

Holloway Human Resource Consulting

Workforce Excellence... Simplified

HR Update

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Keeping Your Great Employees

It will be harder tomorrow than it is today to find great employees who not only have the knowledge, skills and abilities you are looking for, but also that “spark” that makes it all work. Once you find a great employee it is critical to invest time in conversations focused on keeping this person on board. Here are some tips to help you retain great employees.

Employees want (and need) the answers to five questions:

1. What is expected of me? Tell your employees your business vision and goals, how their job fits and how they can actively participate in making their workplace successful . A purpose-driven employee is a powerful force in any organization.
2. How am I doing? Employees want and need regular feedback, and the lack of it is one of the biggest reasons people find other jobs. Oftentimes, employees only hear from their boss when they make a mistake. When an employee does something that shows talent, initiative, problem solving, or success with a project or task, let them know. Performance and behaviors that are recognized and reinforced tend to be repeated. It is also important for managers to confront problems promptly and provide the employee honest but respectful coaching.
3. Where do I stand? Formally, and at least once a year, employees want you to sum-up their performance. This is your opportunity to discuss with each employee their accomplishments, opportunities for growth and improvement, and professional career development. If they have some challenges during the year you can review the progress they made and remind them of the points described in # 1 above. And remember: Don't save performance and behavior problems until the annual review meeting.
4. How can I improve? Even your best employees want to know how they can do better. If you see a performance opportunity or a performance gap, work with the employee to develop an action plan. Even one small change can have a positive impact on an employee's overall performance.
5. How can I grow and stay challenged? Employees can become bored over time, and without the opportunity to learn and grow they may lose their “spark” and focus. Consider re-recruiting employees from time to time. Regain the excitement you and they had on their first day of work by reminding them why you hired them over other candidates, and reviewing the qualities you saw in them that are important to your organization. Then together you can outline a development plan and targeted growth strategies for these “new hires.”

If the five questions seem similar to each other it's because of one element they all have in common: COMMUNICATION. Highly interactive and consistent communication is what makes a workplace truly work, and is one of the key features in employee retention.

Answering these five questions for employees is just the beginning of a solid retention strategy. Effective leaders who take a personal interest in their employees' growth and development and involve them in many of the decisions impacting them are well on the way to creating a high performance/ high involvement workplace. This leads to high quality results and a workplace where employees want to be.

In upcoming articles we will discuss each of these five questions in more detail and provide results-focused tips and techniques that are easy to understand and apply, and really do work.

HR Update is committed to exploring every aspect of the employment relationship and providing insightful discussions and tips to help employers not only increase the return on investment (ROI) you have made in your employees, but help you reduce the return on effort (ROE) it takes you to do it.

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