



How Important are Ideas in an Economic Downturn?

You cannot open a newspaper or turn on a TV these days without the news that we are currently in the midst of a deep recession. But what exactly does this mean to us in the world of suggestions schemes.

What we do know is that in times of recession, all organisations look for ways to cut costs.

Some of you may have already been asked to look at ways to justify your existence within the business or even look at ways to discontinue the ideas programme within your organisation.

At ideasUK we feel this is a very short sighted view in the current climate. These troubled times offer suggestion programmes a great opportunity to really develop and become embedded in the culture of the organisation.

So what can we do to make our schemes recession proof?

Now is a great time to look at your scheme as a whole a decide if you are running as

Efficiently as you possibly can.

By far the greatest expense to any suggestion scheme can be the rewards section. The temptation may be there to cut this expense and move directly to a non reward type of scheme.

But..... Just wait one second, what do you think would happen if you stopped making rewards? More often than not it can be almost impossible to remove rewards from a current scheme without having a negative aspect on participation rate.

Your biggest friend at the moment will be implemented ideas, try wherever possible to work out exactly how much your schemes saves the organisation each year through implemented ideas. If your scheme is working efficiently, you should be able to report savings of at least £3 per £1 spent.

Secondly, do some research, one of the benefits to the organisation of a good suggestion scheme is improved staff morale or motivation. Why not survey some of your employees who have had ideas



Implemented. Find out if they would have implemented that idea if the scheme was not available. Prove to your management team that the scheme is being used and will be missed if it is taken away.

Use us at ideasUK to help you, we have over 20 experience is managing ideas programmes and you can be assured there is not one problem out there that the committee has not experienced in the past and has over come.

Another way is to benchmark your organisation against others in the same sector or be brave and look at a totally different sector. This could provide you with all the information you need to prove your survival.

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Networking October 2009

Do you have a venue you would like to offer for a networking event in October 2009?

Networking meetings will take place bi-monthly in 2009 and if you feel you would like to host one of these meetings, please drop us an e-mail for further details

Conference 2009

11/12 November 2009

Crown Plaza Hotel
Chester

Focus on International Ideas Week

What are you doing to ensure your ideas programme survives the current economic climate?

Join us and celebrate International Ideas Week between 11th and 15th May 2009.

Events will be held in London, Manchester, Edinburgh and Cardiff.

ideasUK launched National Ideas Day on 14th March 2001. The original day (14 March) having been chosen as a special day to focus on creativity and innovation in the workplace on the anniversary of Einstein's birth.

Due to the success of celebrating this special day our members asked that the celebrations be extended to a week in May. And expanded to include our members worldwide. So each year ideasUK International Ideas Week™ is now celebrated. This allows our members to hold special events within their organisations as well as attend the one-day seminar arranged as part of these celebrations - ideasUK International Ideas Week™

So what are the objectives during International Ideas Week?

- To focus on creativity and innovation within organisations, private and public sector
- To understand that there is a vast untapped resource of creative ideas
- To encourage organisations to implement programmes to harvest employee's ideas and turn creative thought into innovation
- If you are launching an ideas scheme, arranging a special marketing event for your existing ideas programme or a campaign seeking ideas on a specific subject area or problem, why not promote this during ideasUK National Ideas Week™?

So why have an International Ideas Week?

Having a Internationally recognised ideasUK International Ideas Week™ can help promote suggestion schemes. It gives us a wonderful opportunity to advertise our own schemes and to encourage employees to submit new ideas.

It can be used to encourage employers to start new schemes or to rejuvenate old ones.

It can be used to encourage new members to ideasUK thereby adding to the wealth of experience and benchmarking opportunities available to all members.

Gaining Management Support

Management support is vital to the success of suggestion and recognition programmes. A special event can be used to invite renewed interest and support from management.

By reminding them of the contribution ideas from employees have made to efficiency and profitability over the last year, as well as the positive impact on staff morale and improved communication, can encourage them to take a more proactive role in supporting and developing the scheme.

It may be helpful to remind managers of the commitment given by other leading organisations (including competitors) and the CBI to supporting employee involvement in suggestion programmes





Focus on International Ideas Week

Re-launching or just re-vitalising your scheme

We can all benefit from reviewing our programmes regularly. In fact this is essential in order to maintain the momentum and ensure we are achieving targets in line with aims and objective of the organisation.

ideasUK International Ideas Week™ provides the opportunity to promote changes and increase publicity within your programme. After all your ultimate aim is to have everyone within your organisation to know about your scheme.

Boosting Participation

It can be useful to utilise a 'special week' to encourage employees to make that special effort to submit ideas, so use this week to tap into that special reserve of talent within the workforce.

This can be publicised in a number of ways such as email messages, articles in company newsletters, magazines, posters, notices on pay slips or menu cards in staff restaurants.

The week is also a great opportunity for you to develop a special theme to encourage submission of ideas e.g. Improvement in Customer Service, Environmental / Green or even reducing waste.

Why is this Important?

There are still many UK employers who do not operate reward and recognition programmes or whose schemes have fallen out of use due to lack of support.

One of the objectives of ideasUK National Ideas Week™ is to highlight the benefits of an efficient and effective ideas scheme and to encourage employers to make employee participation an integral part of their management and business strategies.

Peer pressure, through the example of those market leaders who do operate such programmes, will play a part in this.

The millions of pounds in savings and increased profitability are a powerful testament to the part which ideas schemes can play in the success of any organisation. This is because employees are ideally placed to identify opportunities for improvement as part of their daily life, and to develop winning solutions.

But this creative talent will be wasted unless employers recognise the need to build ideas schemes into their management and business strategies.

So what will you do for International Ideas Week - Go on make it special!

Call for Presenters - Annual Conference 2009

Be part of ideasUK conference 2009 and help us deliver high quality programming that focuses on the spectrum of issues that employee involvement and suggestion systems professionals need to stay at their peak performance.

Attendees range from senior and middle managers, to coordinators and idea of the year finalists from a variety of business sectors (private, public, non-profit, etc.).

We are looking for presenters to deliver scheme briefs (Overviews of your suggestion programme) and also the tools needed to manage an effective ideas programme e.g. Marketing, Budgeting, Communication Skills etc.

We are not able to provide any payment or re-imburement for your help at the conference, however, we can offer you the opportunity to network with other organisations and develop your skills as a public speaker.

If you are interested in speaking at the conference, please do not hesitate to contact us at info@ideasuk.com

Idea of the Year Award 2009

It is time once again to submit your ideas to the ideasUK Idea of the Year Competition. **ENTRIES MUST BE SUBMITTED BY 30 APRIL 2009.**

Entries are free to ideasUK members.

A condition of entry is that short listed finalists are required to attend Conference on 11th & 12th November 2009, and finalist's organisations are required to provide a display giving details of the idea at the Annual Conference.

All entries will be assessed by an independent panel of judges who will shortlist between 20-30 ideas and these suggestions will have an opportunity at the conference to discuss their idea with the judges during an informal session of no more than fifteen minutes. No audio-visual presentations are permitted. The cost of a Finalist attending Conference for two days is £595. This includes accommodation and all meals.

In addition to the Idea of the Year winners will be selected in seven specific categories. Technology; Organisational; Customer Services; Environmental; Financial and Accounting; Productivity and Health and Safety. There will also be the opportunity to win a sector award. This is an award made by the judges for an idea within each sector, i.e. private sector, public sector and international sector which has not been awarded either a specific category or the overall award.

Each category and sector winner, and the overall winner, will be presented with a trophy to be retained by their organisation and an individual trophy for the winners (one trophy per category/sector). Trophies will be presented at the Awards Dinner, 12th November 2009.

Participation

Participation in this competition has many benefits; providing additional recognition for your suggestions; highlighting the benefits to your organisation of involving employees; assisting with marketing your programme and enhancing management support.

You have nothing to lose and everything to gain by participating in this competition. To enter simply select the best ideas that have been implemented within your organisation.

Any number of ideas can be submitted so copy the enclosed forms and use them for multiple entries. (Create your own form as a table in a word processing document if you wish, just ensure all headings are the same and in the same order as the enclosed).

You may select the category in which you wish your idea to be considered or leave it to the judges to select. The judges will undertake final assessment and categorisation.

Points to Remember

Presentation of ideas is of crucial importance: Remember presentation is part of the judging criteria. Clear, simple and well presented submissions assist the judges to assess the quality of ideas.

A good idea, poorly presented, may be difficult to judge. Ideas must be clearly set out, in the required format, with evidence of the benefits to the organisation. Technical terminology should be avoided as far as possible or a glossary of specialist terminology attached. Each year the judges have to dismiss several ideas as there is not enough information to make an informed decision. Please put as much information as you can about the idea and remember the golden rule—imagine that the person who is reading the idea has no knowledge of your business and is judging the idea totally on your submission.



All ideas are eligible: The ideas must have been implemented and delivered benefit, tangible or intangible, to your organisation.

Any number of ideas can be entered: There is no limit on the number of ideas an organisational member of ideasUK can submit.

Categorisation: There are seven categories in which trophies can be won. You may select the category in which you wish your idea to be considered or leave it to the judges to determine the most suitable category.

ideasUK Annual Benchmarking Survey 2009

One major improvement this year is that for the first time, we will be joining forces with our sister organisations in Germany (Dib), United Arab Emirates (Ideas Arabia) and United States of America (EIA) to give a truly International aspect in our benchmarking.

This creates an ideal opportunity for you to benchmark your ideas programme with those overseas and creates a great platform for International networking which could deliver great benefits for your organisation.

Another improvement for 2009 is that the survey will be totally on-line and details of how to access the survey can be found below.

Remember – Even if you cannot complete the survey in full we are looking for any information you have regarding your scheme and how it fits into your organisation.

Here are the instructions:

PLEASE organise your input so that all data can be entered by **April 30th 2009**. To access the survey, please follow these steps:

Please click the following link:
<http://survey.elmhurst.edu/TakeSurvey.asp?SurveyID=35Jnm733mm2KG>

In order to gain access to the survey you will need to create your own username and password. To obtain these please click where it reads, "Click here to register".

To download the complete survey to make your notes before you go online follow the link below

<http://magnetmail.net/images/clients/EmInAs/attach/2008EIAStatisticalSurvey.pdf>

Once you have completed this, click "Save" and you will be directed to the survey.

Please remember that anytime you would like to access the survey you will need your username and password.

If you cannot complete the survey in one sitting you can return by clicking the link above and entering your username and password when prompted.

Conference 2008 Sponsors



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Networking Meetings 2009

26th March 2009 - Kerry Foods Hyde Manchester

30th April 2009 - Public Sector / Local Authority Best Practice Session - Birmingham

12th May 2009 - International Ideas Week Event - London

13th May 2009 - International Ideas Week Event - Manchester

14th May 2009 - International Ideas Week Event - Edinburgh

15th May 2009 - International Ideas Week Event - Cardiff

TBA June 2009 - Kier Group—Sheffield

If you would like to attend any of these events, please drop us an e-mail to info@ideasuk.com