

Recruitment, Retention and Recognition of our Grant Employees

We should come up with some personal examples for some of the points we make.

1. Intro – why even have a session on employees at a grant conference
 - a. Some stats show that 1/3 of new hires quit within 6 months
 - b. 78% of leaders rank employee retention as important or urgent
 - c. Some HR studies estimate it might cost as much as 6-9 months of an employee's salary to recruit and train someone new; others say it is about 20% of annual salary
Costs include: advertising, interviewing, screening and hiring, loss of productivity (in our cycle it might take a full year or more for reaching productivity, staff morale; work errors
 - d. If we invest so much in training on programs and regulations, and our employees are our most valued resource – why not examine best practices for employee R, R,R.

2. Recruitment

- a. ME – So once you have gotten the news that one of your employees is leaving, what is the most important thing you do to ensure a positive/smooth recruitment process
 - Rita - Review job description and job posting. Make sure it is up to date and everyone is on the same page. Determine what is needed as for a as education, experience, qualifications. Are the job responsibilities well defined. I can add a personal story to the first point regarding review job description/job duties...
 - Keith: Try to do an out briefing, see why they are leaving.
 - Marcy- Is it a good time to restructure? I can add a personal story here about getting more grant support via restructuring.

Decide where to advertise and how much to spend. Use NCDA sites for distribution and other 'professional associations.

- b. ME – We all have different techniques to review resumes, or whittle down the list of potential candidates? What is your most successful tool and why?

Keith- I look for organization on the resume, does it show me what type of employee I might be getting, and chronological order is important and misspelled words.

Marcy - Homework assignment – Burlington develops HW assignments to go to candidates of interest. The assignments will reflect a need for attention to detail, following directions, research, writing, analysis and customer service, depending on the position. Candidates must complete in order to be considered for an interview. We also use a screening tool for reviewing resumes. I can add stories to both points.

- Rita – *in addition to the testing mentioned below Skill test - for example in Davenport Financial Specialists have a math type test regarding percentages, how to determine annual income, etc. Also an attention to detail test (it's timed with about 50 pairs of numbers and the applicant needs to indicated same/different.) I can talk about these tests -*

c. **ME** – Interviews can be stressful for both the candidate and those participating in the interview. Are there best practices you employ to get the best result from your interview process:

- **Marcy** – Standard questions and format to ask questions. Make sure they are open-ended and proceed from general to specific. Harvard testing on implicit bias for panelists, diverse panelists and some with similar skillset for which you are recruiting.
- **Rita** – usually try to break the ice with conversation, a few off the wall questions (if you were a food what would you be, and why – also rather telling. We've had success with role playing and have used it during interviews for a variety of positions. For econ dev. Role played meeting with a potential business loan client, for a financial specialist taking a phone call from a loan applicant who was denied, and for a housing rehab specialist analyzing a picture(s) of house problems and what should/could be done to address the violation/issue. Develop a score sheet on overall qualifications. Some qualifications may include: Verbal Communication, Candidate Enthusiasm, Knowledge of Organization, Teambuilding/Interpersonal Skills, Initiative, Time Management, Customer Service, Overall Impression and Recommendation. (each qualification has 3 indicators with points ranging from 1-5. (*this is what we use in Davenport and I can bring the copies.*)

- **Keith**– I asked them if they had a choice to be any type of animal for a day what would they choose.

ME – Does anyone in the audience have a best practice they would like to share on the topic of recruiting employees?

Does anyone want to take ownership of these points and add a personal 'story'?

Making the decision

- Receive verbal and written feedback from your panel.
- Have more than one interview with final candidates.
- Call references; check online.

3. Retention

ME – So we have discussed the effort, planning, and investment we all put into recruiting a new employee. Obviously, if we improve our retention, it would cost us less time and money and improve our productivity. Are there best practices you have used to successfully retain your employees

- **Rita** – I can talk about building morale events (city hall competitions) internal advancements.
- **Keith** – I want to talk about making it through the probation period
- **Marcy** – I can do advancement opportunities and also other benefits like flexible work schedule and passion for work. *Passion for the work/cause – make sure internal people get out sometime to see the good work being done; Benefits over and above what is provided – flexible work schedule, positive work environment, work spaces; Advancement opportunity – ask someone if they want to apply*

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Does anyone want to take ownership of these points and add a personal 'story'?

- *Open door policies – opportunity for feedback*
- *Opportunity to buy in to work, make decisions commensurate with level of responsibility*
- *Training and professional development – National Development Council – the different tracks for professionals, CDBG, HOME, NCDA conference*
- *Incorporate new perspectives and historical memory*

4. Recognition

ME – Recognition is known to improve morale, retention and make your workplace a more attractive place to be for new employees. What do we do in our cities to recognize the value of and the good work done by our employees?

Keith- What type of leader are you? A dictator or a team player? You lead, follow, or get out of the way. Your leadership style may determine whether a good employee stays or goes. Anticipate your employees needs, coordinate activities and training that hold their interest, and verifying their work.

- **Marcy** - Say thank you – a lot, recognize personal and professional achievements; Employee of the Month awards
- **Rita** Spot award and gift cards to Target and restaurants – these were popular in Davenport.

Does anyone want to take ownership of these points and add a personal 'story'?

- Opportunity to provide additional funding
- Self-appraisals and evaluations

ME – *Does anyone in the audience have a best practice they would like to share on the topic of recognizing employees?*

Thank you for sharing this time with us. By using best practices, we can successfully recruit employees who add value to our grant programs and come with the requisite skill sets and interests. By recognizing them and actively implementing retention tools, we can work to keep a stable and productive workforce for years to come.