high level of perceived worth and goodwill for your people. The depth of rewards your company chooses to create depends greatly on what your employees view as *important to them*.

To support you in identifying and establishing good creative rewards, six core elements along with corresponding best practices are presented.

The less favourable the market conditions, the more value-adding features an organization must include

CORNERSTONE #3: Create Rewards

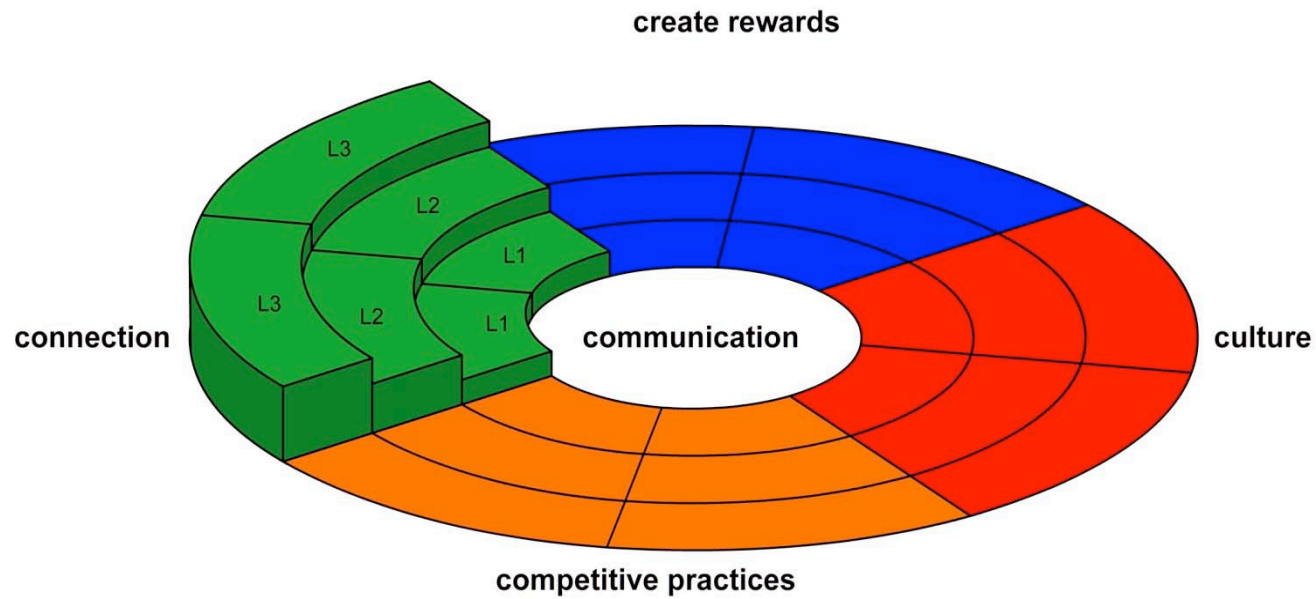
What is the value-added for our people?

6 Core Elements and Associated Best Practices

Performance Based Bonuses (L1)	Benefits (L1)	Recognition Programs (L2)	Incentives (L2)	Stress Relievers (L3)	Advancement Opportunities (L3)
Safety bonuses	EAP	Driver & employee of the month	Employee suggestion program	Fitness facilities or membership subsidies	Goal setting with employees
Fuel bonuses	Health & dental	Division awards	Education subsidies	Truck convenience items	Career path discussions
Professional Driving bonuses	Insurance coverage	Appreciation days	Allowance for taking truck home	Driver home commitment	Promoting from within
	RRSP contribution	Volunteerism	Flex scheduling	Driver right to decide program	Cross training & job shadowing
		Safety achievement	Flex functioning	Family programming	
		Years of service		Rider programs	

CORNERSTONE #4: Connection

How do we support & help our people?



CORNERSTONE #4: Connection

How do we support & help our people?

Talk to your employees and they will typically share what is really important to them.

People, by their very nature, want to share, contribute and feel needed. An EOC will recognize and nurture this by making it a priority to support and help their employees. Doing so requires a blend of strong and effective communication skills, strategic planning, encouraging input and feedback, and ensuring the right tools and resources are in place to make it as easy as possible for people to connect.

To support you in developing good systems and practices that will help to draw your people together, six core elements along with corresponding best practices are presented.

*...business as usual on the people front is not an option
because there is not business as usual anymore.*

CORNERSTONE #4: Connection

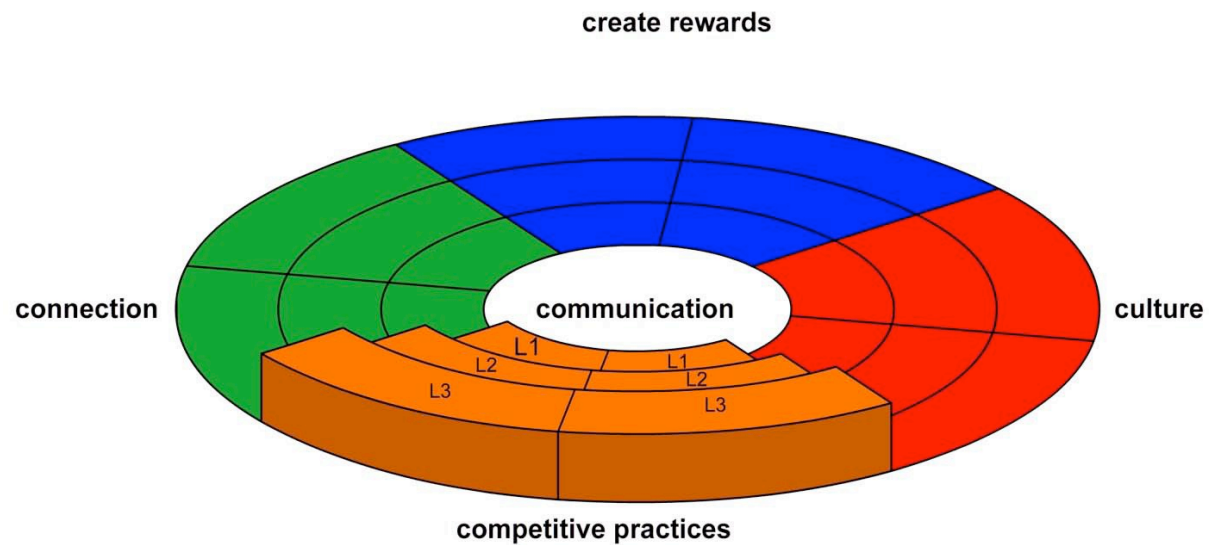
How do we support & help our people?

6 Core Elements and Associated Best Practices

Vision Statement (L1)	Guiding Principles (L1)	Performance Evaluations (L2)	Designated Human Resources Function (L2)	Strategic Planning (L3)	Goal Setting (L3)
Crafted with employee input	Developed with input from Employees	Based on previously defined SMART goals	Recruitment materials and processes	Review of organizational history & structure	Specific
Focused on employees	Should not exceed 7 in number	Transparent	Standardized interview protocols	Reflects external opportunities & challenges	Measurable
Easily understood by all	Should guide a company's operations	Provides a mechanism for employee input	Performance evaluations	Reflects internal strengths & weaknesses	Attainable
Are effectively communicated throughout the company	Should guide a company's decision making	Relevant to, and mirrors, job description and performance expectations	Exit evaluations	National trends	Responsive to needs
	Should guide company people at all levels	Ends with a "go forward" plan	Document management and providing responses	Identifies goals	Timeline driven
				Provides success measures	

CORNERSTONE #5: Competitive Practices

Are we the best we can be?



CORNERSTONE #5: Competitive Practices

Are we the best we can be?

In today's competitive marketplace it is critical to be more than just competent or adequate. To compete as an EOC it is imperative that your company consistently demonstrate leadership and an innovative spirit. It is about always asking if you are the best you can be.

As the final core element, Competitive Practices speaks to your company's consistency and commitment to being a leader in your industry. To support you in achieving this, six core elements along with corresponding best practices are presented.

An employer of choice is a firm whose employment policies and HR management practices give it an edge over its competitors.

CORNERSTONE #5: Competitive Practices

Are we the best we can be?

6 Core Elements and Associated Best Practices

Fleet Maintenance Program (L1)	Tools of the Trade (L1)	Recruitment & Retention Strategies (L2)	Use of Technology (L2)	Business Process Improvements (L3)	Branding (L3)
Proactive maintenance	Subsidized or cost shared technology (smart phones, laptops)	Generational differences	Use current technology (smart phones, laptops)	Define your company's strategic goals and purpose	Know who you are as a company
Oriented to providing safe working conditions	Regular truck/trailer upgrades	Workforce diversity	GPS optimization	Determine who your key customers are	Represent the company personality
	Computer system upgrades	Promoting from within	Fuel monitoring & management	Align all processes	Reflects what you promise
	Current knowledge	Flexible pay strategy		Review your processes regularly	
		Target experienced workers		Look to gain employee feedback	

GRATITUDE

The following people formed the steering committee for the Employer of Choice initiative. Their investment of time, energy, creativity and commitment to the Trucking Human Resource Sector Council Atlantic's mandate as it relates to supporting the growth and development of businesses in the trucking sector was integral to the successful development of this strategy.

- ◆ John Cotterill, Clarke Road Transport
- ◆ Trevor Bent, Eassons Transport
- ◆ Dave Boran, Connors Transfer Ltd.
- ◆ Dave Miller, Armour Transportation Systems
- ◆ Jack Thompson, David Brown United
- ◆ Kelly Henderson, Executive Director, THRSC Atlantic
- ◆ Katrina Henderson, Project Manager, THRSC Atlantic

Most importantly – thank you to the Trucking Industry stakeholders for your participation during the consultation process. The overwhelming support for this initiative is reflected in the comprehensive Employer of Choice program.