

Nick Knuffman-Brewer – Point of Pride Transcript

[00:00:00] **Nick:** Simon Sinek says, "Working hard for something we don't care about is called stress. Working hard for something we love is called passion". My passion is HR, and my goal is that it shows in my role here at Simantel. To me, our employees are my customers. I went to school for hospitality and worked in retail for nearly 17 years before coming here, so customer service is ingrained in me.

[00:00:25] Be kind, be positive, listen, help get answers and follow up. HR is an experience and I strive to make it a positive one for all Simantelites.

[00:00:43] **Misty:** Hey there friends. Thanks so much for checking out our Point of Pride series. In celebration of our 40ish anniversary, Simantelites are sharing stories about what makes them proud to work at Simantel. We're passionate about the work we do, but we're also passionate about supporting our employees' needs — not merely as bodies to do the work, but as human beings with need to connect and feel they belong, all the while life is happening on top of it all.

[00:01:06] I'm so pleased that someone who's been a Simantelite for less than a year has called this out as his point of pride. I'm talking about Nick Knuffman-Brewer, our Associate HR Manager. Listen, as Nick shares his experience,

[00:01:29] **Nick:** My point of pride is making HR more about people. To me, that's what HR is all about: truly connecting with and serving people. It was so cool to hear one of our Simantel owners, Misty, say just that recently in a video celebrating Simantel's 40ish anniversary. Hi, my name is Nick Knuffman Brewer and I'm the Associate HR Manager and I've been here at Simantel for a little less than a year.

[00:01:53] My role was recently added to the Administration Department to support the city growth Simantel has experienced in the last couple of years. I've been charged with facilitating onboarding to make it more of an experience and the great first impression of all new employees. I also keep an eye out for ways to continually improve efficiency and dig into proactive strategies and programs like compensation, staffing and a future internship program.

[00:02:20] I also support payroll, benefits, administration, employee performance, employee relations, offboarding and so much more. I'm leaning on my 13 plus years of experience with all facets of HR to bring a fresh set of eyes into Simantel — to look at what we are doing now, but also what we'd like to do in the future.

[00:02:40] With the ever-changing Covid landscape, life events in general, the economy and mental health challenges, it can be hard to keep it all together. I want people to know that it's OK to not be OK. Some days are just harder than others, and I'm always here to listen. I think oftentimes people think of HR as the rule enforcers, type A intimidating folks that you only see on your first day or maybe when you're fired.

[00:03:05] I don't like that, and I work really hard every day to flip that image of HR. Getting HR's presence out and reminding all that we're here to serve and to listen is very important to me. We're all human too. I like to take my lunch in our main cafe on the upper level just so I can see people that I don't always see on the lower level and make conversation.

[00:03:28] In my nine-ish months here, I've had many great things happen and I've heard great things from those that work here, and even those that have sadly moved on from Simantel. It's been great to hear and fuels my desire to keep up the momentum and find little ways to make it even better.

[00:03:46] I've always viewed HR as an employee experience. To me, our employees are my customers. One of my favorite quotes is "speak in such a way that others love to listen to you, listen in such a way that others love to speak to you". My hope is that Simantelites always feel comfortable coming forward, whether a general HR question or something more personal, like sharing how their kid's sporting event was the night before, maybe how a recent mood went, or how their sick animal at home is doing.

[00:04:15] Sometimes it is the small things that make the biggest difference. But sometimes despite our best efforts, things get in the way. It's no one's fault, it's just life — sometimes there just is not enough time. There's competing priorities or things beyond our control, like the pandemic happen, but no matter what, employees' needs come first.

[00:04:36] My time at Simantel has been a very memorable one and enjoyable experience as well, both in terms of the element of human connection and in finding ways to streamline and be more efficient behind the scenes — which makes time and space for other projects and more time for our people. The Admin Team has been very open to feedback and welcomes new ideas.

[00:04:57] I'm incredibly grateful to be a part of the team. Legit, the people that work here are amazing and that's a huge deal for me personally and professionally. I would like to give a shout out to my leader, Jillian Light, our Chief Operations Officer. She is purely awesome. I love our working relationship that can be literally all of the emotions in the world of HR.

[00:05:18] Now, more than ever, HR has to be viewed as a partner in a trusted resource. Having the opportunity to deliver just that to Simantel and our people is why I chose it as my point of pride.

[00:05:40] *Misty*: At Simantel, it's about the work, of course, but it's also about the people too. I'm really proud of the supportive culture we've built here, and I'm grateful for Simantelites like Nick that help keep such a good thing going.

[00:05:54] If you liked Nick's story and want to hear more, head over to marketing.sweats.com and check out our very special season six, where you can hear my full interview with him, and other Simantelites, as they share their point of pride in celebration of our 40ish anniversary.