

# Employee retention



It is very easy as a business owner to get complacent when dealing with staff; many business owners become the centre of their business. By doing this your own day becomes difficult to manage as you often run from one urgent need to another, it is difficult enough doing your own tasks let alone taking the time to manage your staff to the best of your ability.

This can be improved, it is easier when you start this from scratch with new employees, but it can also be a great way of showing existing staff that you are doing something proactive with your business, something that will benefit them and you.

## **Job Descriptions**

Spend time planning their days or weeks, depending on your industry this can allow less confusion and more focus from staff. Some industries find huge increases in productivity from a 5-minute standing production meeting first thing in the morning; think how you could adopt this or something similar to suit your business.

Do you have individual job descriptions for each staff member? Does it outline your expectations and do you review it regularly for praise or improvement? Does it encourage feedback and initiative?

## **Staff Planning**

Do you have a plan for the unknown, overlapping roles etc?

What is your capacity, do you have the staff to cover growth?

Do you involve your staff in potential changes or future plans?

Do you look to promote from within?

How well do you explain your expectations?

Either at the interview stage or now to existing staff there is much to benefit from communicating your expectations and not just thinking that they know what you want. This can include; working hours & punctuality concerns, annual leave expectations, dress code, telephone use, sickness processes, initiative or process to obtain advice or give suggestions. You know your own personality and business best, are there things that maybe you could explain better?

## **Commenting on Performance**

It is very easy when you are busy to only comment when things are going wrong and often not in the tone intended. What can work best is to develop a procedure that audits mistakes, errors etc. So things don't seem like a witch-hunt, have sessions that look at how the business can learn from situations. I have personally done this in business and once your staff understand that it is ok to admit to errors and that you have systems to help stop these happening again, they start to take more ownership of their roles, problems cannot be fixed without admitting fault or error.

Praise, I am not going to go in detail with this, but what I will say is that you can never praise a staff member too much; praise will always buy you more results than bonuses or pay increases.

Every business will have employees that deliver above expectations, although equally there can be just as many that don't. The fact is you have to develop the ability to build rapport with each member of staff and their personalities will often be quite different to yours. Focusing on each employee's strengths while providing assistance where weaknesses are recognised can increase productivity. This in turn creates an atmosphere that is positive and built around a team culture of achieving results.

Deal with issues or concerns immediately, investigate the concern and ask what the employee feels can be done to solve this problem as just one disgruntled employee can poison your whole company. Negative comments and attitude along with poor performance can become contagious.

Staff will model themselves on you, are you setting the example that you expect from your staff? Be organised, be positive, talk to your staff about the business in an inclusive way, seek their opinions, and develop strategies together such as Company Missions and Visions. Talk about plans that you may have to grow the business.

If your staff are managed well and given the opportunity to grow their minds in a positive way, you will quickly develop a pool of experience that can help you achieve the goals you have for yourself and the business.

Employee involvement, recognition, advancement, development and fair market wages with performance incentives and bonuses is the key to long-term success for your business. And don't forget Praise.