

USE FUN TO FIGHT LOW MOTIVATION

by Greg Smith

Everyone has had a bad hair day, but how about a bad tie, bad hat or bad shoe day? More and more businesses are putting together contests on the ugliest dressed. Why? Another organization sponsors an annual turkey bowl.

Workers go out on the loading dock, take a frozen turkey and try to knock down as many empty wine bottles as possible. This is not evidence of companies gone nuts, but tactics used to stem off a serious business problem. The biggest problem facing business today is how to find, keep and motivate workers. The other problem slapping them in the face is high turnover. Just like the Titanic, today's mobile employees jump ship for as little as a \$1.00 hour raise. A company experiencing high turnover has a serious financial problem. It costs anywhere from \$4000-\$15,000 to recruit, hire and train a new employee. One Atlanta company lost 420 of the 431 employees they hired this year. If it cost them \$4000 per employee that equates to a \$1.7 million loss.

Unfortunately, most employers do not know how much turnover is costing them. Money may attract people to the front door, but something else has to keep them from going out the back. That something may equate to a fun, flexible workplace that gives them more freedom and responsibility. Wouldn't it be great if you enjoyed going to work? Where your supervisors showed appreciation for what you did?

Here is a simple and FAST-FUN formula to help you build a motivating reward and recognition system.

- F-Focus on the behavior you want to reward
- A-Avoid bureaucratic judging and committees
- S-Simplicity, do not make your program too complicated or formal
- T-Team Ownership, let the employees run it.

FUN-Make it fun, entertaining and spontaneous

Here are a few examples of fun workplaces:

1) **Humor Corner:** Give employees one corner of a break room or other area to post cartoons, illustrations and other items designed to relieve stress. At the end of each week, the staff can award a prize for the best submission.

2) **Man Overboard Award:** CIGNA believes in rewarding employees who go over and beyond for their customers. The Man Overboard Award is a life-saving ring, which the president presents to an employee at a special ceremony. CIGNA also pays teams for implemented ideas that improve productivity with awards as high as \$25,000.



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Suggested Perennials for a 4" Forcing Program

Erik Runkle, Dr. Art Cameron and Dr. Royal Heins
Department of Horticulture
Michigan State University

	Container size	Weeks Cold @ 5°C	Long Days Required	Weeks to flower at 68 °F	Comments
<i>Aquilegia flabellata</i> 'Mini Star'	4-5"	6-9 weeks	no	4	A great dwarf Columbine- lavender/blue flowers. This one grows to about 8-10" and is a long bloomer. Great potted perennial. Needs a bit of bulking before cooling, although not as much as 'Cameo'. (Don't overwater).
<i>Aquilegia flabellata</i> 'Cameo'	3-4"	6 weeks	no	4	Great dwarf Columbine - blue white flowers. Only grows to 6" tall and has sturdy leathery leaves. Needs to be bulked for approx. 6 wks in the pot or large plug cells before cooling or else finished plant is tiny (I mean tiny!).
<i>Aquilegia x hybrida</i> Songbird series 'Bluebird'	5" and up	6-9 weeks	no	5-6	A taller Columbine with large, showy, blue and white flowers. Nice fragrance. Due to juvenility factor, plants need to be overwintered in a pot or large plug (72-cell + up). One of my favorite <i>Aquilegia</i> hybrids. (Don't overwater).
<i>Aquilegia x hybrida</i> 'Crimson Star'	5" and up	6-9 weeks	no	5-6	Striking crimson and white flowers are really an eye-catcher, especially for hummingbirds! Nice fragrance. Due to juvenility factor, plants need to be overwintered in a pot or large plug (50-cell + up). Plants have nice dense foliage. (Don't overwater).
<i>Aquilegia x hybrida</i> Musik series 'White'	5" and up	6-9 weeks	no	5-6	If you're looking for pure white flowers, this is the Columbine for you! Looks great in a pot because the foliage is dense and the plants are compact (12" tall). Due to juvenility factor, plants need to be overwintered in a pot or large plug (50-cell + up). Also fragrant. (Don't overwater).
<i>Armeria x hybrida</i> 'Dwarf Ornament Mix'	4"	10 weeks	no	12	variable seedlings - Inconsistent flowering in our trials - but very nice when it does flower. Some <i>Armerias</i> already marketed as pot crops in Europe.
<i>Astilbe chinensis pumila</i>	4" and up	15 weeks	yes	11	showy blooms - more tolerant of sun and drought than <i>Arendsii</i> hybrids, but still relatively sensitive.
<i>Campanula</i> 'Birch Hybrid'	4" and up	6 - 9 weeks	probably not	6	great pot plant - with extended chilling, becomes day neutral. Benefits from supplemental light
<i>Campanula carpatica</i> 'Blue Clips', 'White Clips'	4" and up	no	yes	7	great pot plant - fast, easy, colorful - Very popular in Europe. This should become an important pot crop in the US. Growers can sell all they force
<i>Coreopsis grandiflora</i> 'Baby Sun'	4" and up	10 weeks	yes	7	nice as small pot crop - very good sales
<i>Coreopsis verticillata</i> 'Moonbeam'	4" and up	no	yes	7	bulk under short days or use larger plug to get bigger final product. Can be held at cool temperatures but is not necessary for flowering - force at cooler temperatures for best results

Suggested Perennials for a 4" Forcing Program (cont)

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Department of Horticulture
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	Container size	Weeks Cold @ 5°C	Long Days Required	Weeks to flower at 68 °F	Comments
<i>Delphinium</i> 'Blue Mirror', 'Belladonna'	4" and up	only 5 weeks	no	6-10	great pot plant - difficult to grow well - some of these smaller <i>Delphiniums</i> have weak stems - force at cooler temps if possible. Let plants dry out before watering.
<i>Gaillardia xgrandiflora</i> 'Goblin', 'Baby Cole'	4" and up	9 - 12 weeks	yes	7	variable seedlings! This plant could be great if there was less variation - can't count on 100% flowering in our experience. This is one the breeders need to work on!
<i>Geranium delmaticum</i>	4" and up	6 - 9 weeks	yes	7	nice plant - great garden performer in Michigan - pink showy flowers on small plant.
<i>Heuchera sanguinea</i> 'Bressingham Hybrids'	4" and up	10 weeks	no	6	seed propagated - variable flowering - flowering <i>Heucheras</i> seem to be underrated these days! Some very nice old clones that are not readily available - good potential as pot crop
<i>Lavandula angustifolia</i> 'Hidcote', 'Munstead'	4" and up	15 weeks	yes	7-8	cut plants back at planting - larger plants are better for forcing! <i>Hidcote</i> nice dark blue flowers on short plant.
<i>Leucanthemum x superbum</i> 'Snow Cap'	4" and up	6 weeks	yes	7	nice short, showy cultivar, very uniform in flowering - one drawback, it smells
<i>Pennisetum setaceum</i>	4" and up - versatile	no	yes	11	great tender perennial! - not winter hardy - but very showy - walks out the door in flower even with substantial price tags.
<i>Saxifraga umbrosa</i> 'Aureo-punctata', 'London Pride'	3" and up	15 weeks	yes	4	nice pot plant - probably could use some work to fine tune but could make - lots of other cultivars
<i>Scabiosa caucasica</i> 'Butterfly Blue'	4" and up	10 - 15 weeks	no	4-6	Another great perennial - and looks good in container. Day neutral - so already sold in flower in many instances - no lighting necessary. Will rebloom when cut back.
<i>Sedum</i> 'Autumn Joy'	2" and up	no	yes	12	nice in container - subtle but nice - can plant in flower in May and have new blooms in fall. Can even get rooted cuttings to flower - could make interesting novelty plant in 2" pot!
<i>Tierella wherryi</i>	4" and up	15 weeks	no	2	easy - very nice in pot - long bloomer - great shade plant in garden

HANDOUT FROM SOUTHEAST GREENHOUSE CONFERENCE AND TRADE SHOW

Suggested Perennials for a 5+'' Forcing Program

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	Container size	Weeks Cold @ 5°C	Long Days Required	Weeks to flower at 68 °F	Comments
<i>Achillea</i> 'Moonshine'	5" and up	6 weeks	yes	4	nice plant - very showy in color - also Arthea, Coronation Gold but Moonshine perhaps best for visual impact in container.
<i>Anemone hupehensis</i>	5" and up	15 weeks	yes	14	nice plant - but slow and with some variability - other hybrid Anemones are also great as pot plants
<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	5" and up	only if it's dormant, then 15 wks	yes	8	keep under LD continuously from seed to final product - do not expose to short days or it goes dormant within a short period. Pinch to promote branching - do not overwater! Susceptible to some vascular wilts.
<i>Aster dumosus</i> 'Purple Dome'	5" and up	10-15 weeks	no - this is a short day plant	8	Great potential - some variability in trials - short day plant
<i>Astilbe chinensis</i> 'Superba'	5" and up	10 weeks	no	7-9 depending on cultivar	don't let dry out - my feeling is that Astilbes are never as good in a pot as in the garden
<i>Coreopsis grandiflora</i> 'Sunray'	5" and up	10 - 15 weeks	yes	7	great color - very good in forcing program. Can even fill larger containers with no problem.
<i>Coreopsis grandiflora</i> 'Early Sunrise'	5" and up	no	yes	7	no cold needed for this coreopsis - looks good in container - very easy to force
<i>Echinacea purpurea</i> 'Magnus', 'Bravado'	5" and up	10 - 15 weeks	yes	11-15	tall - could use more plant growth regulator information - probably better suited to larger container size. Sells quickly when in flower! Long postharvest life. 1998 PPA selection
<i>Gaura lindheimeri</i> 'Whirling Butterflies'	5" and up	15 weeks	yes	6	longer cold made for shorter plants - a pinch helped too. Very good in container! Especially when combined with Purple Fountain Grass.
<i>Gypsophila paniculata</i> 'Double Snowflake'	5" and up	12 - 15 weeks	yes	12	likes larger container - may need staking - but great impact in garden center.
<i>Hemerocallis</i> 'Stella De Oro'	5" and up	15 weeks as a bare root crown	no	8	Sells quickly - even in bud. Great name recognition as perennial plant
<i>Hibiscus moscheutos</i> 'Disco Belle Hybrids'	5" and up	no	yes	12	best if grown at higher temperatures (one of the few) - shorter if grown under water stress. Each flower lasts only one day. Needs adequate light for flower buds to continue to develop.

Suggested Perennials for a 5+'' Forcing Program (cont)

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	Container size	Weeks Cold @ 5°C	Long Days Required	Weeks to flower at 68 °F	Comments
<i>Hosta</i> 'Frances' 'Tokudama'	5" and up	12 - 15 weeks	yes	12	nice in 5" pot - so are many other hostas-thick leaves give these plants substance
<i>Hosta plantaginea</i>	5" and up	at least 6 weeks	yes	14+	very fragrant-taller species in need of 1 gallon container- shorter when forced at higher temperatures
<i>Hosta</i> 'Golden Tiara' 'Golden Scepter'	5" and up	12 weeks	yes	12	petite-good for borders or edging-starting material should be larger than 1-eye division for adequate size
<i>Lobelia x speciosa</i> 'Compliment Scarlet'	5" and up	6 weeks	yes	9	great red colored flowers - but tall - still need effective PGRs -
<i>Oenothera fruticosa</i> 'Youngii-Lapsley'	5" and up	15 weeks	yes	6	very showy in bloom - good postharvest life as potted plant in interior environment.
<i>Pentstemon digitalis</i> 'Husker Red'	5" and up	6 - 8 weeks	yes	10	98 Perennial of the year - nice - but maybe not that nice - clonal material is superior to seed - past PPA selection
<i>Perovskia atriplicifolia</i>	5" and up	5 weeks	no	11	Very good perennial in Michigan garden! But too tall for pot - Sumagic quite effective for height control
<i>Rudbeckia fulgida</i> 'Goldsturm'	5" and up	12 weeks	yes	12 - 15	Great perennial - lots of color - but too tall for many growers when in full flower - plant growth regulators needed - timing can change with starting material. Long postharvest life. 1998 PPA selection
<i>Salvia nemorosa</i> 'May Night'	5" and up	9 weeks	no	4	nice - PPA selection - if you can find plugs to purchase (since difficult to get cuttings) - easy to force - nice plant. Likes lots of light.
<i>Salvia x superba</i> 'Blue Queen'	5" and up	9 weeks	yes	5	nice - easy - colorful impact. Very uniform with proper cooling. Everyone likes blue flowers!
<i>Stokesia laevis</i> 'Klaus Jellito'	5" and up	15 weeks	no - shorter days preferred	11	great pot plant - flowers close in evening which limits home use - but simply a great perennial
<i>Veronica longifolia</i> 'Sunny Border Blue'	5" and up	12 - 15 weeks	no	9	Nice perennial but sure has its problems with diseases - esp powdery mildew. Keep checked or quality vastly reduced

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