

W.S. Badger Company, Inc.

P.O. Box 58 • 768 Route 10 • Gilsum, NH 03448

Healing Products • Healthy Business • Make a Difference

New Hampshire's Workforce Challenge: Innovative Approaches to Attracting and Retaining Skilled Workers

Emily Hall Warren
Director of Administration
W.S. Badger Company

Dear Senate Committee Members,

On behalf of the W.S. Badger Company, thank you for this opportunity to share the innovative approaches we have found to be successful in helping us to retain an engaged and committed workforce.

Badger has been producing organic balms and personal care products since 1995. We are a small, family-owned and family-run, mission-driven manufacturer with 100 employees, and we actively strive to create a supportive and family-friendly workplace where all employees are treated as valuable members of our community. We value transparency and engagement, respect personal and family health, and enable employees to enjoy balanced lives.

This caring approach enables us to attract and retain a diverse and highly-skilled workforce. And as a result, we are honored to be an employer of choice in the region with virtually no recruiting costs.

In a recent employee engagement survey conducted by The Employee Engagement Group, one hundred percent of employees surveyed at Badger felt that their manager respected their work/life balance, eighty-two percent reported feeling highly engaged, and over fifty percent plan to stay at Badger for more than five years.

We achieve this high level of satisfaction and engagement by offering robust and innovative programs, including babies-at-work, subsidized, near-site child care, a paid half-hour lunch, \$800 in wellness funds annually, and onsite yoga and reflexology classes. Staff also enjoy paid vacation time, volunteer hours and holidays, 40 hours of paid health time for self or a family member, two weeks paid FMLA, five weeks of paid parental leave for the primary caregiver, and two weeks of paid leave for a secondary caregiver. We even provide a free, organic lunch, serving a fresh, healthy meal to all employees each workday.

Since 2007, our Babies-at-Work program has enabled employees to bring their new babies to work until they reach six months of age or begin to crawl. To date, fifteen babies have participated in the program.



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These programs may seem unachievable for other businesses. However, several are relatively easy to implement, cost little to nothing, and can have a significant impact on employee recruitment, retention, and engagement. For example, offering a flexible work schedule, operating transparently, providing a babies-at-work program, engaging employees and treating them as individuals, and offering an annual wellness fund.

As a business, we are proud of what we have been able to achieve. We hope by lending our voice, sharing our best practices, and serving as a leader and role model within the business community, that we can help other organizations successfully meet the challenge of hiring and retaining qualified employees in a tight labor force market.

Respectfully yours,

Emily Hall Warren
Director of Administration
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