



HOW TO HIRE THE BEST

Want to Keep Your Best Employees? Offer Them This 1 Thing (It's Not Money)

It's never about the money. Here are 12 things that help you retain your best people with only ONE of the twelve having to do with compensation.



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Keeping your key team members is critical to your success. But do you really know what **motivates** them? Here are my top 12 things that you must focus on to keep your employees happy. What's interesting is that 11 of the 12 aren't based on money or "compensation".

Of course you need to pay fairly, but once you are in the right neighborhood to be paying your people fairly relative to the marketplace, here is what really keeps them part of your team.

1. **Relationship -- a personal connection:** Over the past 25 years of working with small business owners, I can tell you this is often one of the most overlooked and undervalued staffing issues. Take the time to get to know them and their lives. Share about yours.

I know that many business owners (myself included) hold ourselves back for fear of drama or awkward moments, but in general, we err too often on isolating ourselves from our teams.

So take a team member out to lunch, organize a social event, ask them how their son is doing in school, and truly be open to connecting in an authentic way.

2. **Great work environment:** Creating a positive work environment goes a long way to employee satisfaction. They are spending 8+ hours a day there, so make a point to create an environment that brings out the very best in them.

Keep it down from the top down with a **company culture** of growth and respect.

3. **Flexibility of schedule:** Flexibility costs you nothing, but can really mean a lot to your employees. Do you have the ability to let them schedule their work around family commitments?

Giving your staff the ability to pick up children from school or control their own calendar goes a long way to letting them feel valued in the company and in control of their own lives.

4. **Work remotely (all or part-time):** Working remotely is not only a perk, but it will also save you money in the long run by reducing your office space requirements.

Consider an all-remote team or at the very least, the flexibility to work from home if they have a sick child or the weather is bad. If this isn't an option for you, consider setting up on-site daycare for employees with small children.

You could also contract with a local babysitting service and reward your core team with x days of sitting for when they need it most.

5. **Vacation time:** Let your team earn more vacation time based on performance. Whether it be by rewarding a team that came through on a big project with a four-day weekend, or giving team members in their third year with your company a third paid week off each year, vacation time is a sweet perk that many small business owners can use to retain top talent.

And if you have good **systems and controls** in place, filling in the gaps while an employee takes time off should be painless. If you are struggling to handle when Janet leaves to be with her family, let that be a wake up call that you and Janet need to talk about training an understudy and systematizing key parts of her role.

6. **Unpaid time away:** If you are unable to offer then copious amounts of paid vacation, consider giving them unpaid time away. Perhaps they want to take a trip overseas....or spend time with a loved one. There are many ways you can structure this, but can be a great perk for some top employees.

7. **Greater autonomy and responsibility:** This is a huge motivator for your team -- letting them earn the freedom to self-manage and do things their way. After all, it's likely one of the strongest drives that compelled you to start your own business to begin with, so why shouldn't it be as compelling to your team?

On the same note, as they grow with your company give them greater responsibility. It shows trust and is a powerful intoxicant for top producers.

8. **Share information:** By sharing "insider" information with team members, you are showing them that you trust and value them.

9. **Ask and value their input -- honor their voice:** Want to lose a key team member quickly? Stop asking for their input. Asking your team for input on how to solve a difficult problem is a great way to show them how valuable they are to the team. But be sincere and really listen.

10. **Cool work:** Is the work your team does inherently challenging and absorbing? Do you have the ability to hand off cool projects to your key players?

11. **Feeling of growth:** Growing together professionally will help an employee solidify their place on the team. Sit down with them each quarter and help them plan out their highest value tasks and encourage your managers to do the same.

12. **Salary:** This focus item was intentionally left for last because the majority of the time, it's never about money. As long as you are paying your people market rate. While you will never win with money, you need to at least be in the right neighborhood. If you aren't paying in market range,
s associated with it.

There you have 12 ways to retain your top talent, again, notice how only one of the twelve was compensation related. So much of management is common sense, sadly however, it's not common practice.

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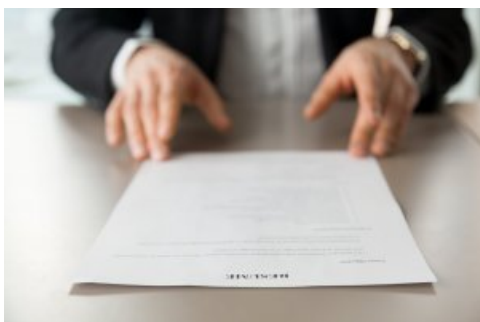
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