**Patagonia Focuses on Customers & the Environment**

**In a narrative format discuss the key facts and critical issues presented in the case.**

I think the key fact was that Patagonia decided to focus on its customers to make a difference in the world; they are a company that is a member of several environmental movements. They are well known around America, Europe and Japan. The critical issues that were presented are that the company did not have an up to date software system. This did not help as many industry-specific software tools were not integrated, so employees had to enter information several times (Microsoft, 2010). The company had finally decided to update their business technology with a new system called Enterprise resource planning (ERP). Although Patagonia was a well-known company, in 1991, with the US economy having a recession, Patagonia had slow sales that created the bank to call in its revolving loan. The company had been forced to file for bankruptcy (Newsdesk, 2009). They have managed the recession and is very successful today. With Patagonia contributing to environmental groups, they have donated $46 million to domestic and international grassroots environmental groups making a difference in local communities. Patagonia has created a common threads recycling program, in which their products are recyclable. The company relies on both Patagonia and its customers to accomplish reducing, reusing and repairing and recycling (Wikipedia, n.d.). With a company like this no wonder it focuses on its customers and the environment at the same time. By the coming focusing on their customers being warm and having reliable products, they also contribute to the environment making their products reusable as well as recyclable.

**References:**

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**How does Patagonia provide a work environment and values that enhances the lives of their employees?**

Patagonia is known to award and recognize their employees. They offer a referral bonus for all employees who refer someone to apply and that are hired. They also offer a company-wide bonus program for all employees, even if an employee is only seasonal or part-time. I think that the work environment that enhances lives of their employees is that it is very social. They offer fitness benefits, were any employee can go during the workday. To me is sounds that they want their employees to be fit and help them the best they can by offering a free fitness area. The values of the company is basically that they want their employees to take care of themselves and their families and also figuring out a schedule that works best for them to be able to get their jobs done. Patagonia is a company that really cares about their employees and the environment as well. One is able to tell by articles and reports from Patagonia. To me it seems that they offer all kinds of incentives, for example, their leave-of-absence policy. Employees are able to take an absence of up to four months. Of course it is unpaid and it has to be good work-life balance in order to be approved for the leave-of-absence. I have not seen any other company do so, other than Patagonia.

**References:**

http://www.outsideonline.com/outdoor-adventure/best-jobs/38-Patagonia.html

**Do you think all companies could inspire Patagonia’s level of loyalty by employees by providing work environments with similar benefits? Provide an example of a company who you think could benefit from their HR practices?**

I do believe so because when you have employees that are happy working with a company, results of sales or revenue will go up as well. People are more than likely to show up for work than someone who just works at a company that does not offer much or let alone care for their employees. In order for a business to succeed, yes you need consumers but you also need a team that is willing to go all the way with the company, and the company needs to offer some type of incentives to keep employees enjoying their jobs. Also, having the company care for the employees shows people about what the company is about. I think that Walmart could benefit from HR practices because there are a lot of Walmart associates that are not happy with their jobs because either they are under paid or the company is not offering anything. Although Walmart is a million dollar company, they do not really care for their employees. I have and know someone who had worked there before. The work you do is not what one show be paid to do. Also, there really was no appreciation from the managers of those who worked hard to help keep the store safe and clean. I think that it all depends on who is running the store, if you have a manger who does not really know what they are doing and only cares about the revenue, then yeah, you are going to have some very irritated employees. If the store managers of all the Walmart’s where to get together within a city to see how other stores are doing and what they are doing to keep their employees enjoying their jobs, then they could learn a thing or two.

It seems that over the year’s Walmart lost their touch with their employees when they started hiring managers and supervisors who have these attitudes of I don’t care I’m just here to make a paycheck. If Walmart was more like Patagonia, then I believe Walmart would have a higher rate of employees wanting to do their job, instead of having these individuals who just don’t give a darn.

**As CEO of Patagonia, how would you deal with criticism that you focus more on hiring employees that are social cause oriented, vs. the most talented and skilled employees.**

As CEO I really would not pay any mind as how I hire my employees because it is my company and I am for those that feel the same way for the environment as well as other organizations. I would not want to hire someone who did not have the same passion as other employees. I believe that would just put a damper on the work environment. Patagonia has a cause to go by and that is making products less harmful to the environment and helping employees with their lives, such as a fitness area, and letting them have time off for a good cause. I would not want to hire someone who is in it just for a paycheck because then they may treat my customers however the way they feel. That would be unacceptable in my vocabulary. I want my employees to feel the passion while working with Patagonia, and have the same values as Patagonia does for the environment. I want my employees to own up to what they do at Patagonia by taking pride in what they do but not so much pride to where they think that nothing else matters.

To me I think that those that are talented and skilled can just be that and nothing else. In order to work for a company like Patagonia you have to have a passion for the environment as well as the customers. Of course if there is someone who is talented and skilled working with the environment then that would be different, I would hire them because they have the passion. I would not be bothered if people criticize me for hiring those that are passionate about the environment and wanting to make a change.