



The City of Caledonia

Economic Development Authority

RECRUITING AND RETAINING EMPLOYEES



Purpose: The purpose of the Caledonia Economic Development Authority Recruiting and Retaining Employees Guide is to offer various methods for recruiting and retaining employees with the goal of impacting employment sustainability for small business growth.

Scope: The scope of this guide applies to any business owner with the intent of hiring and retaining employees for their small business in the City of Caledonia or surrounding area.

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Examples of documents and forms referenced in this Business Guide can be located in the Appendix on Page 48

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What is Recruitment?

Recruitment is the first step in building an organization's human capital. At a high level, the goals are to locate and hire the best candidates, on time, and on budget.

What does recruitment involve? While the recruitment process is unique to each organization, there are 15 essential steps of the hiring process.

Hiring Process Steps:

- Identify the hiring need
- Devise a recruitment plan
- Write a job description
- Advertise the position
- Recruit the position
- Review applications
- Phone Interview/Initial Screening
- Interviews
- Applicant Assessment
- Background Check
- Decision
- Reference Check
- Job offer
- Hiring
- Onboarding



In this guide, we will visit each step in detail.

Benefits of Effective Recruitment

Effective recruitment means more than hiring the right person for the job. A fast and efficient recruitment process can reduce costs, enhance a company's reputation both from a market and candidate perspective and ensure that the very best talent is identified, engaged and brought into the business. Let's look at the top reasons for doing recruitment well.

Get the right talent-It's more than just finding the most talented or qualified people. It's about getting the right talent for the role and the company; people with the best possible skill-set and the right personality for the team and business. Having an effective recruitment process means you start with a clear understanding of what the business needs, then you communicate that well to attract quality candidates, and carefully select the one who best meets those requirements.

Improve retention-High employee turnover can be a real killer for your company's long-term prospects, but if your recruitment and selection processes are effective, you will be far more likely to consistently pick people who perform well and remain loyal employees. It's all about using defined methods and assessments (rather than gut feelings) to identify applicants who will commit to the role and the company's mission, and then successfully bringing them into the team. If you are regularly losing people within the first 90 days of employment, it's a clear sign your recruitment practices aren't up to par.

Increase productivity-An efficient, seamless recruitment experience increases the likelihood that new employees will be more engaged and motivated from the get-go, which improves their long-term chance of succeeding in the job and working to build the business.

Contribute to team diversity-Robust recruitment practices that are free from potential biases and discrimination helps you create a stronger, more diverse team. A diverse workforce that brings a wide range of perspectives and approaches is proven to be better for business performance and resilience, with improved employee engagement and

retention. Being open to diversity also means you'll draw from a wider pool of talent and be a far more attractive company to potential employees.

Types of Recruitment

Internal Recruiting: Internal recruiting involves filling vacancies with existing employees from within an organization. If there are not any potential candidates currently or more employees are needed, then advertising open positions or using a hiring agency may need to be considered.

Retained Recruiting: Retained recruiting is when an organization retains a recruiting firm to fill a vacancy. The business pays an upfront fee to fill a position and the firm is responsible for finding candidates until the position is filled. The organization also agrees to work exclusively with the firm. Companies cannot, in other words, hire multiple recruiting firms to fill the same position.

Contingency Recruiting: Like retained recruiting, contingency recruiting requires an outside firm. Unlike retained recruiting, there is no upfront fee with contingency. Instead, the recruitment company receives payment only when the clients they represent are hired by an organization.

Staffing Recruiting: Staffing recruiters work for staffing agencies. Staffing recruiting matches qualified applicants with qualified job openings. Moreover, staffing agencies typically focus on short-term or temporary employment positions.



What is Candidate Experience?

Candidate experience is the perception of a job seeker about a prospective employer. From the initial job search, through the application process, the interview, and the onboarding process, all of the interactions during the recruitment process impact the candidate experience. Get off to a bad start and your potential future employee's opinion of your organization is clouded.

Even if the rest of their experience is stellar, they always remember that bad beginning. Great candidate experience is the core of successful recruiting and hiring. The candidate experience starts with a job candidate's very first exposure to a potential employer and initial employer branding, but it encompasses the entire hiring process from first touch to final point of rejection or job offer and hire.

How to Improve Candidate Experience

Poorly developed recruiting strategies are the root cause of many problems with lackluster employee engagement and eventual turnover. For example, having the direct hiring manager involved in the process with the candidate is critical to building a relationship and trust with the company vs. the candidate only getting to interact with the recruiter and human resources ahead of their start date.

Rejected candidates who had a poor experience are likely to tell others, reflecting negatively on your brand. By understanding the importance of the job seeker's journey and designing the recruiting process so that they're treated with the same respect as a customer, brands are finding great success. When working on improving candidate experience and enriching a candidate's job search process, consider the following areas:

- Your organization's career site and job descriptions
- Recruitment marketing and social media outreach
- The online job application process
- Any communication from your applicant tracking system

- Any communication from a recruiter, recruiting coordinator, talent source, interview team, or hiring manager.
- The interview process
- Follow-up communication once interviews are completed
- Rejection or job offer
- Offer negotiation and acceptance
- New hire onboarding

What is a Talent Pool?

In simplest terms, a talent pool is a database of potential job candidates. The workers included in the database are typically both highly qualified and have previously expressed interest, in some form, of joining your organization.

Talent pools allow organizations to cultivate relationships with workers whose skills and expertise align with company competencies and values. A proper talent pool database contains information about each candidate, including their skills, potential roles they could fill, how well they fit within the corporate culture, and so forth. This way, you do not have to start the recruiting process from scratch for each opening. Instead, whenever a position opens in your organization, you already have a pool of highly-qualified candidates who are already familiar with and interested in your organization, to recruit from.

Talent pools differ from talent pipelines. A talent pipeline consists of candidates that have already been deemed qualified for particular positions. A talent pool is a broader group of candidates that have not gone through the full vetting process required to enter the talent pipeline. Ultimately, talent pools are the most effective method for recruiting. Building, maintaining and nurturing a high-quality talent pool is a vital long-term strategy for ensuring your organization is able to satisfy both its short and long-term employment needs.

How To Build a Talent Pool

Sourcing varies widely across organizations and industries and includes internal and external. For example, organizations might source directly from specific universities that specialize in relevant degrees or are located near their offices.

Sourcing also includes keeping track of strong applicants who performed well in previous interviews but ultimately were not hired. Those applicants might prove to be desirable candidates in future searches. It is important to note, however, that for this method of sourcing to prove fruitful in the long run, organizations must ensure that all interviewees and applicants have positive experiences interviewing with your company. If not, those applicants are far less likely to respond to inquiries about future positions.

Other external sourcing locations include alumni associations, leads from career fairs, LinkedIn contacts, prior employees, employee referrals and contingent workers. Internal talent pools should identify existing employees who show potential for advancement in an organization. They might also include employees who are in the process of acquiring additional skills or degrees that will qualify them for more senior positions.

Furthermore, social media campaigns and your own company career website are important sites of building your talent pool. Your social media campaigns should consistently advertise your organization, build up your employees, and showcase your organizational culture. In addition, the landing page on your career site should include an invitation for workers to upload their resumes and join your talent pool.



Identify the Hiring Need

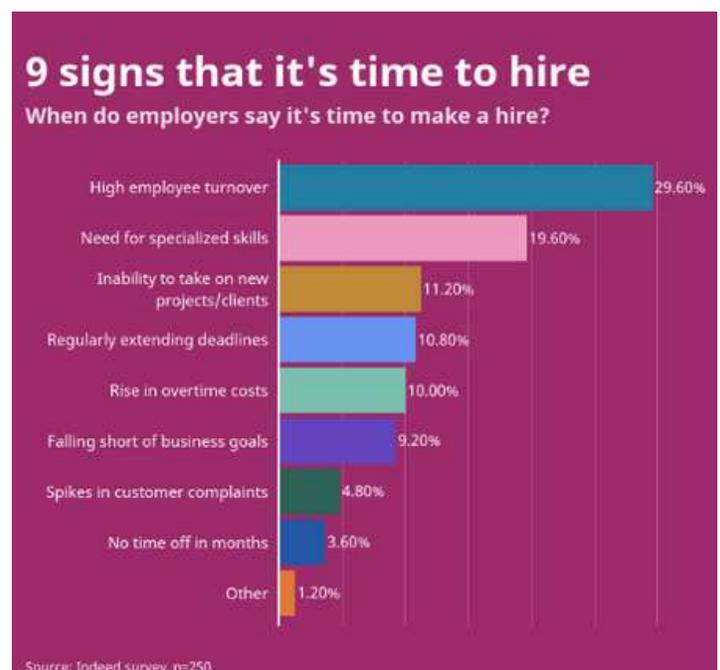
Whether you're hiring your first employee or adding a new member to your existing team, it's critical to find the right match for your position and company and develop a formal hiring process that is fast, effective and legal.

Signs that it may be time to hire

At smaller companies, employees often take on many roles, frequently switching from task to task and working outside their job description to keep up with business growth. Even though this ability to work across departments is a sign of flexibility, resourcefulness and drive, it can also be a clue that your employees are stretched too thin. This over-extension can eventually lead to burnout, low productivity and inefficiencies in your business.

To keep your business growing and maintain high employee morale, watch out for the following signs that it's time to grow your team:

- High employee turnover rate
- Unusual spikes in customer complaints
- Rise in overtime costs
- Frequently falling short of goals
- Regularly needing to extend deadlines
- Inability to take on new projects or clients
- Need for specialized skills
- You haven't taken time off in months



Headcount planning: Headcount planning is the strategic process of creating and implementing growth initiatives for your employee headcount to achieve short and long-term goals . Simply put, it's planning to hire people to meet your company's needs.

It's not just about the numbers. It's about building a winning team that drives your business forward. Whether you're a start-up just beginning to build your workforce or an established company looking to expand, creating a strategic headcount plan is essential for success.

Benefits of expanding your team

Hiring employees offers unrivaled opportunities for growing your company's revenue, capacity and brand recognition. The right new hire can also:

Take your business to the next level-A new employee can bring skills that take years to develop, allowing you to pursue new revenue streams, fill your company's skills gaps and drive rapid growth with just one hire.

Free up time for you to focus on key objectives-Hiring a new employee gives you the opportunity to offload tasks and increase your bandwidth, boosting productivity and freeing up time for you and your team members to focus on what's important.

Bring inspiration and perspective-Employees who bring new ideas and a forward-thinking approach can inject creativity and innovation into your business, helping you make critical process improvements, recognize new opportunities and help the team see things from a new perspective to stimulate advancement and growth.



Devise a Recruitment Plan

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What is a Recruitment Plan?

A recruitment plan is a properly defined strategy for attracting, hiring, and onboarding the right talent. A strategic recruitment plan will typically cover:

- Your recruitment goals
- Headcount planning
- Ideal candidate profiles
- Your employee value proposition
- Your recruitment marketing strategy
- Your recruitment budget

What are the Benefits of a Recruitment Plan?

As the old adage goes, failing to prepare is preparing to fail.

With proper planning, you'll become more proactive in your approach to recruitment resulting in better hires, reduced costs, and less last-minute panics to fill vacancies.

A well thought through recruitment plan will:

- Save you time
- Ensure you make the best use of your recruitment budget
- Help you make better hiring decisions
- Make sure your recruitment objectives are aligned to broader company objectives
- Ensure your recruiters and hiring teams are working to the same common goals
- Focus your efforts on building the right talent pipeline
- Help you secure the budget you need to hit your goals



6 Steps for Creating a Recruitment Plan

- **Define your goals**

The first step to creating your recruitment plan is to get clear on your recruitment goals. Common goals include:

- Growing headcount
- Improving diversity
- Reducing the cost of making a new hire
- Reducing the time taken to make a new hire
- Streamlining recruitment processes and reducing repetitive admin
- Empowering hiring managers to be more involved in the hiring process
- Improving employee retention
- Becoming less reliant on external recruiters
- Building a stronger talent pipeline

- **Forecast future hiring needs**

Now that you have some high-level goals in place, it's important to get a feel for the number of roles you're going to need to hire over the next 12 months.

- **Get your organizational chart up to date**

You'll need an up to date copy of your organizational chart to get started. And if you don't already have one, get started on a draft right now.

- **Identify likely promotions**

Within your current structure, who's likely to move around? Are there upcoming promotions you should be aware of? What gaps will this create?

Add these gaps to the headcount planning sheet in your hiring plan template.

- **Identify likely attrition and turnover**

Think about retirement, resignation, redundancy, health issues, and performance. Are there people who are likely to be moving on in the next year?

- **Growth**

Now that you've got an outline of the vacancies that'll be created by movement within your existing workforce, we need to consider growth. Are there teams where additional resources are needed? A big project coming up? Have more product or services been added?

- **Get clear about the type of candidates you want to attract**

What values do your most successful team members share? What kind of person tends to work well in your company historically? What kind of person doesn't?

- **Develop your sourcing strategy**

Once you've put some work into your employee value proposition, it's time to develop a plan for attracting the right candidates and review how well you're communicating your employer brand in the market.

- **Create a budget to support your recruitment plan**

A well-planned recruitment budget will help you demonstrate the return on investment of your direct hiring strategy to senior stakeholders and position your in-house recruitment team in a positive way. And when you can demonstrate that your in-house recruitment team is saving the organization money when compared to relying on external recruiters, it becomes easier to secure additional budget for the resources you need to do an even better job.

- **Revisit your employee value proposition**

In a competitive market for the best candidates, the organizations that will win are the ones that are clear about why someone would choose to work for them over a competitor. This is known as an employee **value proposition**.

When you're on the inside of a company, it's easy to see all the good (and bad) things about working there. You know what the team's like, what the expectations are, and what kind of person works well within your organization. You can also see when a new hire is going to fit right in – or, equally, be gone in their first month.

How to Create an Employee Value Proposition

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As mentioned on the previous page, a strong employee value propositions (EVPs) set you apart from your competition and can help you attract quality candidates and retain impressive employees. Creating an effective EVP involves learning what your current employees enjoy about your company and what candidates want in their ideal workplace.

An employee value proposition is the set of benefits you offer employees in return for the skills, experience and qualities they bring to the position. In simple terms, what's in it for them?

Your EVP typically includes the benefits, financial rewards, career development opportunities and additional perks employees receive. It also mentions your company's values and vision. The goal of an EVP is to make employees excited and proud to work for your company, and is an excellent way to build your employer brand.

Many job seekers search for companies that share similar values. Seeing an employee value proposition that aligns with an employee's goals and passions may convince them to choose your company over another. Overall, EVPs are to employees what unique selling propositions (USPs) are to customers and clients.

What makes a good employee value proposition?

A strong EVP stands out from your competitors and is relevant to your employees' wants and needs. It should represent your company's values and make your employees feel proud, motivated and encouraged to do their best work each day.

An effective EVP typically includes more than just a paycheck. Here are a few key elements commonly included in compelling EVPs:

An effective EVP typically includes more than just a paycheck. Here are a few key elements commonly included in compelling EVPs:

- Financial rewards like salary, stock options and bonuses.
- Employment benefits like paid time off, health insurance, retirement funds, parental leave or company-sponsored holidays.
- Career development opportunities like leadership training, technical training, mentorship programs, promotions, travel opportunities, tuition reimbursement or paid educational courses.
- Additional monetary and non-monetary perks and incentives like gym memberships, free coffee and snacks, flexible work hours, work from home opportunities or team building workshops.
- A positive work environment that provides autonomy, recognition and a good work/life balance.
- Statements about company culture, goals and values like communication, collaboration and positive relationships between team members and supervisors.

How to define your own employee value proposition

Your EVP must appeal to potential job candidates and encourage employee loyalty. Here are five steps to help you create a strong EVP you can include in your talent acquisition process:

Assess what your business currently offers

What are your company's key selling points? Note the current benefits, perks, compensation, work environment and other opportunities your business offers employees but also focus on the culture and why your current employees enjoy working at your company. Over time, your values may change so it's important to review your company's EVP to decide if it continues to accurately represent your business as your company grows.

Make a list of qualities your ideal employees have

Sit down with your leadership team and list the qualities of top candidates you'd like to recruit, also known as your ideal candidate persona. Mention any skills, traits and characteristics of these ideal employees. Possible traits could include:

- Dependable
- Motivated
- Experienced
- Passionate
- Self-disciplined

Knowing the qualities you want in candidates allows you to center your employee value proposition around them. For example, if you're looking for motivated employees, offer training and career development opportunities. This attracts the most motivated candidates looking for opportunities to grow and advance in their careers. rent benefits, perks, compensation, work environment and other opportunities your business offers employees.

Conduct surveys with current employees to learn their wants and needs

It's important to attract new candidates while also retaining current talent to reduce employee turnover. Craft a list of questions asking your employees what they like about your company and what they wish to improve. Use this list to understand which opportunities your current employees will benefit from the most.

Employees will feel more encouraged to stay at a company with an EVP that revolves around their needs. Seeing how passionate employees are about working at your company creates a positive atmosphere that candidates will want to join. Possible questions to include in your employee survey include:



- What do you enjoy the most about working here?
- What are some of your favorite benefits or perks we currently provide?
- Which opportunities do you wish we provided?
- Are the career paths at our company clear?
- Do you feel like you're doing meaningful work?
- What support would you like our company to provide that contributes to your career development?
- What do you think makes this company unique?

Cater your EVPs toward each candidate

To ensure you're attracting your ideal candidates, target your messaging toward the specific audience you want to hire. For instance, if you want to fill your entry-level positions with candidates who have a desire to learn and grow, your employee value proposition might highlight any growth, career development or tuition reimbursement opportunities you offer.

Catering your EVP toward each candidate attracts quality employees. Even though you're tweaking your messaging to speak directly to a certain audience, make sure each EVP still represents the values and career goals of your company as a whole.

Communicate your EVP

After you've defined your EVP, it's time to share it with the candidates you want to attract. Consider including it in your job descriptions, on your company website, during the interview process, in job offer letters, on your social media account and in other parts of the hiring process.

Remember, the goal of an EVP is to help you attract, hire and retain candidates that are the right fit for your business, so it's important that they're aware of what makes your company unique.

How to Write a Job Description

Your job title and job description⁴ play a major role in encouraging the right candidates to apply. When you provide the information candidates are looking for in an easy-to-read format, you're more likely to capture the attention of job seekers. Writing an attention-grabbing and thorough job description is one of the most important parts of the hiring process.

When crafting a job description, employers should:

Analyze the job. Gather information about the exact duties and responsibilities being performed by employees in the job. This can be accomplished by:

- observing employees as they perform their jobs;
- interviewing the employees and their supervisors; and/or
- referencing outside sources, such as the Occupational Outlook Handbook (see U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics: Occupational Outlook Handbook).

Have the job description reviewed by the employee in the position and the employee's supervisor. The draft job description should be reviewed by the employee performing the job to confirm or clarify any duties and responsibilities. The employee's supervisor should also review the draft to ensure it contains an accurate statement of the position's duties, responsibilities, qualifications and skills.

Update the job description as needed. Some changes to a job are so significant that the job description should be updated before the annual review time. If the scope of a job changes, any duties or responsibilities that are no longer applicable should be removed and updated as the change occurs.

To create a compelling job description, here are a few tips to consider:

- Make titles as specific as possible. The more accurate your title, the more effective you will be in piquing the interest of the most qualified and interested job seekers. Targeted job titles are more effective than generic ones, so be precise by including key phrases that accurately describe the role.

- Open with a captivating summary. Provide an overview that gets job seekers excited about the role and company. Your summary should provide an overview of your company and expectations for the position.
- Highlight the day-to-day activities of the position. This will help candidates understand the work environment and the activities they will be exposed to on a daily basis. This level of detail will help the candidate determine if the role and company are a right fit, helping you attract the best candidates for your position.
- Include the essentials. Write out the core responsibilities, hard and soft skills, and explain how the position fits into the organization. Of course, the job description should specify education, previous job experience, certifications and technical skills required for the role.
- Highlight your culture. Job seekers like to see details about your culture, so take the opportunity to highlight your values and your people. Your job description is an introduction to your company and your employer brand. Include details about your company culture to sum up why a candidate would love to work for you.

Think like a Job Seeker

In general, the average job seeker is short on time. They're looking for jobs on their breaks and after dinner. The simpler and easier-to-read that you can make your job post, the more likely you are to attract the right candidates. Here are a few best practices to follow:

- Break up text into bite-size 3-4 sentence paragraphs.
- Keep your vocabulary simple enough for anyone to understand.
- Use lists (bullet points) to make info easy to scan.

Implementing job descriptions for all jobs in your organization provides an enhanced understanding of your talent pool, succession and development planning.

Advertise and Recruit the Position

Recruiting top talent takes a combination of creativity and diligence. Technology makes it easier than ever to publish your job postings to a broad audience — but to really connect with qualified candidates and drive excitement about the role and your company, you have to find ways to stand out from other employers.

What is a Recruitment Strategy?

A recruiting strategy is a plan of action to help you successfully identify, attract and hire the best candidates for your open roles. These are basic starting points that can help you recruit the job seekers you are looking for. They range from basic methods, like posting on job boards, to more advanced strategies, such as using a traditional recruiting agency or creating an employee referral program. You can implement recruiting strategies at every step in the hiring process.

Here are 11 recruitment strategies to help you immediately captivate job seekers, create a memorable first impression of your company and successfully hire top candidates:

Use social media-Social media is a fantastic recruiting tool. Social recruiting allows you to share job postings with your entire network and encourages a two-way conversation. Even if the people you reach aren't interested in the role you're hiring for, it's likely they may know someone who is a good fit. Plus, by sharing photos and videos from company events, your workplace and/or day-to-day office life that align with your employer brand, you give potential applicants a glimpse into your company culture.

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Implement an employee referral program

Great people usually make a habit of surrounding themselves with other highly capable professionals.

While many employees may already be sharing open roles with qualified contacts in their networks, a well-developed employee referral program can encourage even more of your employees to refer the best talent they know. Consider providing incentives for referrals with bonuses and contests so you can create excitement around the program.

Consider past candidates-When you hire for a position, there are often a few talented candidates that end up not making the cut due to timing or other external factors. When you're recruiting for a similar position, consider re-visiting the resumes of past applicants. These candidates are already familiar with your company and may have picked up new skills and experience since you last spoke.

Attend industry-related meetups-Non-recruiting-specific events are also an excellent opportunity to meet motivated industry professionals who are eager to network and advance in their field. For example, if you're looking to hire a software engineer, find a local group, meetup or association focused on software development and attend a local meeting. The most passionate professionals will quickly stand out.

Include peers in the interview process-Sometimes the best person to interview a candidate is someone already working in the same or similar role. This employee already knows what it takes to excel in the position and can verify whether candidates have the skills and experience needed to do the job well. Current employees can also give an accurate description of day-to-day experiences and help candidates better understand what they can expect if hired.

Use an on line recruitment platform-Using some type of recruitment software could save cost, time and attract specialists, who would drive more growth and productivity into the company. Recruitment systems have filtration tools to help recruiters to find the ideal candidates with competencies that match the job position and by using recruitment software, recruiters will be helped in reaching a wider amount of candidates. In addition, your professional career page is tailored made accordingly to the graphical identity of the company. As a result, this will help your employer branding, underlining the company's identity and values.

Post on the Right Job Boards-With so many different types of job listings, it can be difficult for job applicants to find the one they're looking for. It can also be hard for employers to get their job postings noticed by qualified people. That's why there are specialized job boards that cater to different industries or job requirements.

For example, if you needed to hire someone for a high-level management position, you would want to post that job listing on Ladders or a similar website that only deals with that kind of job position. This puts your job listing in front of qualified people who are interested in that type of job. But what if the job you're trying to fill doesn't have special requirements or isn't covered by a specific job board?

In that case, you may want to post your job listing on a more general job board. The most popular include Indeed, Monster, and CareerBuilder. The high level of traffic on these sites means your listing will be seen by a large number of job candidates.

Try a Sponsored Job Ad-If you want to save money while hiring, use a sponsored job ad. A sponsored job ad is performance-based, meaning the amount you pay for the ad is determined by how many people look at it or contact you about it. This type of job ad can save you money because you only pay when people interested in the job view the listing, as opposed to paying for everyone who uses the website.

Make a Video-Although job boards and ads are a great way to promote your job listing, they aren't able to make your business stand out to potential employees. One way you can make your business stand out to potential applicants is by making a video that explains your business and the job you want to fill. You can then post this video to social media sites and on your company's website.



Promote Your Brand-One of the most significant problems small businesses have with hiring is brand visibility. If job applicants haven't heard of your company, they're not going to search for your job openings. It can also be difficult to stand out to job applicants in the sea of small businesses.

That's why promoting your brand is a great way to find job candidates. You can do this by telling your brand's story and why it's different from other companies. This can get candidates excited to work with you. You can also promote your brand by using positive language in your marketing and talking about your business on podcasts or blog posts to show people you'd be a good employer. It also gives job applicants more information about your company's culture and what your company's goals and values are.

Go Where the Job Applicants Go-Now that you've put your ad online and have promoted your brand, it's time to go where the job applicants are. Going to job fairs is a great way to advertise your job because it puts you in contact with people who are interested in the kind of jobs you need filled. It also lets the job applicants ask any questions they have about the job or business so they can better understand the job position or company culture.



Reviewing Applications and Interviewing Candidates

Finding the Ideal Candidate

When we say ideal, we really mean a candidate that has all the requisite skills to do the job and is a good culture fit within the organization. This includes whatever experiences, education, personality traits, and perspectives that they bring with them. While you may already know what position you want to fill, the next step is understanding what type of candidate you would prefer for that role. You may want to consider:

- Personality traits
- Preferred hard skills and soft skills
- Work experience and education
- Nice to have attributes and key skills
- Must have qualities (qualifications)
- Success traits
- Long term career goals

Using all of the above will help you filter out the better candidates from the more average applicants. You can use a candidate profile⁶ during the recruitment process to find job candidates that suit your company's culture. Creating one will give you a full picture of the type of person that's best to fill your open position. Having the ideal candidate profile prepared will make certain aspects of the recruitment process easier.

Once you've finished creating a candidate profile, you will have a solid foundation to build upon. That information can help you determine how you will start your candidate outreach.

Processing Applications

The key to processing applications and reviewing resumes is planning. Before you receive your first application you should have a plan in place to evaluate, interview, and hire candidates.

Hopefully while writing your impeccable job description you identified “must have” requirements. This will allow you to eliminate candidates based on their application without ever having to read their resume which can eliminate a lot of wasted time spent reviewing the resumes of unqualified candidates.

Evaluate the Cover Letter

In many industries, cover letters are becoming out of date, but if you feel one is required, review cover letters to ensure that it’s customized for your company/job opportunity and scan for relevant keywords.

Sort and Evaluate Resumes

Your resume review process should include some kind of sorting. Traditionally three yes, no, and maybe piles are created. If your resumes are digital, use yes, no, and maybe folders. Create a screening checklist that includes requirements for the position. The screening checklist should include items like adequate experience, education, required skill sets, certifications, etc.

Don’t Ignore Red Flags

If a candidate meets all the requirements but triggers some warning flags in your review, relegate them to the maybe category. Some issues to keep an eye out for are gaps in employment history, signs of demotion or decreasing responsibilities, short-term positions, or multiple shifts in career path.

Once you've identified the mostly-qualified candidates, start the screening and interviewing processes. Structured and unstructured interviews can be conducted in a variety of ways:

- Telephone pre-screen interview: This interview is used to assess whether a candidate has sufficient qualifications to continue the interview process.
- One-on-one interview: This interview can be conducted in-person or virtually, and usually employs a behavioral, competency-based, or situational approach.
- Panel interview: An applicant is interviewed by two or more people in a panel interview. This approach helps gain a broader perspective on the candidate and can also be used as a training exercise for inexperienced interviewers.

Screen Candidates

Before you reach out to candidates, review each resume again and sort them into more defined categories. References and multiple interviews with team members and higher-ups might be necessary. If you've been working with a staffing company this is where you'll come back into the picture. The staffing agency will provide qualified candidates who have been vetted. All you have to do is the final interviewing, select the individual you'd like to hire, and negotiate compensation. Consider the questions below when pre-screening candidates:

Phone Interviews and Screening Questions

- Why are you searching for a new position?
- What motivates you?
- What about this position attracted you to apply?
- Do you have a valid [license type]?
- What percentage of the time are you willing to travel for work?
- Why do you want to work at Company ABC?
- What are your hobbies outside of work?
- Do you have any questions?

Contact The Candidates References

When contacting references take notes and look for consistency. It's a bad sign if there are inconsistencies with the references descriptions of the candidate.

Interviewing and Assessing Candidates

The more comfortable you make a candidate during an interview, the greater chance you'll have of gaining valuable insight into who they are and if they will be the best fit for the job. Below are some tips for how to interview job candidates:

Extend professional courtesies

At the start of the interview, make small talk with the candidate to help them feel comfortable. For example, ask them how their day has been or if they had difficulty finding the building. If time permits, offer to give them a tour of the facility.

Provide structure to the interview

Instead of having a free-flowing conversation, provide some structure to the interview. Having structure can help you stay focused and ensures you address everything you wanted to during the interview. For example, start with a brief description of the company and the job, then explain the job duties and end with the candidate's questions. The latter gives them the opportunity to ask questions about the position and the company.

Be prepared

During an interview, prepare to ask both common and role-specific questions. Use the job description you created for the role to guide the creation of your interview questions. Make sure the questions you ask get them to elaborate on their qualifications and allow you to gain insight regarding their potential fit with your company's culture. As you make a list of questions, leave space to take notes during the interview. Be ready to answer any questions the candidate might have regarding the open position, employee benefits and the company at large and refresh yourself on the company goals in the event the question arises.



Learn about their career goals

Apart from asking role-specific questions, aim to get a better understanding of the interviewee's career goals. Ask them about their professional interests, where they see themselves in 10 years and why they're particularly interested in the position they're interviewing for. Asking these questions helps you understand what they expect regarding professional development. In addition, they give you an idea of how they perceive your company and the position.

Be a good listener

Throughout the interview, make sure to actively listen. Being a good listener shows your genuine interest in the candidate and gives them the encouragement they need to talk about their qualifications for the role they're interviewing for. In addition to listening, learn to understand non-verbal cues such as body language signs which can indicate their level of interest in the position as well as their honesty.

Talk about the next steps

At the end of the interview, explain the next steps in the interview process and what they can expect. Let them know when they can plan to hear back from you and what the rest of the interview process may look like. You can also let them know your timeline for filling the position.

What are some common interview questions?

While you should ask candidates questions relevant to the position you're hiring for, you can also ask some general questions to get an overview of who they are. Here are some common interview questions:

- Can you tell me about yourself?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- Why do you want to work for us?
- Why are you leaving your current job?
- Can you tell me about a time you overcame a challenge?

Apart from these common questions, ask other questions such as behavioral questions, situational questions and emotional intelligence questions to help you determine whether they're a good fit for the role.

Most importantly, treat candidates like customers-Whether it's a phone screening, video interview or an in-person interview, a candidate's first impression of your company is critical. It's important to make them feel like you're just as excited about getting to know them as they are about being considered for the role. One of the best recruiting techniques is to treat interviewees the same way you treat your customers.

- Be respectful of their time. Whether it's a phone call, video conference or in-person meeting, always be sure to show up on time. If you're running late, let the candidate know as far in advance as possible.
- Be hospitable. When a candidate arrives for an onsite interview, ask if they'd like something to drink and show them where to find the restrooms. Make them feel welcome and comfortable.
- Make yourself available. Provide potential candidates with your contact information so they're able to reach out with questions and concerns throughout the hiring process.



Offering the Job

Making a job offer is usually the last step in the hiring process before onboarding. Prepare for a job offer in advance to ensure a candidate's acceptance and swift welcoming to a company. In this article, we discuss what a job offer is, how to make one, give tips to securing an acceptance, and example for what you can expect during a job offer conversation.

What is a Job Offer?

A job offer is the agreement that an employer extends to a candidate, intending to hire them. Job offers may be formal or informal and given orally and/or in writing. Candidates may choose to accept or reject a job offer as the hiring manager gives it or negotiate additional terms.

Move quickly

Most candidates who are actively job seeking may apply to multiple positions at one time. For this reason, they may also attend a variety of interviews and receive competing job offers. When possible, consider contacting candidates the same day as their final interview or within one day of making your decision. This shows that the company is eager to bring on a new employee.

Make a phone call

When possible, make a phone call to offer a candidate a position. This allows you to share mutual excitement over the opportunity and answer questions about the new role immediately. If a candidate doesn't answer their phone, leave a message with your contact information so they can talk to you at a more convenient time. If you can't leave a message, consider emailing them to set up a time to talk.

Provide reasons for the decision

Tell the candidate specifically what experience, skills or qualities helped them get the job. Tell them why they fit with your organization or what new ideas you expect they'll bring with them to the company. Let them know what details made them more qualified or a better choice than other candidates you interviewed.

Talk about salary

Tell candidates the base salary the company is offering and any major benefits included in the package. Many people look to change jobs for a higher wage so consider offering a salary greater than what they make at their current job. Explain the details of major benefits like paid time off and insurance. Include details about any probation or waiting periods for their benefits. You may also explain that you'll include a more detailed list in the written offer letter.

Ask for feedback

Ask the candidate if they have questions you haven't already answered. Ask them if there is anything else you need to know about them before they start the position. Discuss other information you may include in the offer letter such as a potential start date or prior commitments for time off. Offer your contact information again so they can write it down if necessary. They may have additional questions after receiving the offer letter.

Send an offer in writing ⁷

Send the written offer letter through email or traditional mail. You may also consider sharing it through an online human resources platform. The written offer letter includes terms and conditions such as:

- Additional perks
- Base salary
- Detailed medical and related benefits
- Job title
- Legal obligations of a new employee
- Paid time off expectations
- Response deadline
- Start date



Onboarding

"Onboarding" refers to the processes in which new hires are integrated into the organization. It includes activities that allow new employees to complete an initial new-hire orientation process, as well as learn about the organization and its structure, culture, vision, mission and values. For some organizations, the onboarding process consists of one or two days of activities; for other organizations, this process may⁸ involve a series of activities spanning one or many months. An onboarding checklist will help with ensuring all steps are completed.

Onboarding is often confused with orientation. While orientation is necessary for completing paperwork and other routine tasks, onboarding is a comprehensive process involving management and other employees.

PREBOARDING

Some organizations want to begin the onboarding process after the offer is accepted but before the actual start date. In these situations, employers may want to develop strategies to link new employees to the organization. Examples include the following:

- Inviting the employee (and, perhaps, his or her family) to tour the facility (this visit may include a house-hunting trip and community tour if relocation is involved).
- Mailing or e-mailing information to the employee regarding the organization, including benefits information, the organizational chart and company literature.
- Sending a care package to the recruit. Care packages might include cookies, coffee, a coffee mug with the company logo or other logo wear.
- Matching the new employee with a buddy who connects with the new employee prior to the first day to answer basic questions (e.g., What is the dress code? What can I expect on my first day? Where do employees tend to eat?).

ORIENTATION

New-hire orientation is a formal event to introduce the new employee to the organization's structure, vision, mission and values; review the employee handbook and highlight major policies; complete required employee paperwork; review pertinent administrative procedures; and provide mandatory training.

This process can overload a new employee with information and is therefore best done over a few days or a week, if possible.

FOUNDATION BUILDING

Throughout the onboarding process, an organization's unique pillars of culture, mission, employee value proposition, brand and other relevant foundations must be lived and conveyed consistently. New hires will not absorb this in the first week or first month; it will take many months to learn and apply. Identifying the enduring values and aspirational goals unique to the organization will help guide the development of an onboarding program.

MENTORING AND BUDDY SYSTEMS

Many organizations offer a formal or informal mentoring or buddy system to support the new employee during the onboarding period. Mentors and buddies may be volunteers or selected by the department manager or HR professional.

Generally, the role of the mentor or buddy is to offer the new employee a connection to someone who can guide him or her but is not in a position of direct authority or acting in an official capacity. The mentor or buddy may be responsible for such mundane tasks as giving directions to the restrooms or cafeteria or instructions on parking guidelines. They may be involved in introducing the new hire to other co-workers, and helping the new employee feel welcomed.



Roles and Responsibilities

"Onboarding is everyone's responsibility" is an often-used phrase in organizations, but without actionable items and accountability, onboarding programs will never succeed. While every organization is unique in how the onboarding responsibilities are shared throughout the organization, there are some general guidelines for allocating onboarding duties and accountability:

- HR department. Completing and collecting employee paperwork (e.g., forms, benefits); reviewing work hours, the history and background of the organization, and the organizational chart; touring the facility.
- Training department. Delivering the onboarding program elements; guiding lectures and discussions about organizational culture, goals and objectives; reviewing company videos.
- Supervisor. Discussing duties and responsibilities, work behaviors, and standards and expectations; introducing team members and other members of the organization; touring the department; reviewing other roles and relationships within the department.
- Co-workers. Sharing how the group works as a team, how to get things done, how to find/requisition tools and equipment, and where to turn for support.
- Mentor/buddy. Introducing team members and others within the organization, reviewing informal rules and policies, answering day-to-day questions.

Best Practices for Developing and Onboarding Process

In addition to the activities explained above, an engaging onboarding process is the best way to welcome new employees and ensure employee retention in the long run. By making sure the entire onboarding process is engaging and the new employee feels welcomed, the employee will feel valued and likely be more loyal to the company.

Prepare Colleagues For The New Employee

Welcome your new employee with an announcement, email, or by gathering all employees as a team. The announcement should explain the employee's role, their work experience, and what they will be doing in the company. Furthermore, it is important to remind other employees to welcome them and help to help them adjust to the new place.

Make Introductions

On the employee's first day, approach co-workers one-on-one or schedule a welcome meeting to introduce the employee. This will give the new hire an overview of everyone in the company and help them understand their role and who they can approach for certain things.

Plan a Team Lunch

Another important best practice for the employee onboarding process is to plan a team lunch. This will help them break the ice and will allow the new employee to get to know the new colleagues in a relaxed environment. Providing a lunch will allow the employees to gather and take the time to understand each other.

Follow-Up

An important part of the onboarding process is to follow up for feedback after regular intervals. Make sure you have a system in place to check up after 30, 60, and 90 days. Even if the employee is well, it is good to communicate and understand their problems and situation. This will help you learn how to make your onboarding process better and more efficient. You can even ask them what they liked and didn't like about the process and change things accordingly.

A good onboarding process shows the time and effort that was put into the process. Therefore, it's important to take the time to do the work. This will set the tone for the future business and the employee's relationship with the people.

Metrics

Employers should evaluate their organization's onboarding strategies using a variety of metrics that are meaningful to the organization and with a focus on employee retention. Some examples include:

- **Time-to-productivity.** This metric measures the time it takes for a new hire to get up to speed and contribute to the organization, and it is strongly influenced by the onboarding program. Establish key performance indicators for each position, then measure how many days it took a new hire to get there.
- **Turnover/retention rates.** Examine the turnover/retention rates for different "graduating classes" (e.g., those who began their employment in a particular year) and track the different rates of those classes.
- **Retention threshold.** Track the point at which most new employees tend to exit the organization (e.g., 50 percent of employees tend to quit the organization within the first 90 days of employment). If the organization tends to lose many employees during the first 90 days of employment, for example, the organization may want to conduct in-depth exit interviews to determine the cause (e.g., promises made but not kept, lack of thorough understanding of any negative working conditions).
- **New-hire surveys.** Survey new employees at various intervals during their first year of employment to learn where their pain points are. Survey your buddy/mentor appointees, as well, to learn what they believe is working and what isn't.
- **Employee satisfaction and engagement.** These two metrics are closely related to onboarding because how we start in an organization creates a first impression that's hard to modify. Engagement starts with onboarding and providing a culture that embodies the organization's EVP results in greater employee satisfaction.
- **Performance measures.** For example, compare the performance of a group provided with only one week of onboarding experiences in the past with that of a similar group provided a full month's worth under a revised program.
- **Informal feedback.** Especially in smaller organizations, employers may want to gather small focus groups consisting of recent new hires (or conduct this research one-on-one) and ask open-ended questions to determine their satisfaction not only with the onboarding process, but with the organization as a whole.

Retaining Employees

What is Employee Retention?

Employee retention is the organizational goal of keeping talented employees and reducing turnover by fostering a positive work atmosphere to promote engagement, showing appreciation to employees, and providing competitive pay and benefits and healthy work-life balance. Employers are particularly interested in retaining employees during periods of low unemployment and heightened competition for talent.

Why Employee Retention is Important

High rates of employee turnover can harm a business's ability to carry out their mission because of impairments to continuity, loss of institutional knowledge, and high costs of replacing departing workers. Diminished productivity and competitive advantage are among the biggest losses caused by employees leaving an organization.

Employee departures can also lower morale and spur more employees to leave the organization. Employee retention is also important to team building and cohesion in the workplace, so workers can come to trust and depend on each other.

Another negative effect of turnover is the impact on customers, who can notice that they are dealing with a continual flow of different people.

Why do Employees Leave?

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Exit interviews can provide invaluable insight into the employee perspective of your company and help determine whether your employee retention strategies need improvement. More than likely, you'll hear the departing employee cite one or more of the following reasons for leaving their job:

- Inadequate salary
- A perks and benefits package that isn't competitive
- Feeling overworked and/or unsupported
- Limited career advancement or growth

- A need for better work-life balance
- Lack of recognition
- Boredom
- Unhappiness with management
- Concerns about the company's direction or financial health
- Dissatisfaction with the company culture
- The desire to make a career change
- More compelling job opportunities at other companies

Employee Retention Strategies

If you sense your business is at risk of losing top talent, you need to move fast to shore up your employee retention strategies. Here are 14 areas where deliberate action can help boost employees' job satisfaction and increase your ability to hold onto valued workers:

Onboarding-Every new hire should be set up for success from the start. Your onboarding process should teach new employees not only about the job but also about the company culture and how they can contribute to and thrive in it. Don't skimp on this critical first step. The training and support you provide from day one, whether in person or virtually, can set the tone for the employee's entire tenure at your organization.

Mentorship Programs-Pairing a new employee with a mentor is a great component to add to your extended onboarding process, especially in a remote work environment. Mentors can welcome newcomers into the company, offer guidance and be a sounding board. And it's a win-win: New team members learn the ropes from experienced employees, and, in return, they offer a fresh viewpoint to their mentors. But don't limit mentorship opportunities to new employees. Your existing staff — and your overall employee retention outlook and team's job satisfaction — can significantly benefit from mentor-mentee relationships.

Employee compensation-It's essential for companies to pay their employees competitive compensation, which means employers need to evaluate and adjust salaries regularly. Even if your business can't increase pay right now, consider whether you could provide other forms of compensation, such as bonuses. Don't forget about improving health care benefits and retirement plans, which can help raise employees' job satisfaction, too.

Perks-Perks can make your workplace stand out to potential new hires and re-engage current staff while boosting employee morale. Flexible schedules and remote work options are the perks many professionals value most. In addition, paid parental leave is a big plus.

Wellness Offerings-Keeping employees fit — mentally, physically and financially — is just good business. Stress management programs, retirement planning services and reimbursement for fitness classes are just some examples of what your business might consider providing to employees.

Communication-Your direct reports, whether they work on-site or remotely, should feel they can come to you with ideas, questions and concerns at any time. And as a leader, you need to make sure you're doing your part to help promote timely, constructive and positive communication across the entire team. Make sure you proactively connect with each team member on a regular basis, too, to get a sense of their workload and job satisfaction.

Continuous Feedback on Performance-Many employers are abandoning the annual performance review in favor of more frequent meetings with team members. In these one-on-one meetings, talk with your employees about their short- and long-term professional goals and help them visualize their future with the company. While you should never make promises you can't keep, talk through potential career advancement scenarios together and lay out a realistic plan for reaching those goals.

Training and Development-As part of providing continuous feedback on performance, you can help employees identify areas for professional growth, such as the need to learn new skills. Upskilling your employees is especially important today as technology continues to change how we work. When people upskill, they gain new abilities and competencies as business requirements evolve.

Make it a priority to invest in your workers' professional development. Give them time to attend virtual conferences, provide tuition reimbursement or pay for continuing education. Also, don't forget about succession planning, which can be a highly effective method for advancing professional development and building leadership skills.

Recognition and Rewards Systems-Every person wants to feel appreciated for the work they do. And in today's "anywhere workforce," an employer's gratitude can make an especially big impact. So be sure to thank your employees who go the extra mile and explain how their hard work helps the organization. Some companies set up formal rewards systems to incentivize great ideas and innovation, but you can institute compelling recognition programs even if you have a small team or limited budget.

Work-life Balance-What message is your time management sending to employees? Do you expect staff to be available around the clock? A healthy work-life balance is essential to job satisfaction. People need to know their managers understand they have lives outside of work — and recognize that maintaining balance can be even more challenging when working from home. Encourage employees to set boundaries and take their vacation time. And if late nights are necessary to wrap up a project, consider giving them extra time off to compensate.

Flexible Work Arrangements-Many companies understand that even though they have reopened their offices, some of their employees still prefer to work remotely, at least part-time. Not having that option might even spur employees to resign. If remote work on a permanent basis isn't an option. A compressed workweek? Flextime? Or maybe a partial telecommuting option? All of the above can help relieve stress for your team — and boost employee retention.

Effective Change Management-Beyond all the recent disruption due to the pandemic, every workplace has to deal with change, good and bad. And employees look to leadership for insight and reassurance during these times. If your organization is going through a big shift, keeping your team as informed as possible helps ease anxieties and manage the rumor mill. Make big announcements either individually or in a group call or meeting, and allow time for questions.

An Emphasis on Teamwork-You should encourage all your employees, not just star players, to contribute ideas and solutions. Promote teamwork by creating opportunities for collaboration, accommodating individuals' work styles and giving everyone the latitude to make decisions and course corrections if needed.

Acknowledgement of Milestones-A final tip for promoting employee retention is to shine a light on notable achievements. Whether your team finishes ahead of the deadline on a major project or a worker reaches a five-year work anniversary, seize the opportunity to mark the milestone together. It can be a meaningful and memorable moment for everyone.

Some team members will inevitably leave your organization sooner than you'd like. But you can at least make their decision a little tougher. And if those employees leave your company knowing they were valued and supported, they'll likely say good things about your business and, perhaps, even come back to work for you one day.



RETENTION

Employee Relations

Many businesses expect their employees to be loyal, motivated and happy despite only paying lip service to morale. However, the facts show that a real focus on employee satisfaction is one of the biggest factors separating Fortune 100 companies from the rest. More than 80% of employees at these elite companies report high levels of workplace satisfaction, compared to less than 50% of the general population per the 2019 Fortune 100 Best Trends and Trust Index report. If you want to attract the best talent and get the most from your workforce, you need to start emphasizing employee relations. Of course, all this begs the question; just what is employee relations?

Employee relations is the field of creating, managing, and maintaining a positive connection between management and the workforce. It emphasizes a mixture of individual, team-level and collective, company-wide policies and practices to address employee problems and improve overall morale.

People put countless hours of their lives into a career, and the work itself is only one component. Culture, teamwork, social interaction and other elements of the workplace are major factors in a person's work and life. When people are unhappy at their job, factors such as payment and the work itself often fade to the background. Shifting from a narrow definition of the employment relationship to a more broad, inclusive employee relations strategy is necessary to make your company more successful.

The Benefits of Good Employee Relations

Improving employee relations provides a mixture of concrete and intangible benefits. On one hand, increasing the morale and job satisfaction of the workforce positively affects factors such as turnover, which reduces training costs and workplace disruptions. However, satisfied employees are also less prone to conflict and are more willing to go above and beyond for their employer. In all, high employee morale is a powerful asset that will help you grow your business.

Reduce Turnover

High employee turnover isn't just an inconvenience, it's extremely expensive and can easily become fatal to any business. According to several studies cited by Forbes, just hiring a qualified candidate can cost one-third of their annual salary. This includes a variety of numerous expenses, such as advertising, recruiter fees and the labor hours you invest in interviewing candidates. While a third of an employee's salary is a hefty cost, it doesn't even come close to the true cost of turnover, which lies in lost productivity.

While the reasons employees quit are complex and nuanced, job satisfaction is a large component. One study shows that nine in 10 people would accept less pay if they felt their work was more meaningful. People don't just want money; they crave accomplishment and appreciation. This highlights the potential of employee relations as a powerful bulwark against turnover.

Foster Loyalty

It's common to bemoan the lack of company loyalty from the new generation of workers, but managers who want to overcome this need to be honest and cast their gaze inward. If millennials themselves are the cause, then the problem is unsolvable. However, a lack of loyalty isn't some inherent quality of the younger generation; it's the result of performing unappreciated, unsatisfying work with little opportunity for growth. If your company gives employees a reason to be loyal, then they will be. And employee loyalty is a valuable quality that's worth fostering, for reasons as diverse as reduced turnover and more employee referrals.

Even if your company offers excellent compensation, a worker who lacks loyalty won't see the position as anything more than a job. They'll never pull extra hours when they're not required to, and they'll unconditionally put other parts of their life before work. It's a far cry from the performance you can get from an employee who's motivated and truly wants to work with your company.

Strengthen Workplace Bonds and Company Culture

Unhappy people are more conflict-prone, less willing to compromise and not inclined toward effective teamwork. Good, efficient work is never a matter of just coming in and doing what your contract requires of you; it takes a cooperative spirit and open-mindedness. When your workers don't want to be here, subtle unnoticed conflicts and arguments become a sort of friction that reduces efficiency. Working to improve employee relations is one of the only ways to reduce these relatively intangible obstacles to smooth business operations.

Reduce Costs and Increase Productivity

Engaged, satisfied employees work harder and are a lower turnover risk. One hour of work from an employee who's happy with what they're doing is worth more than an hour from someone who can't wait to clock out. Furthermore, a motivated employee is willing to go further and make certain sacrifices when they love working for a company. Each employee becomes an ambassador for your company, which can help you overcome hiring challenges more easily.

All of this adds up to lower costs, higher productivity and a more successful business. Investing time and effort in employee relations isn't just about making work more pleasant, it's a correct business decision.



Tactics to Improve Employee Relations

Employee relations focuses on ensuring that your employees are happy and engaged at work. As a business owner, you may have a lot on your plate, and it may seem like employee relations can be set aside until it's convenient, but it can't. With the rise in remote and hybrid workplaces coupled with the shortage of staffing issues, you need to ensure that your employees are happy, satisfied, and engaged. Follow the following five steps to ensure that your employee relationship management leads to increased employee wellbeing and performance:

Set the tone-Greet employees enthusiastically and take the time to personally get to know them. Learn about their families, hobbies, pets. etc. You don't need to delve into their privacy but showing that you are interested in them will make a difference in your relationship.

Provide positive feedback-Let them know they have value. Believe it or not, employees actually need to hear this on a regular basis. Letting them know when you think they handled a situation well or did a good job in a difficult situation makes them feel like they are an asset to your team.

Say thank you-Employees who feel that they have supportive supervisors who recognize the good work they do are 67 percent more engaged than those who don't. They are also far more likely to remain with your company. A simple thank-you card or note can make more of a difference than you realize.

Be visible-Business owners, Managers and HR representatives should make themselves seen and ensure that employees know they are accessible and approachable. This offers your employees the opportunity to easily seek any guidance or assistance they may need in order to be at their most productive – and to deal with any issues or concerns they may have.

Communicate-Have regular company meetings. This gives you a chance to share important information, provide updates, and allow your employees to ask questions.

Offer transparency-Employees who feel that their managers are open, honest, and trustworthy, are 94 percent more likely to be happy at work. Transparency also works to create a more cooperative workplace atmosphere.

Set up professional development plans- This can help your employees reach their career goals. On a recent study conducted with The Ladders, it was discovered that Millennials, Gen-Xs and Baby Boomers all ranked professional development opportunities as the second most important element when deciding whether or not to take a job or remain at a job.

Give them meaningful work-Employees won't be happy or successful in their work if they aren't in a job that they are well-suited for. Believe it or not, today's employees cite doing their best as very important, and for many, it's the main element they're looking for in a job. In a recent study, SurveyMonkey found that employees ranked meaningful work as the second most important aspect of a job.

Employee relations establish the foundation of trust between your company and its employees. When your employees feel valued, respected, and a sense of belonging at the workplace, it not only benefits them—it benefits the company as well. A strong connection between workers and employers facilitates improved communication and collaboration, which results in a favorable work environment.



Appendix

- A. Headcount Planning Checklist
- B. Recruitment Plan Example
- C. Employee Value Proposition (EVP's) Example
- D. Job Description Examples
- E. Employee Referral Form
- F. Ideal Candidate Profile Example
- G. Job Offer Letter Template
- H. Onboarding Checklist Example
- I. Exit Interview Questions

Headcount Planning Checklist

Use this checklist to help you plan for headcount. For best results, revisit as you review your planning using real-time data.

1. Review challenges and opportunities for growth.	
Ask questions such as:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Where does my company currently stand?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Where do I want my company to go?
<input type="checkbox"/>	What challenges prevent me from achieving those goals?
<input type="checkbox"/>	What new skills or jobs are required to overcome these challenges?
2. Consider all departments.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Speak with each department to learn what each will need to be successful now and as the company grows.
3. Evaluate hiring timelines.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Get feedback about past hiring processes and managing expectations when it comes to the timeline to fill each position.
4. Look at current compensation.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Research compensation and salaries based on experience for your targeted hires, so you can stay competitive.
5. Include relocation costs.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Doing so can help your company expand its search for relevant talent.
6. Include signing bonuses.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Talented candidates will likely compare multiple offers—make sure yours is competitive.
7. Consider remote workers.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	If this is an option, consider this an opportunity to implement a remote working policy. Don't forget to reflect this in your budget.
8. Review employees who currently work multiple positions and roles.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	You may need to hire for additional roles if the current employee is stretched too thin to fulfill their primary responsibility properly.
9. Factor in employee attrition and promotions.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Existing roles may also require budget changes and planning, such as when an existing role needs to be backfilled.
10. Pay attention to skill gaps.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	You want to be able to identify and nurture skills that are in demand across all positions.
11. Focus on the data after defining metrics.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Understand your data and the metrics on which you're basing your decisions.
12. Align business strategy with your talent strategy.	

Examples of Recruitment Plan:

Phase	Task	Owner	Completion Date
Plan Recruitment (2 weeks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form Recruiting Committee Review vacancy Develop Recruitment Plan 		
Develop Recruiting Materials (1 week)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update/develop job description Complete/approve <i>Recruitment Request Form</i> Develop <i>Interview Selection Criteria and Interview Guide</i> 		
Source Candidates (4 weeks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete/approve <i>Job Advertisement Form</i> Identify advertising locations Post job in advertising locations Track candidate applications 		
Manage and Screen Candidates (2 weeks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review candidate applications Select candidates for interview Schedule candidates for interview 		
Interview and Select Candidates (3 weeks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview candidates Conduct reference check Select candidate to make a job offer 		
Extend and Confirm Offer (2 weeks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend offer letter Prepare contract Confirm start date 		

Sample Recruitment Strategy Planning Template

Strategy	Strategy is Designed to Close this Gap:	Description	Possible Tactics	Team Action Items	Individual/s Responsible	Deadline/s
Online Recruiting	Not reaching majority of applicants, especially young college grads	A large percentage of employees hired by human services agencies for entry level jobs are seeking their first "career job." Many are young, either fresh out of college, looking to establish a new career, or relocating to a new area. The newspaper want-ads are not an effective recruitment source for most of today's applicants. Placing vacancy announcements online is more effective and economical than using most traditional forms of advertising.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> www.Monster.com www.CareerBuilder.com www.Jobs.net www.Hotjobs.yahoo.com threesocialservices.com (job site specializing in human services jobs) www.Socialworker.org/joblinks (specializes in human services jobs linked to the National Association of Social Workers website) www.NABSW.org – National Association of Black Social Workers 			
Campus Recruiting and Job Fairs	Need to improve overall applicant pool	Both professional and paraprofessional applicants can be effectively recruited at job fairs sponsored by state workforce development agencies. College recruiting can be a very effective method for attracting applicants for professional jobs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Send team of HR representative with an experienced social worker or frontline supervisor to fairs – provides an opportunity for job seekers to ask both job specific and hiring process/benefits questions. Send an "ambassador" from the agency to classrooms of social work majors to "guest lecture" or provide an agency overview. Schedule experienced employees or supervisors to speak on a "hot topic" in the human services field at a brown bag luncheon at a local college or university. 			

Examples of EVPs

Here are some employee value proposition examples:

- “At Best Tech Unlimited, we’re dedicated to the success of our employees and helping them achieve their goals. Our leadership team is constantly encouraging employees to advance in their career by offering leadership training, team building workshops and free college courses to employees who stay on our team for at least a year. We’re committed to enhancing the lives of our team and helping them grow as people and as professionals.”
- “Marking Solutions is looking for team members passionate about helping others. Our goal is to work side-by-side with our clients to promote their small businesses. We do this by thinking outside the box to craft creative content and marketing campaigns that drive consumers to these companies. To help our employees provide a one of a kind client-employee relationship, we offer benefits like paid travel to clients’ offices, customer service training retreats and career advancement opportunities.”
- “Our team at Elevate values the importance of collaboration and engagement. That’s why we’re dedicated to making the office your favorite place to be. We want work to feel fun, instead of like a chore. To support this, we offer perks like a fully stocked kitchen, flexible hours, potential bonus opportunities, employee retreats and unlimited vacation. Come have fun with us and love where you work.”

Baker/Pastry Chef Job Description:

At Example Co., we pride ourselves with being a leading business in the bakery industry. Our creative team of bakers and pastry chefs apply their skills to produce and design innovative bakery and pastry goods that exceed our customer's expectations. We are currently accepting applications for experienced bakers and pastry chefs to join our team and help us to continue to grow our business. If you're hard-working and dedicated, Example Co. is an ideal place to work and showcase your talent.

The Baker/Pastry Chef position is in charge of preparing baked goods for sale to customers.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Ensure profitability by maintaining an accurate record of baking operations.
- Manage needed supplies and inventory levels.
- Direct, train and supervise the production staff's activities to make sure that products are up to standards.
- Coordinate baking schedules to produce breads, cakes, pastries, cookies, and other goods.
- Decorate baked products using glaze, icing and other toppings to achieve a finished appearance.
- Assess the quality of raw materials before baking.
- Conduct research to develop original recipes for products.
- Ensure the proper storage of baking ingredients and utensils.

Experience/Requirements

Candidates should have experience with cake decoration techniques and have expertise in preparing a variety of baked goods. Candidates should also be familiar with professional kitchen equipment, such as dough sheeters, blenders and mixers.

Education and Training

- Certification (technical or culinary school).
- Basic math skills required.
- Knowledge in food safety handling and food safety regulations required.
- Knowledge in food nutrition required.

Physical Requirements

- Able to stand for long hours at a time.
- Able to lift up to 25 pounds.
- Able to withstand extreme temperatures from commercial ovens and freezers for extended periods of time.

Wage and Benefits

- Full Time Monday-Friday 5:00am-1:30pm (seasonal overtime may be required)
- Starting Wage: \$18.00-\$22.00 per hour
- 401(k)
- Paid Holidays
- Paid Time Off (PTO)
- Dental Insurance
- Health Insurance

Deli Clerk Job Description:

XYZ Grocery Store is expanding their deli services and are currently accepting applications for deli clerks. If you enjoy assisting people and working in a fast-paced environment, the deli clerk position could be a good fit for you. Join our dedicated deli staff and help us to continue to provide excellent customer service for years to come.

The Deli Clerk position is responsible for preparing and packaging deli food products for customers.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Prepare deli food products for retail sale.
- Respond to customer queries, make product recommendations and provide samples.
- Weigh, label, package and make products ready for billing and delivery.
- Stock and organize displays and showcases.
- Clean the work areas and maintain tools and equipment.
- Coordinate with other staff in following food safety and hygiene procedures according to company policy.
- Ensure prompt service and high level of customer satisfaction.

Experience/Requirements

Experience with customer service and food preparation a plus but will train the right candidate.

Education and Training

- High school diploma or equivalent.
- Basic math skills required.
- Knowledge in food safety handling and food safety regulations preferred but not required.
- Knowledge of preparation and proper display of food products preferred but not required.

Physical Requirements

- Able to stand for long periods of time.
- Able to lift and carry up to 50 pounds.
- Able to bend, twist, and reach.

Wage and Benefits

- Part-Time Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and every other Saturday 9:00am-4:00pm
- Wage: 14.50 per hour
- 20% Employee Discount on Deli Products

Employee Referral Form

Date: _____

Employee Name: _____

Department: _____ Phone: _____

Name of Candidate: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Position Referred for: _____

Department: _____

Relationship to Employee (friend, family member, referred by 3rd party, or other):

I have read and understand [Company Name]'s Employee Referral Policy. I understand that if the candidate I referred is hired as a result of my referral, I will receive a bonus within two weeks of the date the individual completes six months of employment with [Company Name].

Employee Signature: _____ Date: _____

Attach the candidate's resume or completed employment application.

Employee Referral Form

Referral Guidelines

1. To refer a potential employee, please complete this form and return it, along with a copy of the prospective candidate's resume, application, or both, to the Human Resource Department. |
2. You are eligible for a referral award only when you refer external candidates.
3. If the candidate you refer is hired, you will receive a referral award of \$1,000 after the new employee has worked for 3 months in the position.
4. Employees involved in the hiring decision for a particular position are not eligible for referral awards for that position.
5. Only one referral award can be given per candidate. If a candidate is referred by more than one employee, the first referral received will be the one rewarded if the candidate is hired.

Employee Information

Employee Name: _____ Date: _____

E-Mail Address: _____ Telephone Number: _____

Referral Information

Candidate Name: _____

E-Mail Address: _____ Telephone Number: _____

Position Referred For: _____

Why this candidate is qualified for this position:

For Human Resources Use Only

Date Received: _____ Interviewed? _____

Hired? _____ Award Date: _____



Example Ideal Candidate Profile Template

Manager:

Team:

Job Classification:

Key Objective(s):

-
-

Measurable Outcomes:

-
-

What I'm Looking For:

Skills

-
-
-

Behaviors

-
-
-

Talents

-
-
-

Culture Drivers:

-
-
-

How I'll Know:

-
-



Responsibilities Breakdown	
Daily/Weekly Responsibilities	
Monthly Responsibilities	
Quarterly Responsibilities	
Projects	

Standard job offer letter template

Dear [Candidate Name],

[Company name] is delighted to offer you the [full-time, part-time, etc.] position of [job title] with an anticipated start date of [start date], contingent upon [background check, drug screening, etc.].

As the [job title], you will be responsible for [brief mention of job responsibilities and expectations].

You will report directly to [manager/supervisor name and title] at [workplace location]. Working hours are from [hours of day, days of week].

The starting salary for this position is [dollar amount] per [hour, year, etc.]. Payment is on a [weekly, biweekly, monthly, etc.] basis by [direct deposit, check, etc.], starting on [date of first pay period]. In addition, you will be eligible to receive [discuss additional compensation potential].

[Company name] offers a comprehensive benefits program, which includes [medical insurance, 401(k), paid time off, etc.].

Your employment with [company name] will be on an at-will basis, which means you and the company are free to terminate employment at any time, with or without cause or advance notice. This letter is not a contract indicating employment terms or duration.

Please confirm your acceptance of this offer by signing and returning this letter by [offer expiration date].

Sincerely,

[Your Signature]

[Your Printed Name]

[Your Job Title]

Candidate Signature: _____

Candidate Printed Name: _____

Date: _____

Simple job offer letter template

Dear [Candidate Name],

With great pleasure, I would like extend the following employment offer.

Position: [Job title]

Start date: No later than [date]

Salary: [Dollar amount] per [hour, year, etc.]

This employment offer is contingent upon the successful completion of [background check, drug screening, reference check, I-9 form, etc.]. This offer is not a contract of employment, and either party may terminate employment at any time, with or without cause.

Sincerely,

[Your Signature]

[Your Printed Name]

[Your Job Title]

Candidate Signature: _____

Candidate Printed Name: _____

Date: _____

Onboarding Checklist



Onboarding checklist

This onboarding checklist will help ensure your new hires are set up for success in their new role, and will make sure you don't miss any critical steps. Be sure to begin the onboarding process at least one week before your new employee's start date.

First engagement

- Obtain signed job acceptance
- Confirm start date
- Send new employee welcome email

Prepare new hire paperwork

- Tax forms (i.e., W-4 or W-9)
- Employment contract
- Non-disclosure, non-compete or other legal documents
- Employee handbook
- Benefits literature
- Job description

Procure devices and equipment

- Computer (including keyboard, mouse, etc.)
- Phone
- Access to shared devices (printer, copier, fax machine, etc.)
- Mobile phone, tablet, or other additional job-specific devices

Set up accounts and create logins

- WiFi access
- Voicemail
- Email
- Time clock system
- Access to CRM, project management software, or other job-specific technology
- Put in request for security clearance (if applicable)
- Add employee to relevant email distribution lists

Set up workspace

- Reserve an office, cubicle or workstation
- Ensure space has a desk, chair or other necessary office furniture
- Provide necessary office supplies
- Provide a branded welcome kit (if applicable)

First day

- Greet new employee
- Provide card, badge or other security assets
- Perform building tour
- Introduce new hire to team
- Send new hire announcement email
- Schedule team lunch
- Provide training plan

Orientation

- Complete all remaining new hire paperwork
- Discuss benefits and insurance plans
- Review employee handbook
- Review safety policies
- Review technology policies and support process
- Assign a peer mentor

Schedule check-in plan

- Obtain onboarding feedback
- Schedule one-week check-in
- Schedule 30-day check-in
- Schedule 60-day check-in
- Schedule 90-day check-in

Exit Interview Questions

What prompted you to begin searching for another opportunity?

Kick off the exit interview by asking the employee why they're leaving. Are they relocating to a different area? Going back to school? Or do they feel that your company isn't the right fit?

What did you like best and least about your job?

This exit interview question will help you identify what might get future candidates excited about the role, as well as how to set the right expectations for the position.

Do you think your job has changed since you were hired?

Job roles often change based on the fluctuating needs of the department or the company. Sometimes these changes demand a different set of skills than the position initially required and can make current employees less enthusiastic about their work. Hearing how a role has changed will provide you with critical details to include in the job description to make sure your next hire is well-suited for these new demands.

Did you feel your achievements were recognized throughout your employment?

Recognition is crucial to the employee experience. When employees know the company notices and values their contributions, it improves motivation, fuels productivity and can decrease turnover.

What suggestions do you have for the company? How could we improve?

From suggestions about management style, compensation and benefits to which snacks to stock in the kitchen, it's important to consider all types of feedback. While you may not be able to make all proposed changes, knowing what employees find important will help you determine how to improve workplace morale and prevent other employees from leaving for similar reasons.

Did you share any of the concerns we discussed today with the company before deciding to leave?

Asking this exit interview question can reveal whether or not employees feel safe and comfortable voicing their concerns and opinions in the workplace. If their answer to this question is "no," it could be a sign that your company needs to work on building a culture where employees feel confident speaking up and sharing their concerns, without fear of negative consequences or retaliation.

Is there anything that would have changed your mind about leaving?

This exit interview question is purposefully direct and can help you get to the crux of why an employee has chosen to leave. Often, what would have encouraged an employee to stay is also the catalyst behind their reason to move on, and is worth examining further.

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