



p-TIPS

Keeping employees happy (and it's not about the money)

How do Asia's best employers treat their employees? *The Far Eastern Economic Review* (17 April 2003 edition) analyzed the results of a survey by human resources consulting firm Hewitt Associates of the USA. The respondents were 84,183 employees, chief executives, and human resources staff in more than 300 companies in China, Hong Kong, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Republic of China, and Thailand. Site visits and interviews were also conducted.

Being among the best employers means having the happiest employees. Although it may surprise some, the survey results showed that pay was not the most important factor in job satisfaction. Recognition, benefits, work-life balance, and career opportunity were ranked as more important. Not surprisingly, eight of the top 20 in the Hewitt Associates survey were in the hospitality industry. Because hotel customers are in direct contact with staff at all levels, savvy hotel managers have long realized that contented, confident employees give better service and are an important part of the product.

While by no means an exhaustive list, the following were common themes in the many examples of how Asia's best employers reduce staff turnover, inspire excellent job performance, and ultimately benefit their bottom line:

- 1) Respect every employee, consult with them on changes, act on their suggestions, and recognize contributions.
- 2) Create a positive work environment where all employees have the tools needed to do their jobs.
- 3) Care for employees as a family, be open and honest, and maintain communication.
- 4) Trust employees. Give them responsibilities to create a culture of performance.
- 5) Ensure that company goals and objectives are in line with employee goals.
- 6) Provide training and development opportunities; let employees know that career advances are possible.
- 7) Pay people fairly and look after their welfare.