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# NewsBud

GROWING YOUR BUSINESS TOGETHER

## FLORIST TRANSACTIONS AT VALENTINE'S DAY UP, NOT DOWN AS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED

A more in-depth analysis of Valentine's Day sales and transactions reveals a different story on spending levels than previously reported.



Results from an SAF-sponsored consumer poll, recently published showed that average transactions were down, despite the fact that 84 percent of florists reported sales up from a year ago. The SAF-sponsored consumer poll, launched the week after Valentine's Day, found the average amount spent across all outlets fell from \$45.30 in 2010 to \$40.20 in 2011 - a decline of 11 percent. A single-question "Gut Check" survey of SAF members sent immediately

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2007 2008 2009 2010 2011

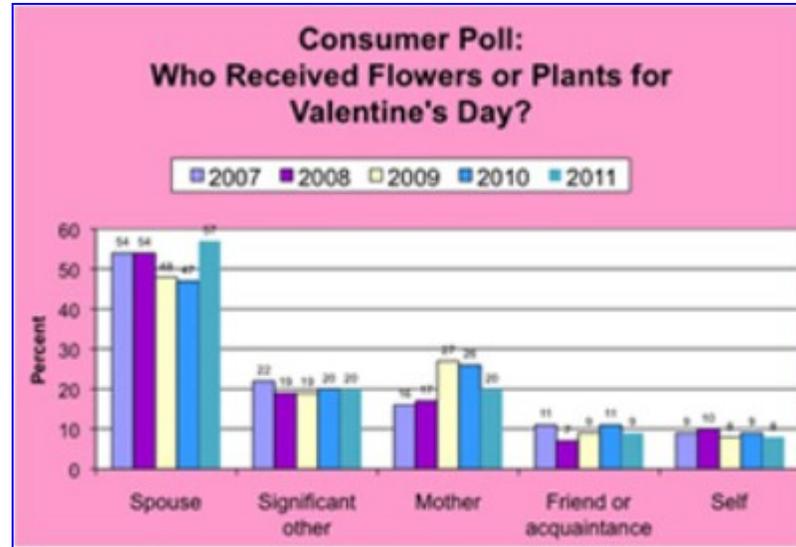
following the holiday, however, found 84 percent of retailers (along with most wholesalers and growers)

reported sales up from a year ago.

According to Cecile Johnston, senior vice president at Synovate, who conducted the research, the declining transaction amount was because the consumer poll measured amounts spent across all outlets, including supermarkets, internet sites and florists. As previously reported, about half of the public did their Valentine's Day buying at supermarkets or groceries, spending relatively less (average \$36) than they did at retail florists (average \$58) or some other venues. Depending on the outlet, they spent as low as \$26 on average at drug stores and \$93 at National Toll-Free Floral Services. The more people who shop at a given outlet, Johnston said, the more that venue is weighted in the calculation.

So, how was spending at retail florists? The average transaction amount at retail florists actually increased from \$57.51 in 2010 to \$62.54 in 2011, up more than \$5. In fact, the increase reversed three consecutive declines in spending.

Source: SAF



## HOW TO STOP WORKPLACE DRAMA AND PROMOTE ENGAGEMENT

When Marlene Chism was an employee, she thought leadership looked easy. She couldn't wait to get out of the factory to share the "inside scoop" with leaders about what works and what doesn't work. Fast-forward past 13 years of experience working with leaders at various levels, and she published a book titled *Stop Workplace Drama*, to explain what drama is, how it manifests, and what leaders can do to stop workplace drama.

The definition for drama that she uses is "any obstacle to your peace or prosperity." The root of the problem is that employees aren't engaged by their workplaces. According to a Gallup Management Journal's Employee Engagement Index, only 29 percent of employees feel fully engaged in their work while 54 percent report not being engaged, and another 17 percent are knowingly disengaged. According to her, this is why employees are not be engaged:

1. They are intimidated. When managers lose their cool and act aggressively, employees stay out of sight and out of mind for damage control.
2. They perceive their results are never enough. No matter how hard they work, the feeling is that they are never going to do enough.
3. They are overwhelmed. They get excited about management's vision, and even give up lunch breaks to meet deadlines, and then managers change their minds without notice and tell them to "embrace change."
4. They are over-stimulated. They have too many choices and have not developed the ability to make a good decision so they procrastinate or find interesting distractions.

Here are four ways Marlene says you can promote engagement and decrease the drama in the workplace:

**1. Master your emotions.** As a leader, your attitude and behaviors either promote or prohibit teamwork and productivity. You can't promote positive change from a negative mindset. At any given time, you have a mental and emotional state from which you operate. I call this your energetic starting place. If you are the type of person who is unaware of your emotional and mental state, and you succumb to finger pointing, negativity or emotional outbursts, this will negatively impact your team's performance.

**What is required:** Before any important conversation or task, take a breath and do a quick assessment about your emotional and mental state. Get completely clear on the outcome you want before you jump into action. If you want to operate from a "no regrets" standpoint, don't start a conversation if you are in a bad mood, and don't correct an employee when you feel vengeful. If an employee comes to you needing to talk, be honest about your availability to listen. If you can't set aside your BlackBerry, if you feel an irresistible urge to roll your eyes, or if you would rather hang yourself than have this dialogue, schedule the time on your calendar instead of risking an unwanted outcome.

**2. Narrow the gap.** Have you ever noticed how a big goal seems exciting when the vision is first revealed, then as time goes on, motivation drops and it's a challenge to keep everyone rowing together? That's because somewhere between here and there, the team gets lost in the gap between where you are and where you aim to be. The larger the gap, the more potential for drama. Your team will lose momentum if they never feel like their efforts matter. If they sense that "it's never enough" they will do just enough to get by.

**What is required:** "Shortening gap" refers to breaking down the bigger goals so that the team experiences a sense of completion and success on a regular basis, while keeping the tasks challenging enough to be interesting. To allow for changes along the way, set the expectations as pilot programs or trial runs, with a boundary of time that has a beginning and an ending, so that your team expects adjustments along the way.

**3. Live and lead in the zone.** Being overwhelmed is part of our daily existence that contributes to anxiety and loss of motivation. It's the "drowning in a sea of choices" feeling that comes from looking way too far into the future at all that needs to be done, but being unable to prioritize, organize and do the one or two things possible. When people are overwhelmed, they procrastinate or use distractions to avoid facing the anxiety.

**What is required:** The key to not being overwhelmed is to get centered and live in the present. Most of us live way too far into the future or spend wasted time regretting the past. Think of a line with negative 10 to the left, and positive 10 to the right. Zero represents the present moment. You want to focus your energy and lead from negative two to positive two. Lower than negative two means you are learning from the past. Higher than positive two means you are looking forward at what needs to be done.

**4. Balance choice and responsibility.** In high-school physics most of us learned that a teeter totter rests on something called a fulcrum point. When the teeter totter has the exact amount of weight on both sides it balances and is horizontal. What causes imbalance in our lives and in our companies is when the new choices (or new power) we gain are not balanced by an equal amount of responsibility. For example, promoting one of your employees because of her expertise and work record may mean that she is unprepared for the additional responsibilities that comes with her new level of power.

**What is required:** When you promote employees, give them more power, or give them more choices, ensure that you also adjust their expectations. Ensure that you communicate the new responsibilities that go with the new choices and new freedoms. This will prevent a lot of unnecessary drama, save you from many difficult conversations and set realistic expectations, so that power is not abused.

If you're ready to stop the work place drama, take these simple first steps. Everyone in your organization will benefit from your efforts.

*Source: Amex*

## **GOOD IDEA OF THE WEEK: PLAY WITH YOUR FRIENDS**

Engage your social media friends, fans and followers with an entertaining non-promotional challenge. It's a great way to build trust - and return visits. Try a brain teaser, quiz, or a contest -- anything that encourages your social network to respond and come back to see what others have posted or to get the answer. For example:

- Let's create a new holiday to celebrate something totally silly... like "MissTheBusDay" (celebrate by hitting the snooze button) or "T'HaveDay" (celebrate by giving a gift for no reason at all -- just because you want someone "t'have it") or EatCakeDay (celebrate the obvious way). Post your ideas and we'll vote for a winner next week.
- Isn't our shop's new watchcat adorable? Enter our Name The Kitty Contest. If we choose the name you suggest, we'll send you a coupon for a free flower.
- Love limericks? Help me write one. There once was a lady with roses, who... (post your answers, but keep it clean folks)!

Brand your challenge with a catchy name and post a new one every week. Offer a small prize if you want

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## **MEMBER NOTICE: BC MINIMUM WAGE INCREASING**

Premier Christy Clark today announced British Columbia's minimum wage will increase in three stages to \$10.25 by May 1, 2012 and the training wage will be eliminated, providing more support for B.C. workers and families in every region of the province.

"Raising the minimum wage and eliminating the training wage is a fair and reasonable step forward in putting families first and building our economy. This increase could mean more than \$4,000 additional dollars annually for a full-time employee, providing more support to B.C. workers and the families who depend on them," said Premier Clark. "Businesses told us they needed time to adjust to increases in the minimum wage and we're pleased we've been able to provide that certainty to them through three predictable stages."

The general minimum wage will increase on May 1, 2011 to \$8.75 and be \$10.25 per hour by May 2012.

As of May 1, 2011 the training wage is also repealed and all hourly-paid employees will be entitled to the general minimum wage regardless of how long they have been in the paid labour force.

A special minimum wage for liquor servers will also be phased in, beginning May 1, 2011. It will be modelled on what now exists in Ontario for employees who serve liquor directly to customers or guests in licensed premises as a regular part of their work.

"We consulted with stakeholders and economic experts on their views about increasing the minimum wage. As a result of those discussions, it was determined that job impacts are minimized when minimum wage increases are done incrementally over time," said Stephanie Cadieux, Minister of Labour, Citizens' Services and Open Government. "Our approach to liquor servers will be in line with what already exists in Ontario. In that province, the alcohol server rate has allowed the general minimum wage to increase while maintaining and supporting jobs in the food and beverage service sector."

BACKGROUND

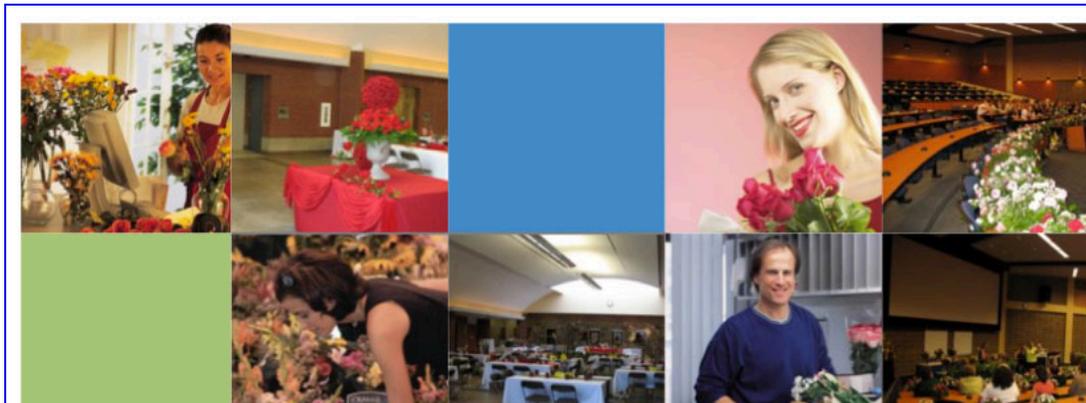
### **General Minimum Wage**

1. Today = \$8.00/hr
2. May 1/11 = \$8.75/hr
3. Nov 1/11 = \$9.50/hr
4. May 1/12 = \$10.25/hr

#### Quick Facts

- There were approximately 1.8 million paid employees in B.C. in 2009.
- According to Statistics Canada, 2.3 per cent of B.C. paid employees earned \$8/hr or less (about 41,200 workers) in 2009.
- The average hourly wage in B.C. in February 2011 was \$23.16/hr. - the third-highest hourly wage in the country, behind only Alberta (\$25.65) and Ontario (\$23.74). (February 2011 figures)
- B.C.'s average hourly youth wage is \$13.86 per hour - the third-highest in Canada, behind only Alberta (\$15.69) and Saskatchewan (\$14.79).
- According to the 2009 B.C. Wage and Salary Survey conducted by BC Stats and Statistics Canada:
  - The most frequent wage for farm workers was \$12.93/hr and the average starting wage for farm workers was \$11.28/hr.
  - The most frequent wage for food and beverage servers working full time was \$10.15/hr (not including tips).
  - For retail salespersons and clerks, the most frequently paid wage was \$14.61/hr and the average starting wage was \$12.16/hr.

#### FLORIST DESIGN SCHOOL AT UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH





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