

HR FOUNDATIONS

EMPLOYEE RETENTION & ENGAGEMENT

***An Essential
Human Resources Guide
for CWSAA Members***

First Edition, December 2018

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This Guide is intended as a resource in your efforts to create a safe and enjoyable work environment. It is a compilation of information from ski area personnel and other industry professionals.

This document is not intended to dictate requirements and should not be interpreted as a standard. It contains “informational” resources and examples that may be updated, revised or withdrawn at any time. While thought to be accurate and functional, it is provided without warranty of any kind.

Operations will vary from area to area. Deviation from the information presented may be dictated by the circumstances of each unique situation and by the policies, procedures and protocols of each individual ski area. Laws, regulations and policies may also vary in different jurisdictions.

This document is for internal ski area use only and not for external circulation.

If you require legal advice, we would be pleased to provide you with a referral to an appropriate legal resource.

About the HR Foundations Series

The visitor economy and ski industry are recognized by national and provincial governments as a responsible social and economic opportunity upon which to build our communities. However, the future of the ski industry may be determined more by human talent than natural surroundings.

The single biggest challenge cited by companies in any industry is access to talent. Good management practices are therefore required to recruit and retain staff effectively, and develop the future leaders that will propel our industry into the future.

The natural environment and excitement of ski areas create employee benefits that few other industries can replicate. In tandem with good systems, ski areas have the opportunity to not just recruit, but attract and captivate employees. This guide provides ski areas with proven best practices on being a preferred employer, and cultivating the most valued asset at any ski area—our people. The HR Foundations Series and this guide would not have been possible without the support of go2HR—we are grateful for their support.

Christopher Nicolson
President & CEO
Canada West Ski Areas Association

About go2HR

go2HR is BC's tourism and hospitality human resource association. As HR specialists, we work with industry associations and tourism employers to develop strategies to attract, recruit and retain employees. We also coordinate the BC Tourism Labour Market Strategy, engage in labour market research, and provide industry recognized training and certification programs.

We are pleased to have partnered with the Canada West Ski Areas Association (CWSAA) to offer this guide and we look forward to continuing to support CWSAA members by providing direct access to:

- the advice of human resources and occupational health and safety professionals
- industry recognized certifications (such as SuperHost, Serving It Right, FOODSAFE, Foundations of Workplace Safety)
- a wealth of resources on the go2HR website
- a Job Board that is free and only for the BC tourism and hospitality industry

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"To be truly successful in today's labour climate, organizations must put their employees first. Good people management practices help to attract and retain top talent, and allow you to utilize the skills of your employees to best serve your customers and meet your business objectives."

*Arlene Keis
CEO, go2HR*

INTRO TO EMPLOYER BRANDING

Branding Your Company as an Employer of Choice

Snow sports are extremely popular in western Canada not only among locals but also with visitors from around the world. As visitor numbers swell, the challenge of finding employees to service them is getting more difficult. Businesses have to compete, not only with each other but also with other industries, to attract and retain the right employees. To remain competitive among employers for talented workers, companies need to brand themselves as an employer of choice—as a great place to work.

DEVELOPING YOUR OWN EMPLOYER BRAND

Elisa Hendricks, a former managing director for Midlyn Day Communications and an expert at helping companies attract, retain and develop top talent, described the need for businesses to develop their own employer brand. “To attract the best and brightest employees, you need to market your company,” said Elisa.

What is an employer brand? “Companies who don’t think they have one actually do,” said Elisa. “An employer brand is what people are saying about you when you’re not in the room.” She stressed the importance of connecting how you or your leadership communicate the business vision of your company and the human resource initiatives you participate in to develop a strong employer brand. “You have to figure out what it really is like to work for your company and then identify the good and bad.” Elisa said that “branding is doing the right things and communicating it.” It makes sense that attracting and retaining people who share the same values of your company, your employer brand, will result in a higher level of loyalty.

The nuts and bolts of creating an employer brand include developing a promise by determining the attributes of your company and selling your strengths to potential candidates, using exit interviews and employee focus groups to establish your brand reputation, and positioning your brand by identifying your target audience and knowing what today’s employees want.

“An employer brand is more than just a logo and a catch phrase,” said Elisa. “You have to engage workers by giving them what they want—respect, tools to succeed and meaningful work.”

She quoted Peter Van Stolk, founder of Jones Soda: “I can’t tell you something is cool. You have to hear it from someone you think is cool.” Same thing with employer brands: if your own employees are saying good things, you know you’re doing something right.

THE POWER OF A STRONG EMPLOYER BRAND

83% of talent acquisition leaders say that employer branding significantly impacts their ability to hire great candidates.

BENEFITS OF A STRONG EMPLOYER BRAND



Reduce time & cost per hire



Improve applicant quality



Build a talent pipeline



Increase offer acceptance



Decrease turnover



Enhance employee engagement

HOW TO ATTRACT TALENT THROUGH EMPLOYER BRANDING



CAREER SITE

62% of candidates listed the company's career site as a top channel for researching new job opportunities.

Tip: Put yourself in a job seeker's shoes. What information do they want to know about you? Focus on the WIIFM – what's in it for me. Manage expectations by providing an overview of your hiring process.



SOCIAL MEDIA

79% of job seekers are likely to use social media in their hunt for their next job.

Tip: Be where your target candidates are. Provide a behind-the-scenes glimpse of your business by sharing content that shows your culture & your people.

JOB ADS

76% of candidates want to know what their day to day will be like. In fact, the #1 obstacle to candidates in the application process is not knowing what it's like to work at an organization.



Tip: Use "you" focused language. Our rule of thumb? For every 1 time you use "we", use "you" 5 times. Illustrate a clear picture of the role, including: responsibilities, key qualifications, team and culture, and benefits.

APPLICATION PROCESS

60% of job seekers quit in the middle of filling out online applicants.



Tip: Simplify the application experience, reducing the number of clicks and eliminating redundant information. Do you actually review cover letters? If not, scrap them from your application process.



MOBILE FRIENDLY

89% of job seekers say their mobile device is an important tool for job searching & 45% use it to search for jobs at least once a day.

Tip: When's the last time you tried to apply to a job from a mobile device? Mobile-first design is critical! Ensure your career site, content and job ads are optimized for mobile.



EMPLOYEE ADVOCACY

3x Candidates trust employees 3x more than the employer to provide information on working at the company.

Tip: Create employee-generated content. Try videos like "Day in the Life" & "What I love about working here". Schedule social media takeovers by employees.

CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE

64% of job seekers say that a poor candidate experience would make them less likely to purchase goods and services from that employer.



Tip: Ghosting is one of the most common job seeker complaints. Come prepared for interviews, treat job seekers professionally, and provide updates on their application status.

HOW TO MEASURE SUCCESS



Time to hire



Cost per hire



Source of hire



Quality of hire



Application Completion Rate



Traffic & Conversion



Followers & Engagement



Employee feedback



Envol specializes in helping business grow through employer branding, recruitment and HR solutions. We're a team of strategists, creatives, recruiters, marketers and HR specialists working collaboratively to find your employer brand's place in the world. From the inside out.

<https://business.linkedin.com/talent-solutions/c/16/3/employer-branding-statistics>
<http://corporate.careerbuilder.com/candidatebehavior/>
<http://careerbuildercommunications.com/pdf/hrtechreport.pdf>
<http://resources.glassdoor.com/50-hr-and-recruiting-stats-2016.html>
<https://business.linkedin.com/talent-solutions/c/16/3/employer-branding-statistics>
<http://www.careerarc.com/blog/2017/04/future-of-recruiting-study-infographic/>
<https://www.tomlaine.com/top-31-important-employer-branding-statistics/>
<https://business.linkedin.com/talent-solutions/employer-brand/employer-brand-playbook>

5 Tips for Developing an Employer Brand

1. Engage with your employees. Listen to their challenges, act on their suggestions and involve them in your business.
2. Find out what your competitors and employers in other industries are doing. Learn what works and what doesn't.
3. Employees prefer to work for companies that treat them with respect. Ensure your company culture provides employees with tools and techniques that engage and empower.
4. Not only use exit interviews to gauge employee perceptions, but also "stay interviews" in which current employees are interviewed consistently about what is and isn't working for them. Be sure to follow up and act on the feedback you receive.
5. Use employee referral programs. Employees who refer friends and colleagues to your company must think your company is worth working for.

RESOURCES



[Employees First Award](#)



[BC's Top Employers](#)



EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT & RETENTION

Recruiting new staff is a time consuming and expensive exercise that directly affects your financial bottom line. It can cost up to 18 months' salary to lose and replace a manager or professional, and up to six months' salary to lose and replace an hourly worker. Given this expense, it makes sense to create an environment where employees want to stay and contribute to the success of your business.

Employee Retention & Engagement: What's the Difference?

The term 'employee retention' refers to an employer's ability to keep or retain their employees while 'employee engagement' speaks to an emotional commitment or deep sense of ownership that an employee has to an organization and its goals. Employee engagement means that they actually care about their work and the company.

A retained employee will show up and perform their job as expected—an engaged employee is more likely to make additional contributions to help their team or the company succeed. Which would you prefer?

While there are many factors that influence employee engagement, a growing body of research shows the direct impact of employee engagement on overall business performance.

You can use many different strategies to improve your retention rates by looking at the following areas of your business:

- Work environment (location, variety, flexibility, culture)
- Compensation (base salary, incentive, bonuses, options, benefits, recognition)
- Personal (quality of work, skills, training, self-leadership, opportunities)
- Relationships (owners, managers, peers, mentors, guests)

A retention program might include asking employees for input before making decisions that affect their work, or keeping in touch with seasonal employees year-round.

RESOURCES

 [go2HR Retention Resources](#)

Employee Engagement: Positive Morale Benefits Your Business

Compared to employees who are motivated, disengaged workers are less efficient, miss more workdays and cost their employers thousands of dollars in lost productivity. Keeping employee morale high is one of the best things you can do to instill loyalty and maintain a productive workplace.

Developing and maintaining good morale starts with hiring the right people in the first place. Thereafter, your employees' morale affects how motivated they will be to work for you, suggests how much they will do while on shift, and influences how long they will stay with your organization. As a business owner or manager, much of the mood within the organization is in your hands. Below are six tips to help you keep employee morale levels high:

- **Ensure that employees clearly understand their role, their impact on customers, and how they bring value to the organization.** Provide ongoing training and feedback to help employees to feel connected to the company.
- **Motivate with your own example.** Show good character, and conduct yourself and your business in a manner you want imitated. Demonstrate a positive attitude to serve as an example of optimism and achievement. In other words, 'walk the talk.'
- **Set a high standard and show commitment.** When it comes to things like quality and customer service, act in a manner that's consistent with what you expect from your staff.
- **Communicate.** Tell employees your objectives for the company and promptly share news that affects the organization. Let staff know clearly what your expectations are, and explain the reasoning behind certain rules or rule changes.
- **Involve employees as equal members of your team.** Make them feel valued and connected to your cause by asking for their feedback and giving them room to make decisions. Ask employees what motivates them, and get their feedback on how to handle staff issues.
- **Provide employees with new opportunities to use and develop their skills.** Involve them in initiatives or events that may be outside of their regular job description (e.g. painting murals in employee areas, helping recruit at job fairs).

RESOURCES

 [go2HR Employee Engagement Resources](#)

Understanding Employee Needs

High employee engagement leads to an increase in productivity and a decrease in staff turnover, which ultimately results in higher customer satisfaction and profitability.

What needs motivate your employees?



BELONGING

How do your employees feel? “I’m doing satisfying, meaningful work!”

What should you do? Create opportunities for employees to work as team; recognize each team for their individual contribution.



ADVANCEMENT

How do your employees feel? “I’m feeling challenged and getting ahead!”

What should you do? Promote from within; meet regularly to discuss career goals and how the organization can support them.



ACCOMPLISHMENT

How do your employees feel? “I am productive!”

What should you do? Demonstrate how one’s work connects to the company’s overall strategy



RECOGNITION

How do your employees feel? “I’m valued at this company!”

What should you do? Show appreciation for one’s work regularly, formally or informally.



ENJOYMENT

How do your employees feel? “I like work!”

What should you do? Be optimistic; set job expectations with the employee.

Leading Multi-Generational Teams

In today's workplace, managers and supervisors benefit from and are challenged with the task of managing multiple generations' employees including Baby Boomers, Gen X, and Millennials (aka Gen Y), and Gen Z.

A recent study by Ernst & Young identified that 75% of managers reported managing multi-generational teams as a challenge. Each of these generations have progressed through the workforce with different technologies, varied expectations, and evolving methods and processes of working. These substantial differences create unique challenges and opportunities for managers and supervisors who strive to build productive and cohesive teams.

Managers can motivate a multi-generational team to work together more efficiently by understanding the unique ways each generation is motivated and how they approach the workplace.

Although each of these generations have different workplace expectations (i.e. culture), methods to accomplish organizational goals and objectives, and the most appropriate method to work with each other, one thing remains true; each generation has strengths which other generations lack.

As a manager, understanding the strengths and weaknesses of each generation can help to identify how employees can be utilized to maximize their strengths, and lend their support to colleagues with shortcomings. Adopting strategies and techniques to engage and motivate employees in different generations can help to foster a healthy and dynamic workforce that works cohesively and efficiently.

RESOURCES



[Tips for Leading Multigenerational Teams](#)



[8 Key Differences Between Gen Z and Millennials](#)



[11 Tips for Managing Millennials](#)

What Defines Each Generation

WORK STYLE

WORK MOTIVATORS

BABY BOOMERS 1946-1964



Highly productive
Competitive
Hardworking
Team-centric
Great mentors
Work is a career
Loyal

A structured, hierarchical work environment
Robust benefit plans

GEN X 1965-1981



Adaptable to change
Critical thinkers
Collaborative
Results oriented
Revenue generators

Flexibility in the workplace
Training and growth opportunities
Work-life balance

MILLENNIALS 1982-1995



Tech-savvy
Highly adaptable
A “can-do” attitude
Value social and corporate responsibilities
Need to feel challenged

Fun and engaging work culture
Being held accountable and rewarded for their efforts
Ability to collaborate with peers
Work-life balance
Ongoing feedback

GEN Z 1996-2010



Multi-tasker
Shorter attention span
Entrepreneurial
Grew up with technology

Independent work environment
Hands-on, experiential learning opportunities

Hiring & Supporting Employees

Who are Newcomers to Canada

New immigrants are not only new to Canada—they're new to your organization. A well-planned orientation that introduces them to your workplace culture and sets out expectations, helps increase employee retention and productivity.

Here are 7 tips that might help you assist newcomers to Canada be more successful as employees in your workplace:

1. Become familiar with how to interview and hire people from different cultures
2. Make a good first impression
3. Provide a new hire orientation
4. Assign a mentor or buddy
5. Be sensitive to cultural differences
6. Get to know your new employee
7. Provide appropriate training

TOOLS



[Template: New Employee Orientation Checklist](#)

RESOURCES



[Tips For When Hiring Newcomers To Canada](#)

MANAGING EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT AND MOTIVATION

Tips to Boost Employee Motivation

Motivating and keeping employees engaged does not have to cost a lot of money. All employees want to feel valued in the workplace, not just through wages and benefits, but also by having their voices and opinions heard, being recognized for their efforts and having opportunities for growth and development. All these factors contribute to a successful retention strategy and are important to a company's long-term success.

Here are a few tips to consider:

- Create an environment in which leadership is less formal and hierarchical so that all staff feel as if they are treated with respect.
- Conduct Employee Stay Interviews
- Poll employees to find out what is important to them. It might not be money; money is often further down the list than other non-monetary things such as recognition and communication.
- Create fair total compensation practices and guidelines so that measurable standards are consistent and clearly communicated.
- Find alternative means of compensation, including distributing gift certificates or organizing social events covered by the company.
- Implement a program to reward employees for innovative or cost-saving ideas and practices.
- Notice if employees are becoming sick more often, and decide how you can alleviate pressures to advocate for your staff's well-being in terms of a work/life balance.
- Whether you operate in a union or non-union environment, have an employee relations committee or group so that a representative group of staff have input as to how the business is run.
- Provide a healthy and safe environment for employees.
- Pursue opportunities to 'give back' to the local community in meaningful ways as employees today want to work for an employer who cares.

Employee Stay Interviews

While job interviews are conducted pre-employment and exit interviews are conducted post-employment (when it's too late to act on the information gathered), stay interviews are conducted with current employees. Focused less on the organization evaluating the employee and more on the employee evaluating the organization, they play a critical role in helping managers understand what they need to do to help encourage employees to stay with the company—before an issue becomes a deal-breaker and you lost them.

- Stay interviews don't have to be formal. They can be as quick as a 15-minute conversation but be sure to leave some time for a longer discussion if needed
- Let the employee know that you value their honest feedback about their job and the company
- Be open to receiving all feedback—good, bad or ugly. Avoid getting defensive if the feedback isn't what you wanted to hear, consider the employee's perspective
- Focus on asking questions that will help identify what the company is doing well and how you can build on those strengths as well as identify areas and opportunities for improvement
- Most importantly, be sure to follow up! Where possible, act on suggestions. If not possible, communicate with employees to thank them for the suggestion and let them know why not and/or what could be done instead

Motivating Seasonal Employees to Return

As a seasonal operation, having great qualified and committed employees return to you year-after-year can be critical to your success. Unfortunately, it is not always easy. Here are a few winning ways to motivate your seasonal employees and keep them coming back:

Talk openly with your departing employees

Before your season closes, ask employees if they would like to return the next season. Sit down with them over coffee and ask about their work experiences with your company, or conduct a formal Exit Interview. The information you obtain will go a long way in helping you to understand what motivates employees to stay or leave your organization.

Stay in touch with employees you would like to rehire

Maintain an updated employee list and invite seasonal employees to stay connected. Encourage them to drop by for coffee if they are in the neighbourhood. Create a Facebook, Twitter or other social media page for employees to 'like' or

'follow', where they can find regular updates and information. Invite them to subscribe to employee newsletters, send birthday cards, etc. The more ways you can make the employee feel like 'part of the family' during the off-season, the more inclined they will be to return next season.

Help employees find work in the off-season

By helping employees find other seasonal work in the off-season, you are showing an interest in their livelihood outside of your own operation. If an employee knows they have a job to go to for the time your operation is closed they will feel more secure, and as a result feel more inclined to return to you once the other seasonal job ends.

Many seasonal resorts have informal arrangements with other employers who operate in the opposite season (e.g. golf courses, adventure tour operators) thus providing the employee with year-round employment and the employer with a more consistent workforce. Consider establishing relationships with opposite season employers in other industries who may have employees with transferable skills (e.g. agriculture, manufacturing).

Offer employee incentives

One of the many advantages of having seasonal employees return to your business is that it is not necessary to retrain them each year. Saved training dollars can be used as incentives, such as offering seasoned staff a higher salary upon their return or paying a returning bonus.

Be an employer of choice

This is the most effective way of encouraging employees to return. Providing a fun, flexible, and positive workplace will have seasonal staff looking forward to returning the following year. Make such issues as work-life balance, training, teamwork, and communication a priority. You'll earn a reputation as a place people want to work, resulting not only in repeat seasonal employees but also in other qualified workers hoping to gain a position with you.

Ask for employee referrals

If your top seasonal employees are not returning for reasons unrelated to the job, ask if they have family members or friends who would be interested in coming on board. If they genuinely enjoyed their time working for you, they will not hesitate to recommend hardworking individuals to take over the role they are leaving.

Engagement Surveys: What Do Your Employees Think?

Listening to and acting on employee concerns are vital aspects of creating a positive work environment. As Melody McLorie, human resources manager at the Wickaninnish Inn notes, "We are very proud of our internal promotion and succession planning programs. Who better to develop than those you already have a relationship with and who 'get your business'? These opportunities motivate staff to work hard to stand out and be selected for promotions or development plans.

By listening to your employees and engaging them in the creation or betterment of procedures, you build their ownership in the product and again earn their loyalty. In any economy, investing in your employees is always a sound investment which will pay off for years to come."

To motivate and retain employees, ensure they have a safe, confidential and (depending on the situation) anonymous process in which they can discuss workplace challenges and issues. This can take the form of something informal such as an Employee Suggestion Box, informal Stay Interviews or a more detailed or formal Employee Engagement Survey. Regardless of the method or process used, it is important that feedback and follow-up are transparent and timely. You may not be able to act on every suggestion, but providing the employee with honest, straightforward feedback on the reasons for your decision shows respect and appreciation for their opinion and interest.

Conducting Employee Engagement Surveys

Gathering information from your employees provides you with an excellent method of gaining insight into workplace issues and the opportunity to act for positive change. If you decide to conduct an employee survey, here are some tips for getting the most out of the process:

- Determine the goals and objectives of the survey and how best to collect the data, whether it be individual interviews, focus groups or online anonymous surveys.
- Ensure you communicate to all your employees the full details of the survey, including why it is being conducted, how you will be conducting it and when, and when you will follow up on the data collected.
- Recognize that it is a process, and getting answers to your questions is only the beginning. The more important part of the process is communicating back to the employees on the information you receive, then analyzing the input and acting on the issues uncovered in the survey.

- Depending on the type of survey, ensure the process is confidential and anonymous; the use of an online tool is preferable in terms of confidentiality and security.
- Communicate the results to your employees and provide an action plan on how you will address any major issues raised in the survey.
- Involve employees in the development and execution of the action plans to ensure they are taking ownership of the key issues and ultimate successful outcomes.
- Regularly update all your employees on how your action plan is progressing using various formal and informal communication tools.
- Include both quantifiable (e.g. asking employees to respond on a scale of one to five) and open-ended questions in the survey. This will allow you to measure results over time.
- Conduct the survey on a regular basis (usually annually) so that you and your employees can measure progress over time, and you can uncover other challenges and issues that may arise.

TOOLS



Template: Employee Stay Interview



Template: Employee Exit Interview



REWARDS & RECOGNITION

Satisfied, dependable and productive employees make business happen. Often a consumer will choose to purchase your product or service based on the employee who represents that product or service.

It seems that one of the secrets to a productive workforce—and therefore a successful business—is an elusive thing called good morale. Just what is good morale? It usually refers to how your employees feel about their jobs, you and your business. And that can directly affect your bottom line.

So the next question would be: “What contributes to good morale in the work environment?”

It’s a myth that good employees care only about money. Money is important, but there are many items that contribute to an employee’s morale. Interestingly, some are so fundamental that we tend to miss them completely. For instance, do your employees feel:

- Treated fairly and respectfully?
- Valued and appreciated?
- Recognized and possibly even rewarded for their work?

It shouldn’t take you long to realize that if you wish to attract, recruit and retain good employees, fair and respectful treatment is a given. Employees who do not feel valued and appreciated will either contribute less effort as time goes on, or leave for greener pastures where they will be appreciated.

In addition, everyone likes to have achievements and efforts recognized. Even though personal satisfaction is usually generated from within ourselves, it is always more meaningful if someone else notices and shares the success. Thus the concept of recognition and rewards.

Rewards can motivate and encourage employees to contribute to their own success and that of your business. Now, we’re not talking big-ticket items like a car or trip to some exotic locale. On the contrary, employees are often delighted with a range of rewards that can be provided at little or no cost. Most importantly, ensure your program fits the culture and image of your company.

5 Elements of an Effective Reward and Recognition Program

- **Achievable**
Set achievable standards. If it can't be accomplished, it becomes a demotivator.
- **Timely**
Waiting too long to deliver a reward or recognition will lessen the impact.
- **Objective**
Tell employees exactly what it takes to achieve a reward or recognition.
- **Sensible**
Include rewards that are logical motivators. If you are in your busy season, don't award additional time off if your schedule can't tolerate it for another six months.
- **Useful**
If possible, measure and reward something that helps to produce useful business results.

There are no firm rules about what to recognize, but many programs recognize the following:

- Productivity/quality
- Customer service
- Peer recognition
- Superior performance or extraordinary achievement
- Safety
- Length of service

Employee Recognition Best-Practices

Recognition does not need to take the form of a cash award or cost the employer a great deal of money.

Employees are people first, so will be motivated in many different ways. The most effective recognition programs incorporate these differences, offering multiple forms of rewards all designed to reflect the vision and culture of the organization.

Midway through each busy season at the Pan Pacific Hotel in Vancouver, the senior management team would line the employee entrance, greeting each employee with coffee and donuts in the morning, or ice cream bars and soft

drinks for the afternoon shift. It was a sincere gesture to say “thanks” and “we know it’s busy; but hang in there!”

On Valentine’s Day, they would transform the employee cafeteria with linen-topped tables, and a special Valentine’s menu was served to all staff by the managers.

Other forms of recognition may include:

- Gift certificates, plaques, sports or cultural event tickets
- Time off with pay (birthdays, personal anniversaries, etc.)
- Hot chocolate and cookies during breaks on really cold or challenging days
- Informal thank-you party with treats between shifts on a Friday afternoon
- Tucking a small flower in a vase with a handwritten thank-you note
- Inviting ‘extra’ staff members to meetings or events outside of their area of work (provides them with an opportunity to gain a broader understanding of the business and how it operates)
- Providing employees with more challenging work, career advancement opportunities, skill-building assignments, problems to be resolved, or peer mentoring opportunities

Above all, a simple thank you to staff at the end of the day costs nothing, but builds trust and inspires loyalty. Remember, recognition and rewards need to be offered with sincerity and thoughtfulness. They should also be timely. Recognizing employees is about giving thanks and credit where credit is due and making those employees feel valued and appreciated for a job well done.

RESOURCES



[Managing Reward: Why Line Managers Are The Vital Link](#)

HOW TO CREATE A CUSTOMIZED RECOGNITION PROGRAM

To retain great employees employers must actively and creatively seek out ways to make work enjoyable and rewarding.



MAKE THE RECOGNITION MEANINGFUL

Ask your employees what types of recognition they value



SET GOALS

Involve employees in setting clear, achievable goals



CELEBRATE

Create a buzz! Be creative in how you award and announce winners



COMMUNICATE

Be sure all employees clearly understand the program



INVOLVE GUESTS

Invite guests to vote online or fill out comment cards

MANAGING EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

The Performance Management Process

Managing employee performance involves many components. The infographic outlines the four key steps to achieving top performance from your staff and creating a dynamic workplace. Each step is described in greater detail below:

Step 1: Goal Setting

The first step in performance management is establishing annual goals that align with your business plan, and ultimately your company's vision and mission. In developing these goals, it is often useful to refer to a current job description to identify the major job duties, skills and abilities essential for success in the position. Critical areas should include both work performance factors such as service levels and job knowledge, as well as competencies such as problem solving, teamwork or managing change. It is also important that the employee understands how the achievement of their goals and objectives aligns with yours as the manager, and also those of the business as a whole.

Step 2: Communicate Expectations

While the performance appraisal process provides a formal method of communicating feedback on employee performance, effective performance management should also include frequent informal feedback and communication. An employee (or the employer) should not be surprised by anything that is said during the formal performance review, as ongoing dialogue between management and staff ensures that employees feel valued and understand the status of their job performance in terms of areas in which they may be doing well and those that require improvement.

Step 3: Measure Performance

Performance Review Forms support your annual performance discussions. Try to complete reviews either on employee anniversary dates or at a regular time during the year to make it easier to remember to do.

For each factor you plan to review, establish guidelines to determine specific measures of success. You can then evaluate employees based on their performance in these areas, citing specific examples to show why they would receive a specific rating.

As mentioned above, an integral part of the performance review process is to elicit employee input on their performance. As employees tend to be far more critical of themselves, providing them with an opportunity to do a self-assessment can make your job of giving them feedback easier. It can also provide you with insight as to how effectively you have been communicating to the employee thus far in terms of their performance.

In addition to providing the employee with a copy of the Performance Appraisal Form prior to the formal review, here are some key questions you might want to ask them to consider:

- What do you like most/least about your job?
- What do you believe are your specific accomplishments for the year?
- How can I better assist you in meeting your goals?
- What areas do you feel that you need to improve on and how can you do this?
- What new challenges or responsibilities are you interested in taking on that are aligned with the company's goals, objectives and mandate?
- What additional training might you require to help you meet your goals/objectives?

Step 4: Follow-Up

The final stage in the performance review process is the follow-up. By consistently and continually checking in with your employees, you demonstrate your commitment and dedication to their progress. Follow-up does not have to be lengthy to be effective and can take many forms. The most important thing is that it is done and done often to ensure employees remain engaged, motivated and committed to performing their job to the level expected and understood.

It is also important to establish a link between performance and compensation. Good performance must be rewarded and employees should be able to see the connection between what they do and what they get.

Many employers hesitate to incorporate performance management into their business model as they assume it has to be complicated and time-consuming to be effective. However, many performance management systems are relatively simple tools that can easily be incorporated into the day-to-day operation of the business. Selecting or developing something that is appropriate to your business is key.

Smaller businesses with few employees, or businesses that are just starting to appraise its staff, may choose to use a pre-packaged appraisal system consisting of either printed forms or software. Eventually, however, many companies choose to develop their own appraisal form and system in order to accurately reflect an employee's performance in light of the business's own unique goals and culture.

TOOLS



[Template: Performance Management Form](#)



How to Conduct an Effective Performance Review



Goal Setting

- Align to business plan, company vision and mission
- Refer to current job description
- Include both work performance factors and individual performance factors



Communicate Expectations

- Ensure frequent informal feedback, ongoing dialogue
- Schedule pre-shift meetings for a quick debrief
- Schedule structured weekly or bi-weekly meetings for in-depth conversations
- Encourage employees to raise any concerns
- Conduct an informal employee survey
- Ensure follow-up is prompt and transparent



Measure Performance

- Use a standardized performance review document
- Allow self-assessment from employees



Follow-Up

- Set up a specific time to follow-up
- Meet a minimum of twice a year
- Give regular praise and encouragement
- Encourage employees to talk to you any time they have a question, idea or concern

Progressive Discipline

A tight labour market does not mean that employers should avoid holding employees accountable. Progressive discipline is a process where an employee is put on notice that a behaviour or conduct is unacceptable and must be corrected in order to avoid further, increasing levels of discipline. The level or severity of the discipline imposed should be consistent with the level or severity of the infraction and then increase for subsequent similar offences.

The purpose of a progressive discipline process is to provide the employee with opportunities to correct the behaviour or conduct in question. The progressive discipline process should include an investigation, formal or informal, to ensure all facts are gathered. Termination should be viewed as a last (and hopefully avoidable) resort, except where a serious offence occurs and an immediate termination is justified. When at the last step prior to termination, the employee should be notified of that fact in writing and the fact that any further misconduct will be subject to termination.

Sample Progressive Discipline

1st offence = verbal warning
2nd offence = written warning
3rd offence = 2nd written warning
4th offence = last chance agreement (optional)
5th offence = termination

Progressive Discipline Key Principles

Consistency

- Discipline should be applied consistently, for all employees (i.e. similar employment record and similar incident = similar discipline)
- The nature and level of discipline should be equal to the nature and severity of the incident. Examples:
 - A first offence for lateness may warrant a verbal warning, repeat occurrences for the same (or similar) offence may warrant escalation to a written or other disciplinary action.
 - A first offence of not showing up for a shift may warrant an immediate written warning, skipping a verbal warning, depending on the specifics of the situation.

Flexibility

- Case by case basis, not 'mechanical' application
- Sometimes appropriate to repeat or skip steps
- Mitigating factors may influence the discipline

No Condonation

- Misconduct that employer is aware of should not go unaddressed
- Formal discipline should take place
- At arbitration, an employer will generally not be permitted to rely on conduct that has not been formally disciplined

Termination

- Normally results from a build up of incidents
- If serious enough, may be based on a single incident
- Confirm the entire disciplinary history being relied upon in writing

TOOLS



[Template: Progressive Discipline — Written Warning](#)

RESOURCES



[Sample Progressive Discipline Policy](#)

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