



MONSTER ASKED, "What is your employer doing to try and keep you?" Out of 3,594 responses: 82 per cent said "nothing at all," nine per cent chose "allowing for flexible scheduling and other work-life balance initiatives," eight per cent — "offering a pay raise." Monster.ca

EFFECTIVE networking has two main components: communicating your message clearly, and delivering it to those who can appreciate your value and hopefully help you access new opportunities. Monster.ca

Hub helps launch new firms



When most other teenage girls were making minimum wage working at the mall, Minna Van was launching her own information technology company.

That early passion for entrepreneurship developed into a sort of obsession for developing new businesses.

At 25, the Simon Fraser University communications graduate and self-proclaimed serial entrepreneur is already the proprietor of Atomic Media, a company that provides web design and marketing for small businesses, as well as a promotions firm, Urban Bella. She has plans in the works for three more businesses, including a call centre in India.

Van's lifelong passion for entrepreneurship also inspired her last year to launch the Network Hub, a trendy loft-style office space for startup businesses, home to eight first-time entrepreneurs, all of whom are under 30. She calls the Hub her proudest accomplishment to date.

"My goal is for the Hub to be a catalyst. It's a stepping stone to growing your own company," said Van, adding that instead of encouraging entrepreneurs to stay at the Hub, she helps them outgrow it.

"This is so needed for young people," she said. "There wasn't anything like this when I started my business in high school."

Tenants get a professional downtown Vancouver workspace for a fraction of the cost of renting an office, as well as access to resources



Minna Van, at her downtown office space, the Network Hub. Eight first-time entrepreneurs work out of the Hub, where they pay a fraction of the cost of renting a downtown office.

like answering services and copy and fax facilities. She personally interviews prospective tenants to make sure they are a good fit with the Hub's other fun, creative

"It's a community here. We share everything, we support each other, we work with each other, and we're there for each other."

MINNA VAN

ants are a public relations firm, a floral arrangement

young professionals. "I try to keep it different industries because of the creative flow," Van said. Among the tenants are a public relations firm, a floral arrangement

business and a student travel agency.

"It's a community here," she said. "We share everything, we support each other, we work with each other, and we're there for each other."

They also work long hours together. "On Friday, six people were working in the office until 3 a.m. We had six of us huddled around the front reception, bouncing ideas off each other, even though we

were working on different projects. We turned the music up really loud and thought about flicking the lights on and off to make it like a dance club."

She likened the late nights to university cram sessions. "We have a lot of beer and chicken wings."

"A lot of difference can happen if you're just given the opportunity," she said. "It's not a hand out, but a hand up."

Money isn't main motivator for staff

Money not only isn't everything, it isn't even the main thing when it comes to motivating employees, according to workplace consultancy Shepell-fgi Research Group.

Psychological engagement factors — how people are treated and how they view their managers — "have almost twice the impact on motivation and results than pay and benefits, meaning more money won't move the productivity meter upwards," the firm reports.

"Total employee engagement won't happen 100 per cent of the time," observes Rod Phillips, CEO of Shepell-fgi, a Canadian specialist in workplace health issues. "We all like some parts our job more than others. But when overall engagement is low and when your staff prefer to not come in to work or aren't performing at their full capacity, it costs the organization money — up to an average cost of \$1.8 million for a company of 1,000 employees."

The firm found that key factors linked to a company's bottom line include trust in senior management, being asked for input, and a clear say in decisions that affect people's work.

"Given their importance, these indicators should be on every employer's radar screens, but fewer than half of executives report their workplaces achieved healthy levels within these indicators," says Karen Seward, Shepell-fgi's senior vice-president of marketing.

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