

“RETENTION IN A STRONG ECONOMY – TIPS ON HOW TO RETAIN GOOD WORKERS”

A strong economy bodes well for employees, with more jobs available to choose from, better pay as companies compete for workers and an increase in job satisfaction, with more workers accepting jobs that are gratifying to them. Retention plays a bigger role in a strong economy, so how do you retain your good workers?

When thinking about your good workers, ask “Why do they want to work for me...what is the benefit to them in working for me? What do I offer them that they can’t/don’t/won’t get anywhere else?” It’s the “What’s in it for them” question that will help you make a valid determination of what you need to do to keep your good workers.

Workers are as varied in their needs as you or I...what works for one doesn’t necessarily work for another. But there are a few things we can point to with certainty that all workers seek: Respect, Appreciation, and Recognition of a job well done.

RESPECT:

Would you work for a boss you didn’t respect? Most likely not for any length of time. Respect is earned. Employees are not going to respect someone simply because they have a title of “supervisor/manager”.

So how do you earn your staff’s respect? It starts by respecting them.

Be respectful: Never yell at or berate someone for doing something incorrectly. This seems obvious, but I have heard managers call someone out in demeaning ways. If someone has done a task incorrectly (for the fourth time!) or angered you, take a deep breath and gather your composure before you speak with them, then address them calmly and professionally. You might have to walk away to clear the negativity and focus on something positive first. Then when you are composed and have figured a positive course of action that will get you the results you are looking for, proceed with the conversation. People will not hear what you are saying to them if you start raising your voice, start yelling or have an angry tonality – they will only focus on the negativity coming from you. That old saying “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you” holds true today.

Be kind: Being mean never gets one what they want. Again, this might seem obvious to most, but sometimes we have someone getting the best of us and we just want to push back. Don’t do it. It could be that a new employee is testing the limits (your limits) to see how far they can push you or how much they can get away with. That does not mean you get to toss professionalism aside and jump into the ring...that means you put your managers hat on and take the necessary corrective action in a polite fashion that will get your message across so that you are understood.

Be Trustworthy: Say what you are going to do and do what you say you are going to do. Follow through in a timely fashion and if you make a mistake, own it. Nothing disintegrates respect like lying or covering up. Be honest and truthful.

Earn it: Respect is earned. It comes through one’s ability to trust you, to believe in you and to understand you. This often takes some time, but a good manager will be able to gain the respect of their staff quickly. A good manager fully understands what they are asking of their staff and can, in turn, understand how their staff feels about what they are being asked to do. And as a good manager, sometimes that means being flexible in your demands (does the floor really need to be scrubbed with a toothbrush?). When employees see that you are willing to meet them, within reason, to help them accomplish the same goals, respect blossoms quickly. Remember that lack of respect for another always shows through and usually ends in a break of the relationship. Respect is key in any relationship...if you don’t have the respect of your staff, you will not be able to keep good workers.

APPRECIATION:

The easiest thing to do and the most effective way to keep your good workers happy is to show them appreciation. A simple thank you goes so far, yet it is not said often enough. Try this – In the middle of your worker doing a task that can be interrupted, call them over, look them right in the eyes and genuinely say “Thank you (worker’s name). I just want you to know how much I appreciate all you do for me.” And then watch them smile...and as they go back to work, they will have a little extra swagger in their routine. Never underestimate appreciation...and if you are not normally an appreciative type of person, then this especially applies to you!

RECOGNITION FOR A JOB WELL DONE:

This is outside of the appreciation factor. This goes above appreciation for workers who continually outperform. Here you make the extra effort to show you recognize this worker has exceeded your expectations for performance, going above and beyond the norm. So instead of just saying “thank you” you, tell them why you believe they have exceeded your expectations in another fashion. We have the Kudos Korner Award, for example, that you could nominate a worker for. Or you can put something into writing – a thank you note – that let’s your worker know you recognize their outstanding efforts. Or something simple like getting their favorite candy bar or snack and telling them you thought they deserved a little something extra...it’s not about the gift, it’s about the fact that you went out of your way to let them know you recognize their efforts...simple recognition works wonders!

GSIL is aware that these three tips are not a comprehensive bible to retention, but they are common sense things that everyone can do to try and have their workers want to stay working with them. GSIL is also in the process of looking at things we can do to help you retain workers, with the next Professional Development Day scheduled for April 16th (a day of appreciation and training for all care attendants to partake in), as well as advanced training webinars, mentoring for newer consumers and other areas of interest to help retain our workforce. If you have any ideas on retention, we would love to hear from you!