

Three Key Ingredients to Employee Retention

RSG Health Services surveyed some of our clients asking them to rank in order of importance topics they felt were the most important to their organization relating to employee recruitment and retention. By far, employee retention was the topic most managers wanted more information on, followed by reducing contract labor, then reducing their cost per hire. As most of us have seen, employee loyalty is very short-lived, and most hospital employees do not expect to be with the same employer for more than a couple of years. The fact is the employee's basic needs are changing. Finding and keeping good talent is not just about money anymore. Believe it or not, it's typically third down the line of reasons employees leave. In most cases, we discovered that candidates do not leave for just more money, or to avoid difficult job circumstances. Research conducted by our organization found that employees usually leave because of human factors such as; greater job appreciation, better working relationship with management, better geographic location to their family, better work environment, more flex-time, etc.

RSG Health Services has tried to keep the formula for employee retention relatively simple, but unfortunately, it's not. However, we have determined that there are three key ingredients to effective employee retention.

1. Creating a better working environment
2. Develop a career and recognition plan
3. Appreciating employees financially

1. Improving the work environment

FIRST AND FOREMOST, REPLACE/RE-TRAIN BAD MANAGERS: We all have them - Team "leaders" that should not be telling other employees what to do. These individuals do not lead by example, and your employees talk about them behind your back. Most directors know its going on, but do not want to cause conflict by approaching this person about their leadership skills. Eventually, they let things continue until the department eventually turns over. This person may be a good tech and you think you can't afford to lose them, but that is simply not the case. To put this in perspective, it traditionally takes our firm less than 30 days to fill management/lead tech level positions.

2. Define your career and recognition plan

A CAREER PLAN: Employees like to have clearly defined goals, as well as defined plans and schedules to achieve those goals. Help employees develop a career plan within the organization so that they understand where they are going, and why it makes sense to achieve those goals. *For more information on how to create this type of program, please contact us @ 800-804-2345*

OPEN DIALOG: Sharing of certain operating and financial information helps build trust between employer and employee. It also helps workers understand how their performance affects results, and encourages their input. This ultimately invests them with a feeling of ownership in the company and a long-term stake in its future. One of the most valuable tools a manager has is the ability to provide regular feedback.

TEAM BUILDING/RECOGNITION: Provide reward and recognition programs that recognize performance and achievement. Hold regular company social outings to build rapport and enthusiasm. The key word here is "regular". You cannot expect to do something fun once a year and it make an impact on your department. *For more information on how to create this type of program, please contact us @ 800-804-2345*

3. Appreciate employees financially

PAY MARKET WAGES, PAY MARKET WAGES, PAY MARKET WAGES: Accessing market information on compensation averages has never been easier. Any employee worth keeping is smart enough to monitor these figures to make sure he is getting paid fair market value. If your hospital Administrator or CFO will not approve wages for your department, ask for approval to supplement wages with bonuses and performance-based pay.

Additional benefits may include:

- Trips and weekend excursions (hotel suites, spa packages, etc.)
- Exotic car rentals

- Awards, certificates, plaques, honors
- Memberships in professional organizations
- Subscriptions
- Tickets to sporting events, movies, theater, restaurants
- Additional paid days off
- Birthdays as a floating individual holiday
- Gifts of all sorts
- Health club memberships

Tips to attract quality employees

It is amazing to us that hospitals continue using standard methods of recruitment expecting different results. It is necessary to visit job fairs, colleges, follow up on networking leads, and run ads in the paper, but time should be spent on more creative ideas. Keep in mind that the cost of running newspaper ads, overtime, and contract labor is much higher in the long run than using a specialty recruiting firm to fill the position quickly.

Here are a few tips

- Develop advertising and marketing programs that are more personal, addressing the person, not a specialty.
- Establish an internal referral program that pays employees for referrals that result in a hire.
- Maintain a visible presence wherever the labor pool frequents, such as industry associations and related events.
- Use a specialty recruitment firm to supplement your internal hiring efforts. Some search firms will tell you they can recruit about anyone your hospital needs, but try an organization that has targeted resources. To put this in perspective, most women who have children chose to have an OB/GYN deliver their baby, not a cardiologist..... even though they are both physicians.

While this information may seem fundamental, it is often discussed but rarely practiced by most organizations. I've worked for companies myself that were good companies that simply could not put together a plan for retention. Most of the time, it takes a designated employment specialist to create these plans and insure they are implemented and maximized to their effectiveness.

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