



Attracting and retaining employees in a buoyant labour market

Employees who are hardworking and heads that have the ability to think are strong assets. Today, however, many companies find it difficult not only to recruit qualified employees, but also to retain them.

Right now, many companies are seeing droves of employees quitting their jobs in the western world in the post-coronavirus pandemic era, which has significantly changed the labour market. The trend has been nicknamed the Great Resignation.

It is all about job satisfaction and meaningfulness

Today, we no longer go to work just to survive – work is part of our identity. Employees increasingly want to have a sense of pride in, meaningfulness of and attachment to their work, which requires more of the workplace than it traditionally did.

It is therefore more important than ever that the company makes an effort to meet the new expectations. If the company does so, the result will be stronger employee commitment, more loyalty and greater job satisfaction for managers and employees alike.

In collaboration with Pernille Garde Abildgaard, CEO of Take Back Time, we have prepared some specific tips for employers on how to create an even better and more attractive workplace where new employees are looking for vacancies and where it is pleasant to work.

5 tips on how to attract employees in a buoyant labour market



1. What is unique about your company?

Consider why your company is better than other companies in your industry and use it to your advantage. Is it a special location, your working environment, the development potential, the staff canteen or a unique story? Are you a company everyone wants to be associated with?



2. Ask, ask, ask

The working environment is essential in relation to recruitment and retention. For example, ask your employees and potential new candidates what you can do to make everyone come to work whistling every day? You may not be able to accommodate all requests, but experience shows that minor adjustments can make a huge difference. It all starts by involving your employees and by remembering to be curious and courageous.



3. Be specific about what type of employees you want and what drives them

Do you want to take on a suitable candidate who, for example, is engaged in elite sport alongside his/her job or pursues another time-consuming hobby? In that case, you may use flexible working conditions and fewer weekly hours as a bait. Other candidates may focus on good relationships with colleagues, while others find it crucial that the company supports the UN Sustainable Development Goals.



4. Involve your employees

Let them be part of the recruitment process and the search for new labour. For example, invite an employee to attend the job interview as an ambassador for the job, and encourage your employees to use their network to hire new staff.



5. Put a lot of effort into the introduction to the job and the workplace

Create a structured process for an effective integration of new employees into the workplace. An optimum onboarding process can take up to six months. For example, introduce a buddy scheme by assigning a dedicated contact person new employees can consult. As a manager, you should hold frequent short guidance sequences and check-ins. Remember to align expectations with the employee regarding assignments and plans for the future.

5 useful tips on how to create a work culture where employees want to be:



1. Be open about goals, driving force and requests

When is your employee successful? Do you know? Do your employees know? Is it a success criterion to go to work physically every day from 8am to 5pm and to always be available – or do you use other parameters to measure employee performance?

It is very important for the employees to know how their performance is measured. It has to be specific and needs to be followed up and continuously adjusted to meet the employees' requests for progress and/or reward and pace. Leaving a job is harder if the employee feels he/she is successful and important to the company.



2. Provide an optimum framework for performing the work

Make sure to remove obstacles in the form of equipment and systems that do not work optimally. Be aware that structure provides a sense of security, and complete self-determination and flexibility are likely to be difficult to manage. It is important to set up some organisational “corner flags” to ensure you provide flexibility within a clearly-defined framework. Something that also supports the dialogue on driving force and special requests.

Example: Give your employees the opportunity to work from home two to three days a week. You may leave it up to the individual team to arrange when and how.

You can choose to adopt the “TUTH model” (Tuesdays/Thursdays are home-working days) or the “MOW model” (Mondays/Wednesdays are home-working days). Or the “WAW model” (Work Away Wednesday) (no meetings are held on Wednesdays, which can be organised on a completely autonomous basis; you cannot count on reaching your colleagues on that day, which also means you will not be disturbed during the day by colleagues/managers. In other words, Wednesday is a 100% autonomous day on which you have the freedom to work whenever and however it suits you [full flexibility]).



3. Make it legitimate to take breaks and make room for concentration

A work break is not a break from productivity, but a condition for performance. The ability to concentrate and get ideas is improved by taking breaks, unwinding and being physically active, for example. Allow your employees to set aside time for individual tasks and duties without distractions. It could be one hour a day – also where employees work in the open-plan office. If you do it collectively, it can create magic in terms of productivity, planning and job satisfaction.



4. Think up collective solutions to strengthen culture and cohesion

Discuss with your team how you best work together and do not focus on individual performance. Be open about the dilemmas associated with the individual employee's needs and preferences versus the group's needs and preferences.

Launch joint activities across the team, generations and company. Be aware that social activities for some employees are the worst days of the year, while for others they are a kind of Christmas Eve.



5. Solve only the problems that can and must be solved

As a company, you must do your utmost to provide a favourable framework and good working environment. But not all problems can or must be solved by an employer. Perhaps it is okay that a small number of employees quit every year? Perhaps it is okay to adapt the working environment to suit the needs of the majority at the expense of the few? Some employees may have very unrealistic demands for the role an employer should play and the problems the company should contribute to solving – another area where the alignment of expectations is crucial.