



[Growing Pains: How to Keep Employees Happy While Growing](#)

Written on August 28, 2013 at 5:45 am, by [Amy Higgins](#)



[inShare6](#)

Congratulations! Thanks to your vision, hard work and small business management skills, your business is growing.

Of course there is one other group you shouldn't forget to thank — your trusted employees.

Overall, your employees have been dedicated, loyal and seemingly... happy. So as your business grows, they should stay happy, right? Well, maybe, but then again... maybe not. And can you really afford to gamble on maybe?

For any business, growing from 50 to 100 employees is a big transition. While growth is seen as a positive from the perspective of business owners and outsiders, employees don't always see the upside.

Here are five tips for keeping your dedicated employees happy while your company grows.

Happiness Tip #1: Show appreciation

Your employees bought into your vision and worked hard to help you accomplish growth. Now is when they need to be thanked the most.

Assuming your staff feels appreciated could be a costly small business management error.

According to recruiting firm 24 Seven, 90% of employees are willing to consider changing jobs, and unsatisfied employees are 11 times more likely to move to a new organization in the next year.

In her book, *Make More Money by Making Your Employees Happy*, Dr. Noelle Nelson explains, "When employees feel that the company takes their interest to heart, then the employees will take company interests to heart."

If you can afford to, give your staff a bonus. Nothing says, "I couldn't have done it without you" like a nice bonus or gift. Just make sure to do it before the hiring binge to avoid awkwardness.

You might also want to try creative ways to have employees thank each other. Our small business team is trying out a cool tech startups, [MeritShare](#), to give each other props.

Happiness Tip #2: Invest in technology that makes work easier and helps your company

As your business grows, your technology should grow with it.

Manual work that once took ten minutes may now take two hours because of increased data and evolved processes. Not only is unnecessary manual work a waste of time, but it often consists of mindless activities that, over time, can cause your employees to feel like they're in a rut.

For example, [expense management software](#) can do wonders for your small business efficiency and, at the same time, give your employees the added functionality they need to do better work faster.

You get much needed insight, and your employees will appreciate the added functionality and extra time for creative tasks that lead to added productivity and profits.

Happiness Tip #3: Give employees a voice in how the company will evolve

No one knows your company like you, but your employees live their roles every weekday. Doesn't it make sense to leverage their expertise when deciding how specific roles within your company will evolve?

Leaning on your employees for input will do three things:

- 1.) Let your employees know their opinion is valued.
- 2.) Prevent your employees from feeling alienated.
- 3.) Make you a better small business manager. You can only be so many places at once. Your employees are your eyes and ears for everything else. Your odds of making sound decisions increase drastically when you get input from the stakeholders involved. Employees will also better understand unpopular decisions when involved in the solution.

For example, my boss just asked our team for input on our organization structure as we continue to grow our team.

Happiness Tip #4: Provide a personal growth plan

Some of your employees, although generally happy, may feel like they've got nothing left to prove in their career. Not all positions lead to the corner office and not everyone has what it takes, or a desire, to get there.

You want some of your staff to stay happy in their current roles because they're perfect for them. Personal development plans can be a great way to prevent your staff from becoming lethargic and can also motivate them by providing additional opportunities for personal growth within their current position.

Happiness Tip #5: Use activities to maintain a tight-knit team

Think about a previous job in your professional career. Now try to remember three of your fondest memories from that job. Go ahead, take all the time you need.

Now try it for a different job, if you've had more than one.

Notice a trend?

Did most of your memories happen when you were alone at your desk, or when you were among a group of people? Did they occur during routine, scheduled work activities or at another time?

My favorite activity at Concur was one my first day. We had a team offsite at a bowling alley.

Nothing like knocking down a few pins to really get to know your coworkers.

For most people, work can get monotonous. Team building activities give your employees something to look forward to. They also make it easier for your team to bond, feel closer as a unit and work better together – not to mention all the new memories and a lasting appreciation for a certain small business manager.

Want more ways to keep you, your employees and your bottom line happy? We'll keep the small business management tips coming when you follow us on [Twitter](#) and circle us on [Google+](#).

<http://www.concur.com/blog/en-us/small-business-management-employee-happiness-while-growing>