

## **Employee Appreciation Day at SDDCO is Just 1 Slice of the Appreciation Pie**

*[The SDDCO Group of CPAs and consultants shares a year-round process for staff appreciation, including kitchen comforts, monthly luncheons, and career centered methods to keep the talent happy.]*

Feb. 28, 2013

The SDDCO Group (SDDCO), a public accounting firm and leading provider of outsourced professional solutions to broker-dealers and advisers, had its own problem to solve. Beyond compensation, how could staff members, often delivering services off-site at client firms, feel engaged and valued by their own firm?

Staff appreciation days are set aside for companies to show their people some love. Since 1995, National Employee Appreciation Day falls on the first Friday of March (March 1, 2013). And from 1952, Administration Professionals Day is observed on the Wednesday of the last full week of April (April 24, 2013).

Though these secular holidays direct attention to staff twice a year, SDDCO questioned the lasting benefits of such days if used in isolation. They adopted, instead, a holistic approach. And a more staff-attentive mindset in general revived their company culture. Food based extras made a visible difference: hot and cold beverages and energy snacks stocked in the kitchens, cupcakes and cards for birthday celebrants, and an appreciation luncheon held each month.

SDDCO's ritual of monthly lunch is not simply ordering in. "Staff Day" planning includes scheduling precision for a busy crowd, menu planning with an eye on food trends and dietary needs, thematic calendar tie-ins, kudos for milestones and anniversaries, menu invites for participants, and the time-sensitive process of getting big lunch in, spreading big lunch out, and putting it all away.

This monthly lunch en masse is also the anchor of an interactive day of interdepartmental sessions, staff committee meetings, and time to kickback with coworkers. "From a planning perspective," says Office Manager Laura Kelleman, "It's gratifying to see the staff camaraderie and their enthusiasm for a new cuisine or an old favorite. Food is comfort, and sharing a meal absolutely enhances the team spirit."

Based on the popularity of SDDCO's six-year tradition, a firm luncheon in one location is a good way to gather and engage. It's especially effective for members situated on multiple floors or frequently working with clients in the field. However, centralized employee events, even monthly, will fall short if the long-term growth of each individual is not addressed.

SDDCO's Staff Day is one component of an ongoing plan to keep the talent happy, including a manageable workload, some flex time, a clear career path and purpose, annual reviews and goals, training and licensing support, along with good salaries and solid benefits. In other words, a planned gratitude lunch, even once a month, is just one piece of the appreciation pie.

### The SDDCO Team

Formed 1952 in NYC, The SDDCO Group delivers outsourced support to financial services clients including broker-dealers, investment advisers, privately held funds and U.S. arms of foreign banks. SDDCO services include SEC and FINRA registrations, accounting and bookkeeping, FinOp, tax, AML testing, brokerage advising and regulatory compliance. For personal accounts of SDDCO service, see client testimony on the company site ([www.sddco.com](http://www.sddco.com)).