

The Exemplary Employee

Recent media report coming out of the United States of America, highlighted the fact that a fast food employee was recognized by his peers for having not missed a day of work for three consecutive decades of his working life. This to most is an unusual phenomenon. There is the distinct possibility that the achievement of his Afro American male, is replicated across the world by other employees. These stories are seldom given media prominence. On this occasion, thanks to the social media platforms, the world is able to learn of this individual outstanding achievement.

What is likely to capture the attention of most who viewed the coverage given on the USA television networks and social media platforms, is the fact that it was not the employer who recognized the contribution and value of the employee, but instead, his work colleagues. The tokens which his colleagues shared with him that included a movie ticket and other small items, must be the treasures of his life. It has nothing to do with the value of these items, but more so with the recognition, appreciation, respect and high regard that his colleagues have for him.

From what was transmitted on the television networks and social media platforms, this experience was a most humbling one for the employee. The response from people across the world to a Gofundme social media page set up by his daughter as a fundraiser for her father, amassed approximately US \$170,000. This is undoubtedly a signal that the world recognizes and appreciates the fact that workers make an undeniable contribution to the success of their workplaces. It is usually the expectation that the employer of an employee would take the lead in the show of appreciation for this remarkable achievement.

This brings us to taking a look at what makes for an exemplary employee. It is established that by reporting for work on each working in one's working life, would certainly qualify an individual to be placed in this category. For an individual to show up for work irrespective of prevailing weather conditions, health reasons, personal / domestic reasons and existing workplace issues, is a testimony to the commitment of the individual to duty. It is cause for concern if this category of

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worker is made to feel undervalued by virtue of the lack of recognition they may receive from their employer.

The positive take away from the example set by the fast food employee in the USA, is that all employees have an obligation to report for duty on a daily basis without reservation. It is understandable that there are unavoidable circumstances which may present an employee who desires to be at work from being able to do so. However, those employees who engage in taking the liberty to make full use of the annual sick leave days that are granted, ought to consider the wisdom of doing so, particularly when it is not necessary. Certainly, by not reporting for work, can eliminate them for being classified as an exemplary worker.

It is to be acknowledged that outstanding attendance to work is a significant element in the discussion of what constitutes an exemplary worker. If the individual worker is to meet the qualification standard, it is to be understood that there must be a relation between attendance, punctuality and ultimately, productivity. These are critical measurements that cannot be overlooked, as invariably, these are determinants that will make a difference in any qualification given to an employee.

It is desirable that every employee works towards been being an exemplary employee. With this as a goal, the employee should first be self-motivated, and also motivated by the employer. To striving to attain this, the employee should display qualities that are valued in the workplace, which include a commitment to excellence, maintaining workplace standards, understanding the importance of putting the company's needs first and being focused on getting the job and tasks assigned completed. It is also imperative that the employee demonstrates a readiness and willingness to learn, to avail oneself for training, to be a creative thinking and a team player.

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