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Valuing People Over Minutes: Learning from Star Food Service



Time tracking is never just about clocking in and out; it's about creating a culture of accountability. And while technology like TimeDock provides powerful tools to make time and attendance management seamless, the human element can sometimes throw a wrench in the works.

The Ongoing Challenge

If you've read our earlier article on "[The Perils of Editing Time Entries](#)", you know that manually tweaking time records opens a Pandora's box of compliance issues, labour disputes, and more. Despite the best intentions, editing time entries can create more problems than solutions.

Feedback from the Frontlines: Star Food Service

One of our valued clients, Star Food Service, recently shared some enlightening feedback on this very subject. Lars, Group Business Manager at Star Food Service, offered this perspective:

"Approximately half of them [the workers] are clocking in knowing they're about to sit down and have a coffee, and go for a walk around and have a chat. Or they're doing that before they clock out."

Sound familiar? You're not alone.

The Practical Solutions

When faced with this issue, Star Food Service considered three possible solutions:

1. Relocate the TimeDock machine.
2. Have department heads enforce the clocking policy.
3. Do nothing, valuing the positive impact on the company culture over the minor time loss.

Lars explains:

"We went with the 3rd option, considering the time lost is minimal and the positives from staff having chats after finishing is more valuable to the overall culture than the savings from late clock outs."

Striking a Balance: Accountability and Culture

This real-world experience from Star Food Service underscores the need for balance. When it comes to editing time entries, consider the broader implications, both legal and cultural. As Lars highlighted, sometimes the benefits of a strong company culture can outweigh the minor losses from inaccurate clock-outs.

What We Think: Kudos to Lars and Star Food Service

We wholeheartedly agree with the insights provided by Lars and his team at Star Food Service. Their approach highlights a critical point that often gets lost in the discussion about time and attendance: the human element.

Valuing People Over Minutes

While it's tempting to zero in on each minute and second, Lars recognizes the long-term benefits of treating employees as valuable contributors to the company culture, rather than merely as units of time. By doing so, Star Food Service encourages a strong work ethic among its team, fostering an environment where accountability and productivity are naturally instilled.

A Strong Work Culture Is Priceless

In our business, we see many companies who grapple with the intricacies of time and attendance, often losing sight of the bigger picture. Lars's stance serves as a refreshing reminder that sometimes, the gains from a robust and positive work culture can far outweigh the minor inefficiencies that come from a clocking system.

Inspiration for All Businesses

We believe that there's a valuable lesson here for businesses of all sizes and industries. Whether you're a small startup or a global enterprise, the principles of fairness, trust, and community stand as pillars for success. Lars and Star Food Service exemplify these values, showing us that sometimes, the best solution is to focus on building a team that respects and understands the importance of time, not just a clock.

Who is Star Food Service?

Star Food Service is a proudly New Zealand-owned and operated family business. Their roots can be traced back to humble beginnings in the 1980s, where they served the Gisborne region's wholesale food market from a small truck. Fast-forward to today, the family group employs over 50 staff across multiple regions in New Zealand. Operating on strong family values, the Owen family understands small business and real business relationships.

For a look into a company that prioritises both effective management and strong business relationships, check out [Star Food Service's website](#).