

Employee Retention: Staying power

When you take the first steps in hiring an employee you have to realize that every moment that person is with you they are learning. They learn your ways, your message, your culture and your ethics of being a business. In that learning, you hope that a motivated employee will work hard and stay with your business for a while. If you get lucky and get a great employee it becomes even more important that they stay.

A big issue for every business is how to get the best employees to come to work motivated each and every day. Retention is a key issue, because each business is different and unique in drawing customers and keeping employees.

Staying Power Five:

Orientation

Goals and Objectives

Be the Best

Assimilation

WIIFM

Every day you spend teaching and providing a new employee about YOUR business is an investment. You **are** willing to spend the time and money, but don't want them to take that skill across the street for 50 cents more an hour. So, what can you do?

Orientation: This is the key element in getting new employees to quickly understand the reason they must work with you. Whether it is a delivery person, or a server, the new employee must be able to get a feel and flavor of what YOUR Company is about. Do you wear a uniform? Why? Do you have rules, or mottoes, or processes that set you apart? Remember the product your business sells is unique, but there is certainly some competition across the street.

- Tell, show and describe to the new employee all the things that have gone into being a success for your business.
- Orient them to the way you do things and what makes you tick.

Goals and Objectives: What do you want the employee to accomplish and how will they know when they HAVE or HAVE NOT completed the task? Having set goals allows for an employee to know the tasks at hand. Getting objectives clear shows them what it looks like at the end of the job.

Compare the two different messages for companies that deliver pizza to their customers:

Company one: Deliver the pizza quickly to the right place at the right time.

Company two: Deliver the pizza within the hour, hot, and never leave until the customer takes a bite and tells you "its delicious".

Be the Best: In whatever part of the business you specialize, you have to be able to set yourself apart from the competition. If you were able to walk up to your employees and ask them to describe the job they do, what would they say? Do they put the job in a context that talks about the work they do, for a greater good? Does your pizza maker take pride in the shape and form (again depends on the objectives), or do they say they JUST make pizza. Do they feel they are "providing nutrition and fun" to their customers. What is it that makes you THE BEST?

Assimilation: A great company may have long-term employees who celebrate service awards. They celebrate long-term service because it is a part of their culture, but moreover their employees would never think of going to another business. Even for more money. Do you have those kinds of employees? They like it. They like their managers, they trust the company, and they know they have the skills to go to the competition, but they don't. When a new employee joins the company they are teamed with one of these long timers. They learn about the culture through orientations, but also have time with their managers and co-workers to learn about the business.

WIIFM: This stands for **What's In It For Me**. A classic technique to make sure that the new and current employees are clear about their future. You have identified the next steps in their development and goals in your business. Whether it is moving up to the next job, staying and being the best they can be, or eventually managing their own business or store, they have a plan and see how the work and effort effect them personally.

When you return to a place of business you remember things like great service, wonderful food, and a great experience. The best part? Returning for that great service and seeing the same associate still at the job, doing great work, and enjoying every minute of it, year after year.