



VOICE OF BUSINESS

Give young professionals chance to ditch desks



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As a Gen X leader in 2022, I remember the days when I was working hard to get face-time with the boss, prove myself to my peers, and taking on new projects that I had no clue how to manage. I was also doing all this on a salary of \$19,000. It wasn't easy, but it got done.

The approach from today's young professionals (YPs) is different, and there is nothing wrong with that, but we have to make sure we are providing the right environment for success - and success in Dayton means interpersonal connections, building relationships, and creating a tribe.

These foundational principles of business advancement will never change. Providing this environment has become

increasingly more difficult as we enter an era of more flexible workspaces. As leaders, we have to be more intentional about creating opportunities and building a workplace ecosystem that allows these future leaders to showcase their skills. At the same time, YPs have to be willing to step away from the desk too.

Professional growth doesn't come from sitting behind a desk eight hours a day. It takes a commitment beyond the tactical work to invest time in others, connect with people in-person, and have a truly authentic appreciation for others to build valuable relationships. Experienced, insightful leaders see the value in creating this type of environment for young up-and-comers, and young leaders should embrace it in order to achieve true professional and personal growth.

The way our current YPs approach a challenge is exciting and refreshing, and the perspective they bring to the workplace is uniquely them. I'm fortunate to have a tremendous team at the chamber, and a number of

Residential Home Sales

| | February 2022 | February 2021 | %Change | YTD '22 | YTD '21 | %Change |
|--------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------|---------------|---------------|---------|
| Number of Homes Sold | 979 | 1020 | -4.02 | 2019 | 2050 | -1.51 |
| Total Home Sales | \$212,145,097 | \$197,928,332 | 7.18% | \$432,541,127 | \$396,689,451 | 9.04% |
| Average Sale Price (\$) | \$216,696 | \$194,047 | 11.67% | \$214,235 | \$193,507 | 10.71% |

Source: Dayton Area Board of Realtors, Dayton Area Home Sales

Sales Tax Collections

| County | Current Rate | February 2022 | February 2021 | 12 Mos Change | YTD 2022 | YTD 2021 | YTD Change |
|---------------------|--------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| Butler | 0.75 | \$3,822,657 | \$3,666,011 | 4.27% | \$8,977,491 | \$8,427,484 | 6.53% |
| Clark | 1.50 | \$2,163,755 | \$2,158,397 | 0.25% | \$5,076,272 | \$5,039,725 | 0.73% |
| Darke | 1.50 | \$822,708 | \$757,640 | 8.59% | \$1,853,528 | \$1,724,549 | 7.48% |
| Greene | 1.00 | \$2,346,800 | \$2,319,336 | 1.18% | \$5,825,724 | \$5,416,929 | 7.55% |
| Miami | 1.25 | \$1,697,002 | \$1,601,696 | 5.95% | \$3,948,284 | \$3,693,079 | 6.91% |
| Montgomery | 1.25 | \$8,522,535 | \$8,100,932 | 5.20% | \$20,087,488 | \$18,118,211 | 10.87% |
| Preble | 1.50 | \$573,119 | \$541,834 | 5.77% | \$1,226,395 | \$1,180,280 | 3.91% |
| Warren | 1.25 | \$4,529,493 | \$4,327,575 | 4.67% | \$10,903,068 | \$10,307,535 | 5.78% |
| Region Total | | \$24,478,068 | \$23,473,420 | 4.28% | \$57,898,251 | \$53,907,792 | 7.40% |

Source: https://tax.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/tax/researcher/tax-analysis/tax-data-series/publications_tds_sales

them are the best young professionals I've ever had the honor to work alongside.

I learn from these leaders every day and in turn, I personally believe I have a responsibility to make sure they have every opportunity for success. It's my responsibility to provide the same experiences and professional risk-taking opportunities I once had as a

24-year-old.

Creating an environment where YPs have the chance to meet internal and external business leaders is a must. Forcing them out of their comfort zones and into situations where they network with others, carry on interpersonal conversations, and build relationships, is essential. It might make them uncomfortable today, but they

will appreciate it tomorrow. We will build the community and our YPs will hustle it.

Dayton business leaders have a reputation of coming together in this community to create change. Now, we must use this skill to protect one of our greatest resources and the next generation of business leaders in this community.

We have to fill the pipeline, but it can't be done sitting at a desk. Let's come together to find a way to invest in our next generation of leadership, build a system that allows them to connect in-person with peers, and give them an environment ripe with opportunity.

Chris Kershner is the CEO and president of the Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce.

DAYTON AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE CALENDAR OF EVENTS

■ Retaining Talent: Employer Best Practice Series, June 28, 7:30-9:30 a.m. Topic -- Promotion from Within: Creating Pathways for Promotion. Speaker -- Hannah Walker and Erin Kunkle, JJR Solutions. Location

-- Montgomery County Employment Opportunity Center, 4303 W. Third St. ■ Safety Council Informational Session & Networking, June 29, 4-6 p.m. Topic -- What the Dayton/Miami Valley Safety Council can offer

your business. Location -- The Dublin Pub, 300 Wayne Ave. ■ Breakfast Briefing, July 8, 8-9:15 a.m. Speaker -- Walter (Wally) Sackett, president, Kettering Health. Location -- NCR Country Club, 4435

Dogwood Trail, Kettering ■ Retaining Talent: Employer Best Practice Series, July 12, 7:30-9:30 a.m. Topic -- Banish Burnout -- Keeping Your Employees Happy & Motivated. Location -- Montgomery County

Employment Opportunity Center, 4303 W. Third St. ■ Government Affairs Breakfast, July 15, 8:30-10 a.m. Speaker -- Sen. Rob Portman. Location -- NCR Country Club, 4435 Dogwood Trail, Kettering ■ Safety Breakfast with

the Experts, July 21, 8-9 a.m. Topic -- How Mental Health Impacts Safety & Productivity. Speaker -- Janella Straw, MPH; Lifestyle Coach, Premier Community Health. Location -- The Mandalay, 2700 E. River Road

Brewery

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Piqua regarding a vision of a brewery anchoring the redevelopment of the Lock 9 Park on the corner of Water and Main streets.

He said the new brewery is going into a completely renovated 11,000 square foot space with a full view of the Great Miami River.

"We were able to apply what we have learned over the last six years to this new design-build," Moore said. "We are tripling our production capacity with a fully vis-

ible brewhouse that allows for additional expansion."

The brewery, expected to open this fall, will also have a larger kitchen and a private event space that customers will be able to reserve for special events, Moore said.

Moore is originally from Fairborn but spent much of his childhood growing up on a farm in Adams County, in southern Ohio. He said he made his way back to the Miami Valley in 2000 and now lives in Springboro with his wife, Kristy.

He explained that his brother-in-law in Fort Collins, Colorado, was the first

to introduce him to craft beer and home brewing. He said it wasn't until a tour at New Belgium in Fort Collins that he became very interested in the industry.

"It was refreshing to hear the stories of such humble beginnings growing to one of the country's largest employee-owned craft breweries," Moore said. "Every brewery we visited gave us directions to their next favorite in town."

Moore said an industry full of craft beer enthusiasts supporting each other was not the standard of business he was used to.

In 2008, he started home-brewing as a hobby and shared his beers with family and friends.

"Our little hobby quickly grew into a passion that took us on a wild ride to owning our first brewery and we never looked back," Moore said.

He said his favorite part of his brewing journey is the "endless creativity of brewing new beers and providing a fun, inviting place for our team members to thrive and guests to enjoy."

"Our goal is to help guide you to your favorite beverage, and we want that expe-

rience to be memorable," he added.

For those thinking about starting their own brewery, Moore said they should join the OCBA as a brewery in planning to learn more about the industry.

For more information on the OCBA, visit www.ohiocraftbeer.org.

For more information about Crooked Handle Brewing Co., visit www.crookedhandle.com or the brewpub's Facebook page.

Contact this reporter at 937-409-9623 or email Natalie.Jones@coxinc.com.



Crooked Handle Brewing Co. is located at 760 N. Main St. in Springboro.

Office

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asked in early 2021 about the share of their workers who would be back in the office five days a week in the future, executives said 50%; now that percentage is down to 20, according to a recent survey from the consulting firm Gartner. Office occupancy across the country plateaued in May at around 43% as COVID cases spiked again, according to data from Kastle, a security firm.

The vast majority of Americans, particularly those in the service sector and low-wage jobs, have been working in person throughout the pandemic. But those who were able to work remotely got attached to the flexibility. In a January survey, the Pew Research Center found that 60% of workers whose jobs can be done at home wanted to work remote most or all of the time.

"What is abundantly clear is that there are fewer and fewer companies expecting their employees to be in the office five days a week," said Brian Kropp, vice president in Gartner's human resources practice. "Even some of the major compa-

nies that came out and said we want our employees in the office five days a week are starting to backtrack."

There's Apple, which recently suspended its requirement that employees return to the office at least three days a week. There's McKinsey, which intends at some point to set clearer norms around office attendance, with the goal of ensuring that people get the value of in-person collaboration, but for now is allowing individuals to set agreements with their clients and managers, according to its head of human resources.

Google postponed its return to office planned for January, and by now roughly 10% of its employees have received permission to go fully remote or relocate. Intuit had at one point considered some kind of rigid return-to-office plan for its 11,500 U.S. employees but instead allowed managers and teams to set their own expectations of which days to go in.

"Being prescriptive creates all kind of bureaucracy, because then you have to get management layers involved and it just becomes very rule-based," said Sasan Goodarzi, the chief executive of Intuit.

"We don't believe you have to be in the office 40 hours a week, and we also don't believe you can be all virtual."

RTO plans have unfolded like a giant game of chicken. Executives told workers to come back to the office, then delayed their plans as COVID cases continued to spike. Business leaders accepted the uncertainty, hoping it was temporary. Until it was clear that it wasn't. Workers got extra time at home, and extra leeway to test the rigidity of their bosses' plans. Now some companies are expecting people back but have lost the leverage to enforce that because of the constant flux in deadlines.

"What we've decided to do is say, 'What is working?'" said Joan Burke, head of human resources at DocuSign, which postponed four return-to-office dates before deciding not to require attendance for now. "Let's learn from what's working and put in place guardrails if we think things aren't."

Some executives hope that if they can get their employees to spend some time in the office, the workers will realize that they liked it more than they remembered. Christina Ross, chief execu-

utive of Cube, a software company with 75 employees, used to consider herself a proud office acolyte. Before the pandemic she hired an engineer who lived in Texas and insisted that he move to New York for the job. She couldn't imagine building a long-term relationship with an employee she had never met in person.

Now she calls her company "remote first." She briefly toyed with the idea of requiring a return to Cube's office, but decided instead to make it as enticing an option as possible. She even moved the New York location to make the commute easier for staff living in Brooklyn.

"People voted with their feet in not necessarily coming back," Ross said. "It can be disappointing to put a lot of effort into building the office environment and then not have people come in."

Some business leaders have taken a harder line. Elon Musk, for example, told SpaceX and Tesla employees that they would have to spend a minimum of 40 hours in the office or be fired. Many others, like Google and Microsoft, have opted for a softer tack by filling their workplaces with cold brew, snacks, tote bags and beer.

But those corporate carrots have their limits, and few are willing to try out the sticks.

"It's almost like a meme now of the 2018 office -- 'Hey we have bagels and snacks and Ping-Pong tables,'" Ross said. "That's not a trade-off for a commute."

Many companies are accepting the reality that requiring a return to the office could put them at odds with their peers and mean losing out on talent. In some industries, and in some areas of the country, an office-centric culture is becoming a quirk, not a norm.

Other executives are insisting on a full-throated return, confident about the value of having people at their desks five days a week. Tom Siebel, chief executive of C3 AI, an 800-person artificial intelligence company, required his workers to return to the office full time last June. He said the requirement had only heightened the company's appeal to a certain type of job applicant.

"For people who want to work at home on Zoom, there's companies that are like that," he said. "Go work for Salesforce."

Siebel said he had "the only full parking lot in Sil-

icon Valley" and sees that as a competitive advantage. "We don't invent rockets that land themselves by people working on Zoom calls once a week," the chief executive added. "We have to get together in a room and get on whiteboards and fail and fail and fail until you succeed."

But for executives who haven't doubled down, larger questions loom over the future of their offices. Take Manny Medina, chief executive of Outreach, an artificial intelligence sales company with roughly 600 employees in Seattle, most of whom are encouraged to spend 40% of their work time in the office. From a mostly empty office, Medina said he had grown accustomed to fielding challenges from employees about the value of in-person collaboration.

Recently a junior employee attended the chief executive's virtual office hours and said he didn't understand why he should be required to commute when working from home allowed him to balance productivity with his social life and jujitsu training.

"I said, 'Fair point, and you should think about what your priority is,'" Medina said. "If you want to be an MMA fighter, go do that."