



# Guide

## How to attract and retain good employees



# How to attract and retain good employees

Some of the most successful organisations are those that recognise that their employees are their most valuable assets, and treat them as such.

Few business owners could argue that they don't see a correlation between both employee and customer satisfaction, so those that put their employees at the heart of what they do could enjoy a competitive edge that's difficult to match.

Consider some of the tech giants, like Facebook or Google. They offer employee perks such as free haircuts, on site laundry and gym facilities.

Of course those things just aren't practical for most businesses operating in the SME sector, but there are other things you can do to bolster morale and create an atmosphere that is attractive to current and potential employees.

It means putting practices in place that create a healthy, progressive and nurturing environment for workers and providing your workforce with interesting and meaningful opportunities that will motivate and inspire.



## Build your public profile

Job seekers naturally look for work with companies that are well known within their industry, so building your brand and managing your reputation, both internally and externally, is a key factor in attracting top talent.

There are a number of steps you can take to maximise your public profile:

### Consider the effectiveness of your website

Many company websites don't make it easy for potential employees to find out about any job openings you may have. Often, these are almost hidden from sight and when found, merely describe the position rather than use the opportunity to sell your organisation to candidates.

It makes sense to promote any vacancies in a prominent position on your website and to include details about your vision, values and culture as well as expressing your commitment to both your people and your customers.

“With the economy picking up again, people begin to feel more confident to take a risk and make a career move.”

Long gone are the days when employees might stay with a company for the duration of their working life, preferring now an exciting and diverse career. In fact, statistics show that the average person in the UK will have between 10-14 different jobs in their lifetime\*.

With the economy picking up again we could see that figure rise, as people begin to feel more confident to take a risk and make a career move.

To help you ensure you can retain the brightest possible workforce, we have compiled this guide to outline some of the most effective ways to become an employer of choice.



---

“In today’s world of social media, word travels fast and potential employees are more knowledgeable than ever about which companies are the most desirable to work for.”

---

Ensure you tell people what sets your business apart from others in your industry and don’t be afraid to show a little personality – the aim is for top talent to knock on your door, having already identified that your organisation is a good fit for them.

You could also consider asking senior members of staff to contribute to an interesting and informative blog that will help demonstrate your personality as an organisation.

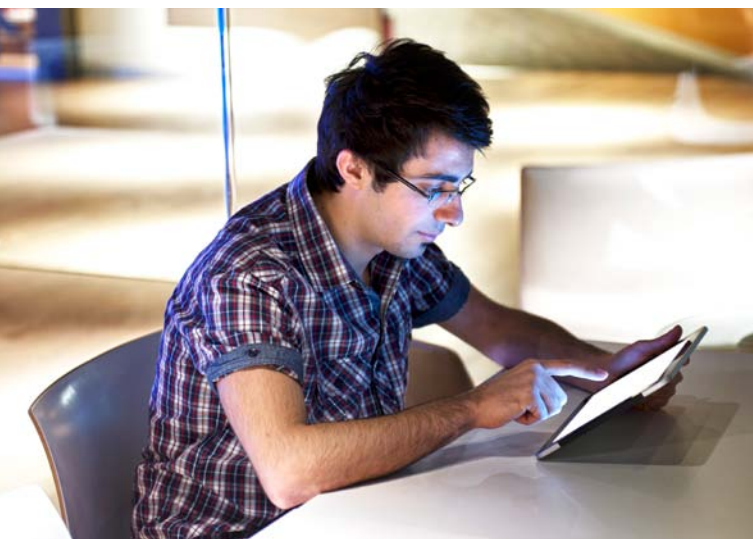
In today’s world of social media, word travels fast and potential employees are more knowledgeable than ever about which companies are the most desirable to work for.

#### Engage through recruitment

One way to attract the strongest candidates is to create a consistently branded online recruitment process, with the ability to respond to applicants quickly and with useful feedback.

Ensuring a well-integrated and smooth online recruitment process can also be important for ongoing talent management. For example, records can be kept of those candidates who might not be suitable for the current role on offer, but who could be revisited when a more suitable role for them arises.

When it comes to recruiting the best talent, the ability to identify it as early as possible is advantageous.



#### Be social

Work to build a relevant and engaged audience on social networks such as Twitter, LinkedIn or Google+.

Sparking industry discussions and demonstrating thought leadership via social media can help to consolidate your position as a leader in your field and widen your appeal to prospective and current employees.

LinkedIn is a useful tool as it allows you to actively search its members for those with the required qualifications listed in their profile. You can then easily share your contact information with anyone you’re particularly interested in.





## Create a positive organisational culture

Creating a positive environment built around established values such as honesty, excellence, teamwork and innovation, leads to increased productivity, higher morale levels and an overall ability to keep skilled workers.

What's more, when your employees look forward to going to work every day and find meaning in the work they do, they'll share that with their friends and peers and, in turn, could provide you with future candidates.

There are a number of small measures you can take to ensure that your culture is one that welcomes and inspires.

### Interact and communicate with employees

Make sure you communicate your company's vision and plans to employees. Sharing the 'bigger picture' with them will allow them to feel more involved and engaged. Likewise if there are any problems or setbacks, communicate this so that rumours can't take hold.

It's important to take the time to give feedback on performance and to be willing to listen to employee concerns or suggestions about company procedures.

You can also consider ways to get to know your workforce better. Team building activities or social events can help to create stronger bonds, thus engendering staff loyalty.

## Recognise and reward hard work

Acknowledging both positive and negative behaviour, and achievement versus goals set are critical factors in creating a strong organisational culture.



Every employee should understand their goals and objectives, and be encouraged and incentivised to meet and if possible, exceed these.

Any negative behaviour must also be addressed – staff members who choose not to respect positive company goals may have a detrimental effect on their subordinates.

### Empower your employees

When employees feel that they have a voice in the company and the freedom to carry out their duties without being micromanaged, they will ultimately achieve a sense of pride and ownership in their work.

This is a win-win for employers, as that sense of ownership will enable employees to assume more responsibility within the organisation.

---

“When your employees look forward to going to work every day and find meaning in the work they do, they'll share that with their friends and peers and, in turn, could provide you with future candidates.”

---



## Consider the entire compensation package

A big salary isn't always the top priority for employees. One recent survey\*\* found that job satisfaction was the most important factor for 56% of UK workers, compared to just 36% who said a higher wage was their most pressing concern.

A business needs to develop and retain the kind of people who will help to achieve its goals and while a competitive pay scale will certainly help you retain staff, it's just part of the mix. Your capability to offer people attractive benefits can make the difference between a satisfied employee and one who may be reconsidering their prospects.

---

**56%** of employees said job satisfaction was the most important factor at work.

---

### Challenging work

Every job has its less-than-exciting responsibilities, and it's important to balance these out with challenging assignments that give employees an opportunity to rise to the occasion.

Putting your trust in them to do a job well will enhance their sense of worth to the company.

This may mean developing new projects that specifically suit an employee's talents or simply becoming more aware of what they do best and assigning work accordingly.

### Offer training and development opportunities

The most ambitious employees never stop learning. Giving them the opportunity to gain new skills and experiences is an easy way to increase motivation and job satisfaction. Of course, this also translates into positive gains for the business as new skills are added to the existing talent pool.



Consider skills training, opportunities for promotion, internal career advancement and coaching, mentoring, and leadership development programs. Providing a fresh challenge and career prospects will help you hold on to your best employees and present a more enticing prospect to potential candidates.

\*Statistics from The Personal Career Management Group, 2014  
\*\*Statistics from Workplace Savings and Benefits, Aug 2013

---

If you're looking for working capital or additional funds to support your business please call Close Brothers Invoice Finance on 0808 159 9838 or visit [www.closeinvoice.co.uk](http://www.closeinvoice.co.uk)

