

# The "How To" Guide

## Hiring, Training, and Maintaining Your Employees

Hiring the best staff for your restaurant and foodservice operation is one of the most important keys to your success. However, finding the right staff is not an easy job. There is also a lot of work and preparation that must be done before you even begin the interview process. The harder you work to find the right people, the better the people you will find.

In addition, Canadian foodservice operators continue to face growing food and labour costs. With other pressing issues vying for the attention of business leaders, it is easy to put issues, such as employee recruitment, retention and development, on the back burner. It is important, though, to regularly consider whether your business has enough well-performing employees to be in a strong position to take advantage of increased sales opportunities to grow your business.

Retention and development of employees involves identifying what is important to your employees, and then building foundational programs into your business so you can deliver on these needs as a regular course of business.

**1. Start retention at the recruitment phase.**

Make sure that your job advertisement, job description and interview process express what the position requires and your expectations.

**2. Clearly communicate career path opportunities.**

Strong performers typically seek out the opportunity for greater knowledge, responsibility and career growth. If you do not have available growth opportunities to move employees up the corporate ladder, then provide lateral growth opportunities within a position until the next level position becomes available.

**3. Foster a positive work environment.**

By knowing what increases job satisfaction you can provide intrinsic value (not just money) to generate a culture of employee engagement and retention. To identify what you need to do to foster a positive work environment: seek regular feedback, conduct exit interviews and provide reward and recognition opportunities.

**4. Provide development and internal promotion opportunities.**

Consider subsidizing or providing business-related continuing education courses that help employees improve their qualifications for internal promotion.

Promote from within wherever possible. Employees are more likely to perform at a higher level and stay with a company when they believe there may be opportunity to grow with the company.

**5. Take advantage of the flexibility of the hospitality business.**

By hiring those who cannot work traditional hours or by adapting shifts to satisfy needs, companies can make themselves attractive to employees, and in return improve retention.

**6. Practice equitable and competitive pay practices.**

While money is not the only motivator, it still has a part to play in the whether or not to remain with a company. Review of your pay practices is still an essential part of a well-rounded retention plan.



# Hiring The Right People For Your Business

- 1. Know exactly what type of operation you are running and the type of person you want to hire:** Before you even begin the interviewing process, make sure that you have defined exactly what type of restaurant or foodservice operation you are running, and what type of person would be a good fit.
- 2. Finding and hiring:** Now that you know exactly who you want to hire, you need to go about finding such a person. You might have to look further than posting a "Help Wanted" sign in your window - consider in-house first. Is there someone currently on your staff who could do the job? If not, consider asking your staff if they know anyone.
- 3. Outline your goals and standards:** Have a list of your goals and standards, as well as some sort of a training manual to give to each new employee. Your restaurant must have rules and regulations that each employee must follow and respect, as well as guidelines for the job itself.
- 4. Train new employees properly:** Decide which tasks need immediate action (training), and which ones that can be mastered on the job or down the road. It is also important to be consistent with your training. Make sure that each and every employee receives the same information and training, and is able to offer the same levels of service expected from your operation.
- 5. Train management team properly:** Many restaurants and foodservice operations reward their best servers and bartenders by promoting them to be managers. Consider sending your managers for formal training and educational courses. This may cost money and take time, but the value of what they will learn and apply to your restaurant is worth it.
- 6. Always keep teaching:** There is always something new to learn. Don't think that just because your new employee has finished the two-week training program that this will be the last time you need to train them for anything. All your staff should be constantly updating their knowledge and skills. You may send employees to attend training seminars or workshops, or send your managers to train-the-trainer programs
- 7. Respect each other's roles:** A restaurant is made up of several different teams of staff that must work together to ensure that the ship sails smoothly. However, quite often, tension will build and arise between teams. Once a month, have each staff member step into someone else's shoes for a shift. It is important that all staff members have respect for each other's positions, and understand how important and difficult each role is.
- 8. Reward and recognize:** Staff retention is a major struggle in the restaurant and foodservice industry. You must reward and recognize your staff for a job well done, but at the same time, you must also fix and rectify mistakes immediately. Consider putting together an employee incentive program, where employees that provide excellent standards of service receive bonuses.



Source: Staff retention and development: Six best practices to retain top talent: <http://www.restaurantcentral.ca/Staffretentionanddevelopment.aspx>  
Source: Eight Steps to hiring, training and maintaining the best staff possible; <http://www.restaurantcentral.ca/Hiringandtrainingfoodservicestaff.aspx>

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