



REAP Be Local Awards

Category: Empowering Employees Leader

1. Description of the organization

The Commons is a boutique cowork, meeting & event space where some of Calgary's most talented and up-and-coming entrepreneurs, businesses and innovators meet, connect and collaborate.

We offer a perfectly equipped environment tailored to the needs of the modern-day entrepreneur. Desk space, private offices, meeting rooms, event venues and a community of phenomenal entrepreneurs – all in one stylish space.

2. Why does paying a Living Wage matter to your business?

Employees who work for a small business like ours are one of a kind. Working for entrepreneurs is profoundly different from working a corporate, downtown office job. Our staff pour their whole heart into the work they do, wear many hats throughout the day and truly understand what it means to work in an ever-changing environment. Without their buy in, our business would not be able to survive and thrive.

We hire employees that can do things better than we can, which means from our strategy team to our janitorial team to our front of house staff everyone plays an integral part. No one is more important than the other and we believe it is only fair to offer adequate compensation. And, honestly, it didn't occur to us to pay less and, as our business grows, it is our intention to pay more.

3. What other HR practices do you have in place that represent an investment in your employees?

The nature of our business allows for our employees to be part of an innovative space that offers a multitude of areas for professional development, personal growth and wellness. We encourage our employees to take part in weekly yoga and fitness classes, lunch and learns and facilitate networking opportunities with the Calgary Chamber of Commerce, ILEA Calgary or other local organizations.

We strongly believe that being well-rounded in one's personal life contributes to a better team dynamic and therefore we actively encourage personal development that is not work-related through goal-setting and accountability meetings.

We value our staff's time and like to foster an environment that they can thrive in. Each staff member gets the opportunity to work offsite during their weekly flex day. Whenever possible, we also facilitate remote work opportunities where our staff can work from abroad.

We also value our team's input. All members of our staff are part of our strategy team and have a voice in how the company is run.

4. What other HR practices do you have in place that represent an investment in your employees?*

As most small businesses that does not have an internal HR department, it can be a challenge forging and maintaining employee engagement and implementing a mediator between the business owners and the staff. This is why we work with Calgary based organization Culturesmith.

From a colours based behavioural assessment test during the hiring phase, daily emotional blindspotting tools and a daily coaching protocol called SPIRAL, the programs and coaches at Culturesmith are an integral part to forging engagement amongst our employees. We employ a variety of their programs from individual, daily coaching sessions to single day team sessions or monthly coaching and training sessions. We have found that this has resulted in more open and honest team communication that values differences in how our individual staff members operate, learn and behave.

*BONUS: This practice was adopted within the last 12 months.