

Let's Start "Regarding" People for a Change.

20. January 2011 By Steve Palazzolo

So it's a new year – 2011 and all that, and yes I know that we are already 20 days into the new year and yes I know this is my first post, but we have been making some changes here at good old WNJ.

The first one you might have noticed is we changed the name of the blog. Yep, no more NegotiumLex! Now, we are Michigan Employment Law. How come? Well let me tell you how come: It took me some time to face up to it but NegotiumLex is a stupid name. I didn't think it was when I started all this, I thought it was kind of cool. Latin and all that! Of course no one speaks Latin and no one reads Latin and so no one found the blog. So, we are going to go with something a bit more, shall we say descriptive? That means that if you are one of the three people who has us bookmarked as one of your favorites, change your bookmark. Now you can find us at <http://zomichiganemploymentlaw.wnj.com/>

Now what else can we change? I have an idea, how about our goals. I was reading through some twitter feeds this morning, (yep, you can find me on twitter too @ZoEmploymentLaw, and yes again, a new twitter name, seeing a pattern here are we?) and I came across an article at CNNMoney announcing the Fortune 100 Best Companies to Work For. You can find the post at <http://money.cnn.com/magazines/fortune/bestcompanies/2011/snapshots/1.html>

Number 1 on the list (drum roll please) . . . SAS. Not only is SAS (a software company headquartered in North Carolina) #1 but it has been on the list for 14 years. This is not a "mega" company with tens of thousands of employees and tens of billions of dollars. In fact, the post classifies SAS as a midsize company with about \$2 billion in revenue in 2009 and about 5,600 employees. So what are they doing right? Why are their people so happy?

Well, they do have some great benefits. In fact, the post claims "Its perks are epic: on-site healthcare, high quality childcare at \$410 per month, summer camp for kids, car cleaning, a beauty salon, and more – it's all enough to make a state-of-the-art, 66,000-square-foot gym seem like nothing special by comparison." But that is not what jumped out at me.

What jumped off of the screen when I read the short post was how one manager at SAS described the working experience.

According to CNN this manager, who is not named, said people were happy because: ". . . they feel **regarded – seen, attended to and cared for**. I have stayed for that reason, and love what I do for that reason." (I added the emphasis). Now how cool is that?

Look, your company probably can't add a great big gym or afford to have on site childcare or a beauty salon, but you can treat people better. Not only should this be easy for us to do, but it can't cost that much money. By the way, I am not saying that you don't already treat your people well. But do you treat them so well that they actually notice? Do they feel so engaged so "regarded" as the SAS manager put it that they love what they do?

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So, managers, HR people, you want a goal for this year that you can put in writing and give to your boss. One that won't cost anything but should make a positive impact on the bottom line? How about making sure that all of your employees feel "regarded"? Work at making them feel like you see them and care for them. And when the profits start rolling in, maybe you can put a gym in too. And that can't be all bad.

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