



EMPLOYEE RETENTION – HOW DO I HOLD ONTO MY BEST PEOPLE?

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Everyone is looking to keep their best employees. Even with a “buyers” market, it is critical to maintain a consistent workforce and ensure that the best ones stay. To replace staff, the current costs average 25% of one year’s salary.

One of the biggest challenges facing employers is managing the different work ethics of employees. Older employees tend to have higher loyalty than younger employees because the came up thought paternalistic cultures. Baby Boomers learned to question management decisions and have gone through much of the corporate downsizing of the eighties and nineties. “Twenty-somethings” are showing loyalty to their profession rather than the employer for all the obvious reasons. Managers are now challenged with managing three different types of employees and attempting to assimilate them into one corporate culture.

So, how do we keep the good ones? Consider the following:

- Non-Compete Agreements – Employers can lock their staff members into timeframes, geographical limitations and types of positions. Of course, employees will want something in return. Consider Stay-On bonuses, company cars, etc.
- Employee Focus Groups – Periodically, hold employee meeting to solicit their thoughts on how to handle business processes, ask for suggestions for improvements, etc. This will give your staff a feeling of ownership in the company and they will be more apt to stay where they have somewhat of a say in how they do their jobs and how the business is run. Remember, the most important benefit to employees is recognition for their efforts.
- Accelerated Increases for Top Performers – Identify the top 10% of your staff and provide smaller but more frequent increases for them. This will be seen as greater recognition for the job they do.
- Provide Training and Tuition Reimbursement – Exceptional employees are always looking to gain knowledge and expand their horizons. By providing the opportunity to receive training and continue their studies “on the company”, employees will stay to ensure they receive these benefits.
- Provide Concierge Services – By providing personal services, employees will focus more on the work at hand rather than personal needs. Consider providing pick-up dry cleaning services, bill paying services, childcare referrals, group catalog purchases, etc.
- Individualized Work Scheduling – Allow employees to work Flex-time schedules, telecommute a few days a week, allow for job shares; allowing two people to work a full-time job schedule around their own schedules, etc.

Some of these ideas may not work for your business, but it comes down to one question: If you *really* want to keep your top performers, can you not consider the above or other alternatives?

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