

Country Heights: CHamps!



A property conglomerate that primarily focuses on property development and investment holdings, with subsidiaries involved in diverse industries such as health, hospitality, membership & tourism and education.

“If your plan is for one year plant rice; if your plan is for ten years grow trees; but if your plan is for a hundred years educate your people.”

- Dianna Lee, Group CEO Country Heights Holding Berhad

Overview

Country Heights strives to gain a competitive edge and maintain sustainability to build a strong Human Resources Development foundation. Since 2012, Country Heights is dedicated to transform its Human Resource initiatives by formulating systematic programmes for its employees towards a purposeful and effective workforce.

The launch of “CHamps!” – Country Heights Amazing PeopleS! (Plural of people, Def : a body of persons that are united by a common culture, tradition, or a sense of kinship) is to create a common identity among all employees under different business units towards one goal, one culture and one direction.

Objectives

The primary objective of CHamps! is to provide programmes that resonate with their employees, allowing them to be a proud CHamps! The programmes also aim to create unity, inclusiveness and a heightened awareness and energy amongst employees.

Each employee is recognised as a CHamps! and abides by the common values listed below as a guide in one’s individual conduct in the working environment.

Country Heights AMazing PeopleS!

- C** – I am Caring & Committed!
- H** – I am Healthy & Honest!
- a** – I am Appreciative and Assertive!
- m** – I am Mannered & Motivated!
- p** – I am Persistent & Positive!
- s** – I am Sincere & Successful!
- !** – Oomph! (Energy)

Initiatives

Leadership support has been fundamental to the success of the company's programmes. With the strong support and transparent lines of communication from the leadership, the company is able to focus its efforts on the following initiatives:

Extended Maternity Leave

Additional 30-day half-day maternity leave with full pay on top of the 60 days paid leave as per the statutory requirement.

Designated Car Park

Allocated car park facilities located closer to the office for mothers-to-be during their pregnancy.

Flexi-work arrangement

Flexi-hours for pregnancy check-ups as and when needed to ease regular doctor's visits. At supervisors' discretion, expecting employees are allowed to start work after their doctor's visits as opposed to taking the full-day off for check-ups.

Childcare Centre /Preschool

Launched in 2013, an in-house childcare centre located within the Mines is available for employees at a subsidised rate. The set-up of 8 Virtues Montessori Preschools allows parents to work at ease, knowing their child is well-looked after. Through their day-to-day activities and a series of creative and exciting lessons, children will learn about the importance of filial piety, brotherhood, loyalty, trust, etiquette, righteousness, integrity, and humility. Values are placed significant emphasis and this is what sets the 8 Virtues Montessori Preschools apart from the rest. For example, while children in most childcare centres only learn that the letter 'A' is for 'Apple', the children in 8 Virtues Montessori Preschools are taught that 'A' is for the value 'Appreciate'.

Start of CHamps!

In line with Country Heights' underlying commitment to listen to their employees, the management has enabled various platforms for employees to share their thoughts and feedback on current and upcoming initiatives.

With the ideas and feedback gathered from the employees, CHamps! was launched and announced at "Yay! Day", which is an annual conference attended by all employees, to kick-start the financial year. To build on the enthusiasm of CHamps!, internal memos and roadshows are regularly organized and coordinated todate to continuously advocate the initiative to employees.

Ongoing Initiatives

Since the official launch, the initiative has been well received with positive feedback from the employees, who have adopted the initiatives fairly quickly which made the HR team's job much smoother.

Also recognising the importance of integrating their new joiners to the organisation, each new joiner is provided with thorough briefing of the organisation's culture and initiatives during the Induction Programme.

Challenges

While employees were overall happy about the programme, the challenges faced were at the start of the implementation process where the project team had to ensure a solid communications plan was in place to reach out to over 1000 employees. As Country Heights has a very diverse workforce, the project team had to ensure its communication plan reached all employees. For instance, posters and departmental briefing sessions were organised for employees without email access.

Sustainability of the initiatives was the other key area that the top management placed emphasis on. HR was tasked to monitor the initiative closely to ensure it remains sustainable and beneficial to employees. Since the launch in 2013, CHamps! has not only managed to sustain all its initiatives, but also continued introducing better programmes for all.

Outcome

Through their commitment of being a caring and supportive employer, Country Heights has been successful at leveraging the value of their HR initiatives and translating these values into positive outcomes as outlined below:

- Employee engagement survey results shows that 93% of CHamps! love what they are doing while 85% are proud to be CHamps!
- Women comprise more than 56 percent of the manager group.

Country Heights believes that their initiatives have been successful in retaining key talents and maintaining a positive employee engagement level. This has helped create a harmonious working environment where expectations between management and employees are verbalised and understood.

To continue their efforts in achieving its organisation's goals, the management is committed to continue working closely with CHamps! club to explore more programmes that will benefit its employees. In the near future, HR also intends to formalise a flexible work arrangements policy..

Success Factors

- Leadership
 - IDEA BANK, an email account operates by Group CEO personally as a direct channel communication for employees from all levels
- Organisational Alignment
 - Embedded culture of common core values lived by employees
 - Clear and transparent communication through IDEA bank, Quarterly Management Reviews, Yay! Day and other supervisor-employee engagement sessions

- Marketplace Connection & CSR-related Initiatives
 - Contribution to the larger community to encourage its employees to be socially responsible.
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Awards

- 2013 : “Top 5 Companies : Best Employees Healthcare and Wellness Programmes”, Benefits Asia Awards
 - 2014: “Top 40 Companies to Work For in Asia” – HR ASIA
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Website

www.countryheights.com.my