

Best Places to Work: The New Home Company Takes Second Place in the Medium Category

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Description: Publicly held homebuilder focused on the design, construction and sale of innovative and consumer-driven homes in Southern California, the Bay Area and Sacramento

Top local executive: Kevin Carson, Northern California president

Local employees: 55

Total employees: 300

Headquarters: Ailso Viejo

Describe your company culture in five words: “Team-oriented, dedicated, family-oriented, passionate, innovative”

Tell us three specific ways you ensure all of your employees know they are valued:

- “We survey employees annually and implement many of their ideas and suggestions.
- “We recognize performance during our quarterly employee meetings but overall we have a culture of recognizing performance through feedback, accolades, special events, etc.
- “We host Fun@Work Events that are focused on health, community and fun.”

What concrete steps do your senior leaders take to create a great work environment for all employees? “The leadership team provides team members with flexible work schedules so they can balance family needs and participate in their children’s activities. We foster an open-door policy so employees can discuss concerns or suggestions at all levels within the company. In addition, we are actively involved in community outreach and volunteer events so employees can give back to the community in which we work and live. This past year we added a community service holiday where employees come together on one day to serve in the community – it was huge success.”

Give us some specific examples of how your company creates opportunities for individual development and career growth at all levels of the company: “The

company promotes from within nearly 75 percent of the time. All leaders conduct mid-year informal goal sessions with all team members. We sponsor a bi-monthly next-gen lunch-n-learn where team members spend time learning from leaders and colleagues from various disciplines in the organization. We launched a future leader development program where employees from all divisions participated in a four-month long leadership development program.

“We have a learning platform that we utilize called Grovo that allows people to actively seek topics they’d like more information about. We also have a tuition reimbursement program that allows team members to pursue higher education that relates to their current or potential future role in the company.”

How would you describe your company in 30 seconds to someone you meet at a cocktail party?“We build homes and create neighborhoods with tremendous passion and heart. Our vision statement is to “Build a Better Life” for our home buyers, for our trade partners and for our team members and their families. It is an extreme privilege to build homes and create neighborhoods.”

What are the most popular perks you offer to employees?“Casual Fridays — we get off at 3 p.m. every Friday, wellness reimbursement, popcorn machine/snacks, 401(k) company match, tuition reimbursement program, new employee referral award program, fun-at-work events.”

How does being a Best Place to Work affect your bottom line?“To have our entire team value our business and understand how they contribute to the overall success of the company is truly a competitive advantage. We provide the environment so that our team members can do the best work of their lives. By providing this environment we certainly have less turnover, but we also have passionate, dedicated, caring team members that view work as far more than a job – we are family.”

What’s the biggest mistake an owner/manager can make in the workplace?“Not listening to their team. We all get extremely busy with work and when times get busy, managers can make the mistake of not taking the time to listen to their team members. Often when times are the busiest is when listening should occur more. Busy times often bring out some of the flaws or breakdowns in systems or processes, so by listening to what fellow team members are saying, things can get back on track and the issues raised can be addressed. Listening is absolutely the best way a manager can show a team member that they are a valued and necessary part of the overall mission of the company.”

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