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We Develop Leaders

Wanna Spend Less Time Recruiting?

Try Re-Recruiting



A simple 90-day program to prove to every new employee that coming to work for you is the best decision of their career.

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We have long maintained that one of the most important decisions any manager has to make pertains to who does and does not wind up on the payroll. So it makes sense that one of the smartest things for managers to do is to remain in 'recruiting mode' at all times.

We pound this point in speeches and seminars and watch all the heads nodding in agreement, then stand by to hear the distant thuds as most of these well intentioned folks fall off the wagon. It's not unlike all those New Years resolutions to lose weight or stop smoking that even at this early date are in serious jeopardy.

In response, we'd like to offer some additional thoughts about recruiting, albeit from a bit of a different perspective. Clearly, one of the reasons we wind up behind the 8 ball in recruiting is that folks have the audacity to take their act elsewhere, and do it without much notice. Though a few of these departures bring a sigh of welcome relief, most do not.

Similarly, some of the newly departed are on their way to markedly greener pastures, but most aren't. So why are they leaving? For one (or more) of the



very same reasons folks leave a marriage, or other significant relationship... They feel they've been abused, cheated, or taken for granted. Let's concentrate on the last one since it's probably the most prevalent.

It has been suggested that a key strategy for maintaining a successful relationship is to continue the courtship long after the `knot has been tied.' Assuming that there is some validity to this notion, most of us discontinue our recruiting at precisely the wrong time, before the game has even begun.

That's right, we are suggesting (no, insisting) that the recruiting process has only begun when you've found the right person and convinced them to board your ship. Before the ink is even dry on all those forms from HR (more later), another phase of recruiting (Re-Recruiting if you will) should begin,

IF you are serious about getting this hard won recruit off to a great start, turbo-charging their performance, and convincing them to stick around and stay productive for the long haul.

Following is a suggested regimen of re-recruiting measures designed to help you with this process:

Pre-start: Before the person's 1st day of employment, there are a lot of necessary as well as neat things you can get accomplished. Remember the axiom about first impressions.) A few starters:

Within days of their acceptance of your offer, they should receive a welcome letter from the president of your company. You prepare it, the prez will sign it, trust us. You'll knock somebody's socks off. (20 minutes)

Whether it is via the web or old-fashioned mode, get the HR paperwork taken care of before the person reports for work. When it comes to benefits enrollment, here's where high tech should be augmented by some high touch. Ask (no, insist) that someone involved with your organization's benefits administration speak with the person to ensure that they understand their benefits options, claims procedures, and the like. When they are through, test them on this knowledge to be sure they really understand it. (20 minutes)

If relocation is involved in the job change, arrange to have some groceries delivered to the person's new residence.

Nearly 20 years ago, I showed up at a new employee's home shortly after the moving van had departed. My purpose was merely to see if they needed anything. It turns out they did. With a toddler and a newborn, they were already running about 2 quarts low – on milk. I scared up some milk, bread, and a few other essentials, delivered them, and left. To this day, that guy and his wife mention the 'milk thing' whenever we talk. (30 minutes/\$100)

In similar fashion, see to it that their work area is set up and squared away. Whether it's ID cards, keys, computer passwords, tools, business cards, or what, this stuff can and should be taken care of before the person arrives for work.

Once someone has accepted a job, make sure they start receiving selected pieces of intra-company communication. If your company has an employee handbook, by all means send them a copy, and ask them to read it. See to it that they are enrolled in any

required or recommended training, and advised as to the date(s). Invite them to come in at their convenience for a tour and to meet new co-workers.

Day 1: With the traditional orientation stuff taken care of already, this day should be about making sure the new person understands (really understands) the relevance of their work, and letting them get started with it.

Towards the end of the day, spend a few minutes with them to answer any questions they may have, and learn the name of anyone who has been particularly helpful to them on that day, so you can thank them appropriately. (15 minutes)

Week 1: Ask a different person to take the new staff member to lunch each day during this week. (\$150)

End of Week 1: Ask your boss to spend a few minutes with the new person in order to 1) reinforce their decision to come to work for Acme Widget, and 2) offer support. (20 minutes)

End of Week 2: Spend some time with them in their work area to find out 1) what they have learned, 2) what help they need. (60 minutes)

End of First Month: Ask your HR rep to take the new person to breakfast or lunch and discuss if they are finding the new job and work environment as they had expected it to be. If you don't have an HR professional, turn to someone else you trust. (\$40)

45th Day: Review with the new person the performance expectations for their position, and ask for their candid self-assessment regarding their performance. Coach as necessary. (40 minutes)

60th Day: Spend an hour working with the new person, or reviewing their work output. Coach as appropriate. (60 minutes)

90th Day (and every 90 days thereafter): On a rotating basis, conduct coaching sessions in which you are addressing topics either defined by the employee, or you. (60 minutes)

Routinely: In addition to varied social interaction with your employees, we heartily recommend that you take time to acknowledge the special events in their lives, the lives of their family members, and significant others. Those cards, notes, and phone calls take but a minute, and are SO significant to the recipient.

Oh, and another thing: Don't think you have the 10 hours and \$300 to invest in the first year of re-recruiting your new folks? Better brush up on your resume screening and interviewing skills.

Bill Catlette and Richard Hadden are the authors of the popular "Contented Cows" leadership book series. They speak to business leaders worldwide, helping them build a focused, engaged, and capably led workforce. contentedcows.com.



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