

# **The Components of Employee Retention & Career Development Processes**

Employers sometimes struggle to retain employees who make valuable contributions to business goals. Through certain processes, however, employers may be able to resolve turnover and continually improve employment performance. These processes include fairly appraising employee work, assessing your company's benefits and building your workforce's capability to provide in-house employee development.

## **Performance Appraisal**

An employee's performance appraisal is a key part of the process that affects both retention and development. Career development goals become part of a performance appraisal when the employee and her supervisor discuss long-term career goals as part of an annual evaluation. Additionally, employee feedback offered during the appraisal process sheds light on what the employee is seeking in a rewarding career and what it takes to retain her. Employee retention and career development are therefore intertwined. Career development prepares employees for challenging job assignments and promotions which will maintain their interest, and thus their desire to stay with your company.

## **Benefits Review**

Increasing health care costs and the availability of group health care benefits cause employees to place greater value on a current employer's benefits package before they make any decisions to look for employment with another company. As a result, compensation and benefits are fast becoming the reasons employees stay with a company. Job seekers often base their decision on career opportunities between competing employers based on the type of benefits packages each company offers. One of the steps in the employee retention process is, therefore, reviewing your company's benefits package to ensure that it's not just adequate, but competitive enough to keep your employees with your company.

## **Motivation through Recognition**

Motivated employees who are fully engaged in their work are likely to stay while employees who become complacent, bored or ineffective look for employment opportunities elsewhere. The process of recognizing employees' contributions is a component in the effort to retain and develop employees whose performance demonstrates their aptitude and potential. The recognition process includes acknowledging employee talent; an employee who is especially effective in customer service could become a leader customer service agent your company can use for training new agents or mentoring employees whose customer service skills are below par. Recognition in this form motivates high-performing employees while improving the skills of other employees. In fact, Right Staff, a Texas-based staffing agency, comments on successful mentoring within the context of employee retention: "Mentoring fosters important working relationships and gives employees a sense of 'belonging.' Employees who feel they 'belong' and who have an employer who is interested in their development...will stay longer..."

## **In-House Strength**

Using employee talent to augment your training and development offerings is a key element in the process to improve employee development and employee retention -- the customer service agent example perfectly describes how your company can develop and retain employees in one step. Another process for retaining employees and improving development opportunities involves your in-house human resources department's ability to provide employee training and development. For small businesses without dedicated human resources staff, this may include consulting with outside trainers on the types of developmental workshops that will improve employees' skills or providing access to online training sessions. Anything to keep employees engaged and interested in their work will serve your organization well in employee retention as well as employee development.

