

Staff Retention by HRBerkshire

We read a lot in the press about job cuts and redundancy, but very little about staff retention. Good staff are hard to come by, so how do you retain them?

Here are our Top 10 Tips for Staff Retention:

1. Recruit sensibly and fairly. Be realistic about the role and the skills/experience required. Unrealistic promises and expectations will just lead to disappointment and a high staff turnover.
2. Communicate with your staff. Ask for their views and suggestions and listen to what they say. They're working at ground level, so much of which may be valid.
3. Where feasible, offer training and career progression.
4. Try to offer a variety of work to create job enrichment and satisfaction. Take a good look at the job descriptions and see how you can improve them so that each employee can learn new skills, enjoy a variety of tasks and remain interested. Routine has its place, but variety is the spice of life. This will also help you during absences when staff will be able to cover for each other.
5. Be appreciative. Yes, you're paying your staff for their services, but that doesn't mean you shouldn't appreciate what they do. So long as they perform to your satisfaction or above, then they're making your life easier and making a valid contribution to your business, so be sure to tell them that you appreciate their efforts. Two simple words, "Thank You", go a surprisingly long way.
6. Operate a comprehensive Performance Appraisal process, where performance is acknowledged and/or criticised in a constructive manner, and where staff can offer honest feedback. This should occur frequently and include plans for improvement, further training and supervision if necessary.
7. NEVER criticise or humiliate a member of staff in front of others. Not only could it land you in an Employment Tribunal but it's simply unfair. If there are performance or behaviour issues, address them in private, and in line with company Disciplinary Policy if appropriate.
8. Put in place a Grievance Procedure and use this constructively to address problems - however minor. Try to nip minor grievances in the bud, informally, before they escalate.
9. Always conduct exit interviews. Staff may be reluctant to tell you about their grievances while they are still employed, but they'll very likely open up once they have formally resigned.
10. If high staff turnover is predominantly from one department or one particular function, then it is particularly important to establish the cause. It could be that the problem actually lies with a line manager or other member of staff, in which case you need to deal with this - even if YOU are the line manager concerned!

Summary

If the existing conditions, management or job content is causing a high staff turnover, be prepared to change your practices. As an employer and manager, it's vital that you are open to change.

Never underestimate the importance of happy staff. It has a knock-on effect on morale, performance, attendance and output. Everyone wins!

Visit our website at <http://HRBerkshire.co.uk> or contact us for further information or to discuss any concerns you may have over Human Resources issues within your organisation.

Barbara Patrick
HRBerkshire