



Workers and management from Seagull Lodge meet in an open environment to discuss their improvement ideas

SCORE South Africa

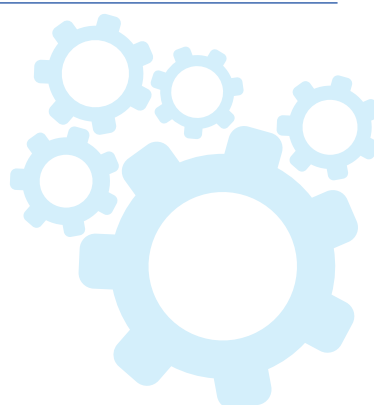
A case study from Seagull Lodge

REWARDS AND RECOGNITION IGNITE A RENEWED SENSE OF PRIDE FOR EMPLOYEES AT SEAGULL LODGE

COMPANY PROFILE

SME:	Seagull Lodge
Location:	uMhlathuze Municipality
Staff:	15 (72% women)
Established:	2009
Sector:	Tourism

St Valentine's Day set the perfect scene for a new staff suggestion scheme at Seagull Lodge. Both workers and guests were able to feel the love when one innovative suggestion resulted in weekend getaways for them both.



How did they do it?

Seagull Lodge is a self-catering lodge in Richards Bay, South Africa. Competing with many full service operations also located near the beach front, the lodge was struggling to attract local clientele.

Then in 2015, after completing SCORE Training Module 1: Workplace Cooperation, Seagull Lodge hosted their first Enterprise Improvement Team (EIT) meeting to discuss and prioritize areas of development. Discussions quickly moved to the patronage of the lodge, which largely comprised of business travelers and families from outside the city.

During the baseline visit, the SCORE trainer who worked with Seagull Lodge had commented on how well organized, clean and cooperative operations already were. This gave rise to the question, What tool could be used to produce better marketing strategies that would attract new clientele, and simultaneously strengthen collaboration between management and workers?

The result was a suggestion scheme, with staff members asked to share their ideas about how the lodge might be better promoted in the local area. To inspire submissions, management offered a reward for the best contributions, that would also later be implemented.

The new scheme happened to coincide with the celebration of St Valentine's Day in February, which stimulated many romantic contributions.



Staff were eager to contribute their ideas to the new suggestion box.

The key results in data

From 15 staff members, a total of 13 suggestions were submitted for consideration. Two women, both house-keepers who had worked with Seagull Lodge for a number of years, were awarded for their suggestion.

The marketing strategy? To produce pamphlets for the workers to distribute in town. Capitalizing on the occasion, it would also include a special Valentine's Day offer – R1500 for 2 nights stay, plus the opportunity to win a Valentine's Day Hamper if presented upon check-in. Out of 500 pamphlets distributed in the local area, 7 couples booked the weekend special and one lucky couple won the hamper.

Management of the Lodge awarded the winning employees' a fully paid overnight stay, dinner and breakfast, with full paying-guest treatment.

The two women, Londiwe and Pamela, earn USD 230 (R3,000) per month as house-keepers, and had never considered the prospect of spending the night as a guest at the lodge; which charges USD 46 (R600) per night.

Initially apprehensive, the two women were able to invite a guest, and to enjoy the luxuries they themselves would normally afford their clientele. As a result, the women felt both valued and proud of their work. ***"I now clean the rooms with absolute attention and care and with an understanding that I could be the one using the room"***, said Londiwe.

Pamela, who had invited her boyfriend for the overnight stay, felt that her partner was better able to understand and respect the work she does. Consequently, she too began to appreciate her workplace and bosses even more, ***"I felt very important and understood that my opinions have value"***.

A culture change that supports growth

From Pamela and Londiwe's happiness and recognition, a renewed sense of hope was generated amongst the remaining staff. Collectively, workers saw themselves in these first two winners and together looked forward to the next opportunity that would enable them to enjoy such recognition and reward. Subsequently, the next call for suggestions on company cost savings, received an overwhelming 17 suggestions.



The revenue that resulted was R10,500, distinctly more than the expenditure of R500 that was spent on the hamper and pamphlet printing. Londiwe, House Keeper & ESS Winner, Seagull Lodge

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