



evolve

Printex Monthly News Bulletin

January 2016 | Issue 36

Tips of the MONTH

*Your Life does not get better
by chance, it gets better by
change.*

~ Jim Rohn



**FIRST LEARN
THEN REMOVE "L"**

If the Plan doesn't work, change the
plan not the goal.

**“ If you focus on
results, you never
change. If you
focus on change,
you will get the
results. ”**

~ Jack Dixon

THERE IS
NO ELEVATOR
TO SUCCESS

**YOU
HAVE TO
TAKE THE
STAIRS**



10

Simple Ways *to Keep Your Employees Happy*

By Brittney Helmrich, Business News Daily Staff Writer July 24, 2015



No boss wants a miserable staff. So how do you keep your employees happy and excited about their jobs?

It may seem like making sure your employees are happy is hard work, but there are actually plenty of easy ways to keep your staff content. And, no, employee satisfaction is not all about salary, benefits and expensive perks — it's about making employees' jobs easier and more meaningful, and supporting and respecting them as people both in and out of the office.

Business News Daily asked business owners and experts for their best advice on keeping workers happy. Here are 10 ways to make sure your employees love coming to work each day.

Give Employees Autonomy

"Let employees have some autonomy over their work areas, work flow and work conditions. One of the main things that drives down employee satisfaction and happiness is the feeling one is being micro-managed and controlled by a boss. Customizing one's work area, being able to work on self-chosen projects for an hour or few a week, and telecommuting or flextime are all ways to boost employee happiness and productivity."

– Frank Niles, co-founder and managing partner, Scholar Executive Group

Challenge Employees

"Show that you believe in employees by giving

them new assignments that will challenge them, motivate them and push them beyond their previously perceived limits. There is nothing more rewarding to an employee than earning the trust of the boss."

– Lawrence Polsky, co-founder, Teams of Distinction

Engage With Your Staff

"Ask the right questions and then listen. Having an open door is great in theory but it puts the onus on the employee. Instead, make time outside of standard reviews and ask questions that dig in to what the employee actually values. Spending that time, over lunch or a cup of coffee, and digging in with your team helps

with engagement and retention."

– *Jill Moriarity, employee experience manager, ÄKTA*

Be Transparent

"Happy employees are ones that know the direction of the company and where they fit within it. Being somewhat transparent about what is happening within the business can help employees feel more valued and trusted."

– *Josh Burnley, director, Shweebo*

Support Employees' Ideas

"Show you value your employees by including them on key business decisions and listening to their input. You don't have to implement every suggestion, but you should listen to them. Constructive criticism is one thing, but don't ever publicly condemn an idea, which would kill a creative environment."

– *Simon Slade, CEO and co-founder, Afflorama*

Acknowledge Employees' Accomplishments

"People love to be respected and acknowledged when they do something well. I like to have a weekly meeting/conference call with the whole team and mention items that took place the prior week, and mention some staff by name with their accomplishments."

– *Bill Fish, president and founder, ReputationManagement.com*

Treat Employees Individually

"Don't approach a happiness initiative with a one-size-fits-all approach. Encourage managers to spend time one-on-one with their directs. Encourage them to ask their team members for the top three things they need from their leader, colleagues and organization. Also, ask how they like to be recognized and rewarded. Treat employees how they want to be treated based on their answers to the direct

questions as opposed to a broad-brush approach."

– *Jackie Breslin, director of Human Capital Services, TriNet*

Get social

"Frequently bringing employees together for team activities, competitions, offsite events and retreats and healthy happy hours helps foster critical connections and social ties between employees that keeps them both happy and engaged at work."

– *Dr. Rajiv Kumar, co-founder and CEO, ShapeUp*

Provide the right resources

"The first thing I do to keep employees happy is remove any obstacles to their work success. Sometimes this means eliminating distractions by providing a more private work environment; sometimes it means improving technological tools to eliminate frustrations."

– *Sondra Lintelmann-Dellaripa, president and principal consultant, Harvest Development Group*

Watch your body language

"Those in leadership and management roles should look inward at their own behavior and body language; are you sending out the right optimistic and positive message? Leaders set the tone for the culture, which will create a happy or unhappy staff." – Laurie-Ann Mura-

bito, speaker and author, *"Rethink Leadership: 4 Lessons to Make You Remarkable"* (CreateSpace, May 2011)



Halftone Printing on Textiles



High-tension screens are best for printing halftones because they enable better registration, controlled off contact and excellent “snap-off” behind the squeegee. Shown is a 23" x 31" 230 yellow mesh panel stretched to 25 N/cm on a Newman Roller Frame.

Screen printing halftones on textiles is not as daunting of a process as some people make it out to be. However, there are steps that must be followed to ensure success. Most garment decorators are good at making screens for spot-color jobs because the exposure latitude is wide and screen making seems pretty easy — until you try to expose that first halftone job. The following tips will make screen making and printing halftones a little easier.

In the early years, process cameras were used to convert a photo into a series of dots to reproduce the shaded tones in the image. Today, this process is much easier by using special raster image processor (RIP) software, which converts images from vector form into a rasterized dot pattern.

SCREEN MAKING CONSIDERATIONS

Screen Making with Film Positives: To create film positives for halftone printing, the rasterized image is sent from the computer to a laser or inkjet printer and printed onto clear transparency films. A common formula used to determine the correct screen mesh count is to multiply the dot line count by 4. For example: A 55-line dot multiplied by 4 results in a 220 mesh. In this case, round up to a 230-mesh since it's a common mesh count in this range.

CTS Inkjet Printers: With computer-to-screen (CTS) equipment, you can bypass the film-making stage altogether and print the rasterized image directly from the computer to the contact side of the emulsion-coated screen. Not only does this process eliminate creating expensive films, but it also eliminates the need to store them. The main ink types used with today's CTS systems include wax, water-based inkjet toner and specially formulated UV-blocking formulations.

Wax: The heated wax inkjet technology is a popular method for printing a high-density image directly onto an emulsion-coated screen. Some CTS systems that image with wax can reportedly print 1,200 dpi, allowing halftone frequencies of up to 110 lines per inch (lpi).

Water-Based Inkjet: Some CTS systems use Epson piezo inkjet heads with proprietary inks that have special UV blockers added to increase performance during the screen exposure stage. Inkjet system manufacturers report that their CTS systems can print 720 dpi, run on standard PC software and use a standard USB-2 port connection.

SCREEN EXPOSING AND COATING

Every screen-printing shop needs an exposure calculator when attempting halftone printing. Basically a test film positive composed of fine detail, it helps to determine the optimal exposure time for the emulsion, mesh and stencil materials being used. There are two main kinds of exposure calculators: the step wedge and filter type.

It's important to periodically repeat the exposure calculator test because exposure times will increase as the light source gets weaker. The most accurate way to compensate for weak bulbs and power fluctuations is to invest in an exposure unit with a light integrator. This device uses an optic photocell to collect and measure how many units of light are delivered to the screen surface during exposure. This greatly helps to control exposure times.

Halftone printing can get pretty technical. Before the advent of YouTube, where screen printers can watch videos to answer technical questions, industry veterans and experts like Richard Greaves and Mark Coudray were printing halftones, and here they share their decades worth of knowledge.

“When it comes to stencil considerations for exposing halftones, there are dual-cure stencils that use both diazo and photopolymer sensitizers,” Greaves says. “They can be formulated with high solids content, which means better resolution, exposure latitude and coating properties than conventional pure photopolymer or diazo stencils.

But they do take longer to expose. Dual-cure direct emulsions are typically 50%-60% water, and the solids that are left behind when you dry a stencil shrink and take on the texture of the mesh that rarely leaves an even film on the bottom of the mesh to control your image.”

Greaves adds that direct films are superior because they have a solids content near 90%, meaning they're not liquid. “You stick them to wet mesh like a postage stamp,” he explains. “This also means stencil preparation is much faster because you remove the drying step after degreasing and only application water needs to evaporate, compared to the 50%-60% water in direct emulsion. Direct films also deliver stencil consistency — even from inexperienced screen makers — unlike direct liquid emulsions.”

Greaves says a strong vacuum on your exposure unit and the use of dyed mesh can help reduce the choking effect by absorbing scattered UV energy and pressing the positive tightly against the stencil.

“The untrained screen maker, who has been told the stencil has been overexposed, will react by reducing exposure — which means the stencil will be ‘medium rare,’ not ‘well done,’” he adds. “For a plastisol ink print, this usually isn't a problem because plastisol never hurts a stencil. But water-based or solvent inks and stencil removers will attack the uncured stencil on the inside where the ink and squeegee will be pressed down hard and rubbed like an eraser. The only way to compensate for undercutting is to make dots larger on the positive, so that you get the size you want on the final print and have a completely cured, durable stencil. This is like sighting on a rifle for accuracy.”

SCREEN PRINTING HALFTONES

For screen printing halftones, I prefer to use an elliptical dot in the 45-line count range exposed on 230 yellow mesh tensioned at 20-25 N/cm. Also, I print with a dual- or triple-durometer, straight-edge squeegee. I keep off-contact distance minimal to allow the screen mesh to snap off right behind the squeegee during the print stroke. Too much off contact will cause excessive

ink on the substrate and the dots will expand in size. I use Great Dane Graphics software and typically select a 45-line halftone at 61-degree angles using an elliptical dot shape. (My film positives are made using AccuRip software and an Epson 4900 inkjet printer.)

Coudray says: "For the cleanest dots and best tone range, use a sharp 70/90/70 triple-durometer squeegee and 305.34 mesh tensioned to at least 25 N/cm. One of the easiest tricks you can do to really improve your halftone printing is to add 2% by weight of clear, high-density base to your halftone inks. This will dramatically reduce your dot gain and improve the tone transition from lights to darks."

Trying to print halftones with the same squeegees that are used in the shop on a daily basis also can be a mistake. "One of the most common errors I see printers make is to use a squeegee that is too dull," Coudray says. "For sharp dots, you need to cut the ink, not mash it. To determine if your squeegee is sharp enough, lightly drag your finger across the edge

of the blade. If you can feel the individual ridges of your fingerprint, the blade is sharp enough."

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Stir plastisol inks thoroughly before going to the press and, according to Coudray, never add reducer to ink that will be used for printing halftones. Reducer destroys its thixotropic nature, causing massive dot gain and a dark, muddy print. If you can't see the individual dots when all the colors are printed, that means you're mashing the ink, he says.

"It's common for beginning halftone printers to use 230-mesh for their prints, and a low line count such as 45 lpi. The line count is OK, but you need to use 305 plain-weave mesh with 34-micron thread (305.34 plain weave). It will print as easily as 230, but with much more control. Keep the tension at 25 N/cm or higher for best results."

James Ortolani has more than 30 years experience in the decorated apparel industry, specializing in hands-on direct screen printing and heat transfer production. He has worked for main industry suppliers, and currently serves as product development specialist for Transfer Express. For more information or to comment on this article, email James at james.ortolani@stahlsdfc.com. — J.B.

News from Printex

By The Grace of Allah, we did the Successful Installation of First Roq Oval Pro 36 XL + at M/s Style Textile Lahore.

The second Installation of Roq Oval Pro 36 XL + will be on Second Week of February at M/s Style Textile Lahore.

By the Grace of Allah, the first M4 Direct to Garment Digital Printer arrived at M/s Style Textile Lahore.

By the Grace of Allah, we booked the First Roq You P 18 Machine with Vacuum for M/s Town Crier Faisalabad.

Printex is Participating in GTex at Expo Centre

Karachi from 31st January till 2nd February, 2016.



PRINTEX Chemicals (Pvt.) Ltd.



Defence Road, 0.5 Km off, Bhopatian Chowk, Mauza Bhopatian,
Rohinala Raiwind Road, Behind Zimbis Knitwear (Pvt) Ltd, Lahore.

Contact No. +92-42-35966300, +92-42-35966301. Fax No. +92-42-35966300

E-mail: printexworld@gmail.com

Website : www.printex.com.pk