

Power of the people

Acquiring the best employees for success

From staff parties with international Grammy stars to yoga to building community playgrounds, fast-growing business outsourcer Acquire BPO has mastered the art of keeping employees motivated.

It's often said that a business is only as good as its employees, but attracting and keeping the best talent is easier said than done.

One company that knows a lot about the art of finding and retaining good workers is global business process outsourcer Acquire BPO.

Acquire BPO provides offshore contact centre and back office services. It is one of Australia's 100 fastest-growing businesses. In a little over a decade, Acquire BPO has grown to a workforce of 7000 in four countries and won multiple industry awards.

Acquire BPO chief executive officer Scott Stavretis – who this month was named Professional Services Executive of the Year by CEO Magazine – says the company does things differently to others.

"We certainly have a very large reputation for being a different player and not just being another 'me-too' company wherever we're recruiting," Stavretis says.

"We do things differently and that's right from the way we enjoy ourselves to the environment that we put our staff into."

The company has an extensive employee engagement program and knows how to reward its workforce, who are based in the US, the Philippines, the Dominican Republic and headquartered in Australia.

Last year, more than 900 people were promoted within the business. Acquire has an employee development team that advances people's 'soft skills', whether that be leadership training or how to manage their personal finances. They run more than 300 training sessions each year. Stavretis says this training is critical for the predominantly millennial workforce.

It's one of the reasons why in the Philippines, Acquire BPO enjoys one of the best brand recalls when people name a company they aspire to work for.

In 2017, Acquire BPO was the only Australian organisation to make the International Association of Outsourcing Professionals list of world's best outsourcing providers.

"Knowing that we look after our employees well is key to attracting the right people," Stavretis says.

But hiring the best employees is pointless if they leave within a year.

The secret to retaining staff, according to the CEO, is a mixture of hiring the right people and then investing in them.

There are dozens of staff at Acquire BPO who have been there since the beginning, and no less than 750 have been there for over five years – a number that's virtually unheard of in the industry.

"Employ the right person in the right role who



CEO of Acquire BPO Scott Stavretis (left) says investing in staff makes good business sense because 'high-performing teams translate to very happy clients'.

behaviours that are attached to those values, then we'll know that they will achieve the performance outcomes from there," Stavretis says.

"High-performing teams translate to very happy clients."

The different approach seems to be working, judging by the accolades the company is quickly gathering.

As well as being named in the Australian Financial Review's Fast 100 list of fastest-growing companies this year, Acquire BPO was last year named in Deloitte's Asia Pacific Technology Fast 500.

It also won the top award for the fastest-growing company in Asia Pacific at this year's International Business Awards, as well as Gold Winner for Excellence in Customer Service in the 2017 SSON Asia Excellence Awards.

The company has also received a number of industry awards for service standards and corporate social responsibility.

Stavretis says the industry recognition has helped many at Acquire BPO realise the important role they play.

"I think everybody in the organisation has seen the accolades, has seen what they've achieved together, and it's great from a morale point of view," he says.

"It really puts it into perspective, that every part that somebody plays in the business (leads to the) outcomes that we want and the success that we want to achieve and we keep pushing for."

actually wants to be there, then as a company really invest in that individual, ensure that individual is well-educated, developed in the role, provided the right training, support and ongoing coaching development," Stavretis says on retaining workers.

Then there's employee engagement. Acquire BPO has a dozen-strong team dedicated solely to this area.

The result is that apart from reward and recognition programs, regular parties and celebrations, employees enjoy free yoga classes, gym memberships, vaccinations and health insurance for themselves and their family.

They also get the chance to give back to their communities by taking part in the company's "Dare to Care" project of building and

maintaining playgrounds and parks in local areas.

"Work needs to be fun as well as business, so we pride ourselves on the amount of employee engagement activities and personal development (initiatives) we have for our staff," Stavretis says.

Business is business, however, and employees also undergo performance appraisals like in any other company.

Not surprisingly, Acquire BPO does things differently in this area too.

It recently changed from measuring workers by traditional performance alone to give an equal weight to how well people are aligned with its eight core values: ambition, collaboration, impact, judgment, leadership, leverage, passion and Stavretis's personal favourite, transparency.

"If people are aligned with our values and the



OUTSOURCE. OUTSMART. OUTPLAY.

Partner with Australia's largest outsourcer to the Philippines

Contact Centre | Back Office
1800 952 877
www.acquirebpo.com