

ANGELA SINICKAS: Engaging employees during site walkabouts

Getting senior leaders out on the floor to meet employees can be a really effective way to increase visibility and build a bond between senior management and the front line. However, if leaders truly want to make a positive impression on employees, they have to be willing to meet them at a personal level. Angela Sinickas, president and founder of Sinickas Communications, has a few pointers to help make this happen:

- **Get leaders to go it alone.** “It’s much less intimidating if a leader walks around a site by themselves and casually stops to chat with employees as opportunities arise,” she says. “This gesture downplays status and makes employees feel more comfortable talking openly with the leader about their thoughts.”
- **Ask questions – lots of them.** “This is an opportunity for genuine, face-to-face feedback from employees. So, leaders should avoid the urge to do all the talking and instead should concentrate solely on asking employees questions about their jobs, what they think about the products, how things are running and what ideas employees have for making things work better.”
- **Don’t shoot down ideas.** “Leaders should not be judgmental. These discussions are about gathering information, getting an understanding of employees’ perceptions and thanking employees for the jobs they’re doing.”

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