

The Size of Your Company Doesn't Matter, Your Ability to Manage Them Effectively Does!

How do you get the best people to work with you and stay?

Be clear on what it is you expect them to do- job description

Be clear about the type of education, skills training, experience that would be ideal for the job

Use various tools available to find them—Internet sites, community college job sites, Jobs Canada, local newspapers,

Market your company—small and mid size companies are highly desirable by many employment seekers—they want to make a difference, be heard, make an impact on the company, work in a place where their ideas are heard and acted on, if they're good

Market the size of your company, corporate culture, what separates your company from the crowd, your client base, what you value in your employees and what you can offer them, i.e. career advancement, training opportunities, cross training, recognition and reward for a job well done, location, benefits, etc.

Invest time and energy in interviewing —it is well worth it

Prepare a set of questions in advance—consistency in comparing different candidates

Ask them about the following:

- Salary expectations:
- The most challenging work they have ever done
- The most stressful situation they have ever dealt with
- The type of hours they worked and are willing to work
- What do they see in their career path?
- What would they like to learn?
- What type of work environment do they thrive in best?
- How do they deal with constructive criticism?
- What is their concept of exceptional customer service?

Never make a decision right after interviewing someone—give yourself some time to reflect on the interview, what you liked about him or her, his or her strengths, gaps, etc.

Is there a good fit with co-workers—interpersonal working relationships are very important—you want someone who is cooperative, willing to take on assigned tasks, willing to learn new things, willing to go the extra mile for a customer, internally or externally, positive presence, positive attitude (you can teach people new skills, but it is difficult to teach new attitudes.—people bring those with them).

Conduct reference checks—use a standard format to ask questions so that you focus on what is most important to learn about your potential hire—

Level of skills, confirmation of previous job responsibilities, quality of interactions with others, attendance, customer service orientation, etc.

Now you are ready to make an offer of employment

Prepare a proper employment offer letter, that protects you legally, especially as it relates to termination provisions—if these are not states, ESA standards can be easily challenged by an employee and often the courts will give more the ESA-
Examples

Specify position, start date, pay rate, normally hours of work, group benefits eligibility, premium contributions by employee, if any, pay review date, performance review date, probationary period, termination provisions.

Bringing the employee on board

Proper orientation—get them off to a great start on their first day—the impression you make about how you run your company, how well organized you are in welcoming the new employee leaves a lasting impression for the new hire

Remember, you, the employer is setting the stage for the working relationship.

Provide the best launch for new employee--

Orientation checklist is a must to ensure consistency in bringing all employees on board

Where to go from here.

Performance Feedback

Employees value this immensely—it is also the area most neglected by employers, large and small—Feedback takes time, but it builds a relationship of trust—

- Tell me what I am doing right and tell me what I am doing wrong—Don't make me guess
- People want to improve but they need to know where
- They also need to know what they are doing well- fuel to keep doing that and encouragement to do better in other areas
- Feedback requires coaching—show them, explain it, describe it, let them know what the impact is in doing it right and likewise, doing it wrong—customer impact, \$ impact, business reputation, future pay increases, employment stability
- A well developed performance review program also allows for employees to show you where they shine- as a manager, you are sometimes too occupied with a million other things to notice how good your employees are—let them tell you—its amazing what you will learn.
- Deal with negative behaviour or performance shortly after it occurs—don't wait
- Employers are often uncomfortable in addressing negatives with employees
- The message you are sending by not dealing with it is __ it's OK
- Impact on other employee's—people can get away with this—so maybe I will try that as well

Consistency in treatment among all employees is critical—provide a clear operating framework for all employees.

Ideally you have a set of policies and practices (Employee Handbook) which employees can refer to—provide details about such things as:

- Hours of work, breaks and overtime policy
- Pay dates, hourly and salary reviews,
- Smoking policy
- Harassment Policy
- Working on public holidays
- Dealing with absence from work
- Vacation entitlement and scheduling
- Religious holiday leave
- Maternity and parental leave
- Bereavement leave
- Jury duty,
- Professional development and training, external training courses, on the job training, internal cross training opportunities, etc.
- Use of computers, internet, cell phones and other hand held devices

- Use of company vehicles, tickets, personal use, other passengers, cleanliness, etc.
- Health and Safety

Get to know your employees

Interest in your employees goes a long long way- builds on a more positive and productive relationship. A caring and interested employer is worth a lot these days, nobody wants to be just a number, but many employees are just that

- Hold regular all staff meetings- keep employees informed about the company, its successes and its challenges
- Let them know how they fit into the big picture—their success contribute to the company's successes—stability, energy, talent, what separates you from your competitors
- Bring in munchies, fruit, cake, once in a while
- Do pizza once a month
- Potluck lunches are great to bring people together.
- If you want to create a team, you need to lead the team effort

Act as a role model

- As a Manager, Owner, you set the stage for everyone else
- Your ability to deal with pressure is observed by others
- Keep your moods out of the picture—they have no place at work
- Show understanding and compassion towards employees
- Demonstrate consistency in how you treat employees
- Respect for others is critical—it sets the tone for all interactions