

## TAKE THE DRIVER'S SEAT IN RECRUITING AND TRAINING

> Imagine your business is like a car and your employees are passengers. You are driving forward, focused on the road in front of you, intent on reaching your destination. Along the way you may be distracted by billboards advertising local attractions.

Each day as you drive forward in your business, mental billboards grab your attention. It might be technology upgrades, supply chain problems, operation changes, or customer feedback that is distracting you. Meanwhile, you may rarely look at your employees to see if they have a hand on the door.

Then one day, an employee gives notice and you hit the brakes.

Depending on the person and their position, you — and your business — may even come to a screeching halt. Your first inclination will be to ask, “What do I do now?”

Learn from the experience by looking for warning signs you may have missed. Was the employee spending time visiting family out of state? Was the employee missing work? Was the employee asking for a new opportunity or changes?

Gather the insight and map the future to help engage and retain employees and avoid a blowout.

A record 4.4 million employees quit their jobs in September 2021, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. In addition, only 15 percent of employees are engaged with their job in the workplace, according to a 2021 Gallup Survey. That means that 85 percent of employees are not engaged, and if offered a different option, they may be tempted to choose a different path.

Getting ahead of the recruiting curve is critical. Don't wait for someone to quit to start looking for new talent. Pay attention to the warning signs and be willing to try new ideas to reach your ultimate destination: a fully staffed shop with satisfied workers. Here are some tips to help you get there:

- Market to candidates as you would customers.
- Place ads that are short, impactful, vivid, and enticing to grab attention.
- Be flexible with schedules; quality of life is a high priority.

- Hire people with less experience and train them about your values, product, procedures, and processes.
- Cut the recruiting process by half. This may translate to fewer interviews or an abbreviated time frame. Move quickly as candidates have options.
- Use virtual interviewing; this allows for a personal conversation in less time with little stress.
- Interact continually with candidates throughout the interview process.
- Invite current employees to participate in the hiring process to provide company and culture information.

Once you make a hire, minimize turnover by introducing training and development programs, especially with less experienced employees. Create and provide a basic, yet detailed, level of training to get them up to speed. If you use an online application for directions, you are familiar with the short phrases that get you from one point to the next: “In 300 feet turn right.” This prepares you for what lies ahead. When you take a wrong turn, you are patiently redirected. You are not scolded or judged for an error; you are supported until you get it right. Likewise, prepare your training in a step-by-step manner and be patient.

Another way to minimize workforce disruption is to slow down and pay attention to your surroundings. When you are present and observe, you can correct midcourse.

If an employee is having a challenge, provide compassion, coaching, training, or a solution. Identify experiences to broaden their view and provide options for projects, mentoring, or training. This reskilling is called internal mobility. It is a strategy that enables you to nurture and retain key talent by matching employees with internal opportunities, which helps both the employee and your business grow. 🌱

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