

Retail leaders need to rethink staff loyalty to stave off retail apocalypse

Best selling author calls for retailers to show staff more loyalty.

SAN FRANCISCO , CALIFORNIA , UNITED STATES , November 26, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Author of 'Fairly Common Tales', Glen [Sharkey](#), wants American retailers – and Western countries in general – to rethink their loyalty to staff because the current environment of 'none given and none expected' serves nobody.

Sharkey said brick-and-mortar retailers – struggling to stay afloat in what many are dubbing the retail apocalypse – do have a competitive advantage: their people.



Retail prosperity starts with leadership.

“You can deploy good point-of-sale systems like [Vend](#). You can improve stock visibility and offer branch routings. Even deliver on your multichannel customer experience – but it’s all for nothing without great people engagement,” says Sharkey.

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Leaders who believe they can't find staff are acting out a self-fulfilling prophecy”
Glen Sharkey

A brick-and-mortar store’s ability to make people feel welcome, valued and liked cannot be underestimated as a competitive edge. If your customer feels like you care, they’ll pick you over anybody else any day of the week, and they’ll pay a premium.

“However, retail isn’t well paid and people don’t tend to stay. If your people won’t stay, neither will your customers. But what if we approached it differently? What if we started offering promotions and career paths and stepped up our inputs into frontline leadership?”

Sharkey says he recently worked with a company that was in dire straits because it had such a poor reputation in the community. Staff would come and go and the company seemed unable to attract talent to its ranks.

“Only when the management sat back and analysed their own attitudes and mindset did they start to turn the ship around. Today, business is brisk and the whole culture of the organisation is challenging, exciting and optimistic.”

The author, who talks about communication, motivation and relationships in the workplace, said there are three things that retail leaders need to start doing in order to tip the balance back to bricks-and-mortar:

1. Change the leadership mindset

Sharkey says that leaders who believe they can't find staff are acting out a self-fulfilling prophecy.

"Change the mindset of the leadership. One of the biggest weaknesses in bricks and mortar retail at the moment is the mindset of management. If even the top leadership is feeling demoralised, saying things like 'we can't get good staff' quickly becomes a mindset.

"Management needs to rethink loyalty to staff, but it's more than that. Retail leadership everywhere needs to review the prevailing mindset, and then challenge it and challenge it again."

2. Empower staff

Sharkey says leadership can help engender greater loyalty staff by investing in the personal and professional development of their people.

"People are more loyal when leadership is genuinely interested in their development and their future – if you take a genuine interest in a staff member's long-term journey they will, ironically, want to stay with you longer.

"Leaders who avoid having conversations about the future because they want people to stay in the present and not leave, are not as likely to tick the loyalty box. It comes down to a genuine interest in people."

3. Have courageous conversations

A big part of turning the retail ship around is attracting good quality staff, but it also means having the courage to shift people out of roles for which they're not suited, to create vacancies for the right people.

"Equip your leadership with the confidence and competence they will need to have those courageous conversations. Put people before profit and profit follows," he said.

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