

**Compensation Connections is a periodic publication from Columbia Compensation Consulting for those interested in total rewards, compensation and related topics.**

**Guest Columnist Jennifer Reimert**



Jennifer served as the vice president of total rewards for Symantec, where she was responsible for setting and leading Symantec's global total rewards

strategy. In her 17 years with the company, Reimert also managed HRIS, relocation and immigration, and served in various human resources operations roles. She holds a bachelor's degree in sociology-organizational studies from the University of California at Davis. She is a Certified Compensation Professional through WorldatWork, and has also completed the Human Resources Management Program at the University of California Extension at Santa Cruz. She is currently vice president of solutions consulting at Globoforce.

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## Unlocking the Future of the Human Workplace

By Jennifer Reimert, VP Solutions Consulting, Globoforce



From a very early age, I have been fascinated by people, what motivates them and what makes them tick...this fascination with people led me to study Sociology and eventually to a career in HR, specifically Compensation. What I have learned throughout years of studying people is that we all seek the same things, which Maslow identified in his Hierarchy of Needs. Once your physical and safety needs are met, we seek social needs, esteem & self-actualization. Or more simply, camaraderie, the feeling of belonging; meaning and value in what we do, and to be recognized for our efforts. How does this manifest in the workplace? That is my new fascination.

As a former VP of Total Rewards, business leaders often asked for my help in benchmarking the "right" salary because a member of their team voiced they could receive a better package elsewhere, were thinking of leaving, or some other reason that started as a 'compensation' issue. Often I learned that there was some other need not being met – the employee needed acknowledgement of their contributions, sought an understanding of their place in the company, or wanted a signal that their manager or the company was invested in them. Sound familiar? It was ironically social, esteem & self-actualization (all the "human" needs) that were manifesting as "safety" needs (compensation).

The key to unlocking the future of a more "human" workplace is knowing how to build a company culture that reminds employees of their worth as individuals. Research shows that the more companies embrace the human experience, the more engaged and motivated their employees will be. According to the Globoforce [Fall 2014 Workforce Mood Tracker survey](#), 69 percent of employees felt highly engaged at work when aspects of the human experience were promoted in their company, compared to only 28 percent when it was not.

Here are three keys to unlocking how your company can create a more human workplace:

1. **Say Thank You.** Feeling appreciated is a basic human need. People want to feel recognized and appreciated no matter where they are or what they're doing. The power of "thanks" is often overlooked in the workplace, but is one of the most effective ways to grow employees' loyalty, trust and dedication. "Thank you" creates a bond between the giver and receiver (i.e. the employer and employee, or employee and colleague), that helps employees learn from successes and failures, and celebrate behaviors that embody company values. Saying "thank you" is a way to encourage the right behaviors you want to see replicated in a company, and inspires a shared purpose and vision. And it's free!
2. **Create a Culture of Recognition.** Recognition in the workplace has the power to make employees feel more valued and motivated to do great work, thus increasing a company's bottom line. According to a 2013 Globoforce/SHRM study, 35% of employers that recognized employees for their hard work saw an increase in customer satisfaction, 30% saw an increase in employee productivity and 29% saw an increase in profits. That is compelling data that will make your CEO and CFO sit up and take notice! Beyond impacting the bottom line, as people give and receive recognition, a

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At **Columbia Compensation Consulting**, you are working with someone with over 30 years of expertise in executive, equity, incentive, sales and base compensation. My consultative style includes a D-T-S approach to working with clients: D for Do, since most clients have already identified the need and are looking for specific deliverables; T for Teach, where those opportunities present themselves and transferring knowledge to the client can enable self-sufficiency in the future, and S for Support either through ongoing retainer support or coaching of those then delivering. Go to [www.columbiacomp.com](http://www.columbiacomp.com) for more information or to request a contact.



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**My Sales Executive is talking about doing a "Spiff." What's that and why would we do it?**  
A SPIFF is a "Special Incentive For the Field." Nothing wrong with doing a Spiff now and then, especially when it helps push specific results in a limited window of time. For example, if the results-to-date for the quarter are 90% of plan, and there are two weeks left, a Spiff might just be enough to push extra results out of sales agents to get to the goal.  
I've seen other great places to use Spiffs, for example when cross-selling across product lines or business units and you don't want to complicate the plan design with additional elements in On-Target-Earnings. Of course, "stuff happens" too, and a Spiff enables some flexibility in how you direct sales. But a Spiff or series of Spiffs shouldn't be the way people get to their OTE, otherwise you might have some much larger issues to deal with in your plan design. And it's not a bus that anyone can board, it should really only be for people that sell.

**Unlocking the Future (continued from page 1)**

contagious energy emerges, and the act of celebrating people's achievements becomes a fixture in a company's culture.

- Embrace the Social Workplace.** It's no secret that employees often stay at work for the people, meaning their colleagues and friends. Work friendships are the bedrock of our work experience. According to Globoforce's Fall 2014 Workforce Mood Tracker survey, employees were nearly twice as likely to stay with a company if they had friends at work, and nearly 3x more likely to say they love working there. Not only will they then be more highly engaged, they are more likely to refer their company to their friends, and as HR professionals, you all know the power of employee referrals! Organizations that harness the transformative power of emotional connections among colleagues, through social technology and company events, will see stronger retention rates and higher engagement.

The benefits of creating a workplace culture built on humanity are endless.

I invite you to continue the exploration and discussion of the future of the human workplace by joining me at Globoforce's WorkHuman conference, a first-of-its-kind event that's designed to bring together people from all disciplines, careers and regions to learn and share ideas about how to create a more humanity centric workplace. Join Globoforce and world-renowned thought leaders, including Arianna Huffington, Sean Achor, Adam Grant and Rob Lowe. Visit [www.workhuman.com](http://www.workhuman.com) for more details.

**We Didn't Hit Our Incentive Plan Metric, But....**

Have you been in a position where a metric for your incentive plan was not attained, BUT you don't think it's fair to penalize plan participants? Here are some common "metric failings" and suggested consideration for treatment.

Circumstance	Adjust	Do not adjust	Consider Adjust
Accounting rule change	✓		
Acquisition/Divestiture	✓		
Recession			✓
Legal action			✓
Planning error		✓	
Change in currency rate		✓	

**Top Ten Reasons Why I Like Working for Myself**

1. My razor blades last longer!
2. I have met so many different people that I would never have met sitting in a cube or office building all day.
3. I have discovered dozens of interesting companies that I never knew existed!
4. My office chair is a green La-Z-Boy.
5. My receptionist (Winnie the Welsh Corgi) always tells me when it's dinner time.
6. When I give advice, not only do people usually take it, they pay me for it!
7. My "Other Related Duties as Required" includes walking down fairways and the occasional birdie.
8. I'm one of the few bosses I've ever worked for that didn't micro-manage me!
9. I get to make the coffee the way I like it – every day.
10. I'm low in the range and a top performer – you know what that means!