



PART FIVE

RETAINING YOUR EMPLOYEES

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1. What is employee retention?

The efforts and strategies employers utilise to retain their existing workforce.

2. Why is it important to your small business?

A low employee turnover means your business is less likely to continuously source and train new employees - a costly exercise in terms of time and resources.

3. Key components of successful employee retention

Recognition

Offering recognition and rewards is an excellent strategy to acknowledge staff achievements. It lets your staff know that you value their contributions and in turn increases their motivation and loyalty to you and the business. Be sure one employee does not receive all the recognition as that can be detrimental to overall morale. Understand that while financial rewards and bonuses are nice, a public heartfelt thank you can be just as powerful.

- Paying above award wage is a good incentive for staff
- Acknowledging staff publically at meetings
- Saying ‘Thank You’ more often
- Local shopping vouchers are a great way to support employees and local businesses

Flexibility and Freedom

Offering flexibility and freedom in a role is an excellent way to ensure your staff continue their employment with you. Give your staff the ability to excel within their role without you looking over their shoulder and micro-managing. Allowing your staff freedom to work independently builds trust and rapport. If you can also offer flexible working conditions it is a fantastic way for them to keep their work-life balance. Flexibility also shows you have a vested interest in their overall wellbeing thus building further loyalty.

- It is not necessarily all about pay, other incentives can include: housing (please note there are restrictions on the amount of allowance you can provide for housing - check with the Department of Commerce WA), meals, reduced rent, business vehicles, support for their personal goals, accommodation vouchers, phone for work and personal use, ability to start later one morning a week so parent can attend school assembly
- Providing extra annual leave days or paid leave during office closures between Christmas and New Year
- Casual wear days
- Participation in activities like a Melbourne Cup lunch or holding a staff cooking competition, corporate bowls
- Work social clubs

Community Responsibility

While the idea of corporate social responsibility is an effective retention strategy outside of the Wheatbelt, businesses within the Wheatbelt have a responsibility to their community. If you allow your employees to be a part of the community responsibility it will only build their loyalty. Decide as a business (with staff input) what clubs you're going to sponsor and what you can do to benefit the overall community. Showing you are dedicated to the community's future is just another way to build loyalty amongst your staff.

- Providing paid leave for employees who are part of emergency response teams e.g. local bushfire control, St Johns Ambulance
- Providing paid leave for employees to attend Shire / Council meetings once a month (civic leadership)
- Supporting other local businesses by 'hiring out' your employees to a business who might be un-expectantly short e.g. resource sharing

Career Path and Future

The opportunity to advance, and have a future within your business is important. Make sure you have regular meetings to discuss career goals and how they can be achieved while still under your employment. Look at what additional resources and trainings you can offer them that allows them to upskill and build their value to the business. Set out a clear progression path so that their future is secure with your business.

4. Templates and Resources for Download

- i. Requests For Flexible Working Arrangements - National System (separate)
- ii. Flexible Working Conditions in the Wheatbelt
- iii. Wheatbelt Examples Recognition and Reward Systems
- iv. Career Plan Template
- v. Sponsorships and Donations Decision Matrix

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FLEXIBLE WORKING CONDITIONS IN THE WHEATBELT

Flexible working arrangements open businesses to a broader base of candidates that may have a variety of skills, but unable to meet a standard part time or full time location based role. Unfortunately, flexible working arrangements often have negative connotations, but they are designed to benefit both the employee and employer.

Examples of flexible conditions include: working remote, job share, businesses resource share, compressed work schedule.

Arrangement	Details	Details
Working Remote	<p>Could be a permanent or ad hoc arrangement.</p> <p>Ensure employee has access to systems set up for remote work: phone, internet, internal network, emails, cloud storage, backup etc.</p> <p>Consider reimbursements for office costs e.g. printing, electricity, water etc</p> <p>Set forth expectations for remote working so it can be held by both parties - working hours, how to answer phones if working from home, voicemail standards etc</p> <p>Insurance needs to cover the employee if working from home</p>	<p>BENEFITS increased productivity - often fewer distractions at home, and time is used more efficiently flexibility - employees can continue to work at times suitable for them extended hours of operation for employer</p> <p>COSTS lack of direct supervision work / home life balance OHS concerns</p>
Job Sharing	<p>Two employees sharing a single role. This can be done through joint responsibility of all duties, or split the duties into separate responsibilities.</p> <p>Good communication skills are necessary in this sort of arrangement.</p> <p>Good planning is required e.g. sharing a workpad/note book to leave messages between staff</p> <p>Can arrange as each person works 2.5 days/week or one has mornings and the other afternoons. Or alternate weeks.</p> <p>Have a system for handovers and information sharing.</p>	<p>BENEFITS attracting a wider pool of applicants for new jobs more skills and experience in a position enhanced problem solving (by having 2 minds applied to 1 task) training and quality assurance improved continuity and coverage of work- in case of sickness or leave can attract people wishing to return to work</p> <p>COSTS cross over issues multiple payroll numbers</p>

<p>Compressed Schedule</p>	<p>Depending on the length of time an employee needs for to fulfil their obligations outside of work. A four day week, nine day fortnight or use time in lieu.</p> <p>Consider that some positions may not be suitable to a compressed schedule due to health and safety concerns</p>	<p>BENEFITS dealing with high workloads during peak periods by arranging employees working longer days and rewarding with time in lieu during slow times attracting a more diverse staff group looking for flexibility a low-cost employee benefit which can help staff retention</p> <p>COSTS Staff absent from work on normal operating days - customer and other staffing inconveniences</p>
<p>Business Resource Share</p>	<p>This is really an arrangement between two businesses recognising they do not have enough work to support a full time position, but could justify the process of attracting and recruiting a person to fulfil two part time positions.</p> <p>It is not an officially recognised “flexible working option” but one that is viable for Wheatbelt businesses looking for increased resources in their town.</p>	<p>BENEFITS Fantastic option for rural businesses needing to attract a high skill position that would require full time employment High skill level with part time opportunities</p> <p>COSTS Clear insurance arrangements need to occur, so too cost sharing or issues can arise</p>

WHEATBELT EXAMPLES OF RECOGNITION AND REWARDS

Employee recognition and appreciation that is not monetary can be difficult to think of. These systems play into your overall company culture, and help improve employee retention rate. Our list of rewards has come directly from Wheatbelt businesses just like yours.

Recognition System	Details	Examples
Shared Meal	<p>Multiple business owners across the Wheatbelt had some form of shared meal with their staff.</p> <p>In addition to the meal, most businesses used this time to recognise highs and lows for the month and recognise individual employee successes.</p> <p>In an informal setting, businesses found it was great for team bonding.</p>	<p>“Free lunch Friday” was quite popular for one café/general store that allowed employees to have any item off the menu every Friday. Monthly Staff Lunch was implemented by one business with 40+ staff. It gave all staff members something to look forward and work towards at the end of every month. Ad hoc meals provided. A few businesses buy lunch or coffees when they feel their team needs an extra boost, or deserved additional rewards.</p>
Afternoon Drinks	<p>Ensure everyone understands the need to drink responsibly.</p> <p>Great opportunity to reward and recognise staff after working hours.</p>	<p>One machinery dealer during peak periods, would set a timeframe on assembly of a machine and then cartons to match to encourage the team to meet their deadline. Set a goal at the beginning of the week for your staff, and if they meet the goal reward them with Friday afternoon drinks!</p>
Charity Campaign	<p>Give your staff something that matters most to them.</p> <p>Small towns run on local business and local clubs. Leverage your business donations, so you are not only supporting the local clubs- but showing your employees you care and support their causes!</p>	<p>One organization allows every staff member to pick a local club or charity to support every year in donations. Give your staff the opportunity to have a day off to support their chosen club or charity. A Wheatbelt business allows staff to have a sausage sizzle in front of their shop to raise money for their club. The business donates all the supplies!</p>
Time Off	<p>Have you got an employee that shows up every day and completes their workload day in day out? It might be time to recognise their efforts with some time off.</p>	<p>Perhaps you know the school cross country day is on, let your employee slip out for a couple hours to watch their child run!</p> <p>One Wheatbelt business surprised a longstanding employee with a long weekend away. They had booked all the accommodation and transport, and had the partner in on it.</p>

		Time off during office closures between Christmas and New Year
Christmas Party	<p>While Christmas parties are a fairly common theme throughout most businesses. We had a few interesting ideas.</p> <p>Do your best to arrange the party at a time convenient for everyone and their partners!</p> <p>Great time to recognise an employee of the year.</p>	<p>Have staff awards that are a bit of fun- “most likely to get locked out of the office” or “ the jibber jabber award” for the person that can’t stop talking. These are a great ice breaker and a bit of fun. Who knows it might become a great office tradition!</p> <p>Staff parties can look like a variety of things, but make sure there is plenty of food and drinks for celebration! It is always nice to invite partners and families if the venue is suitable.</p>
Staff Account	<p>Recognise an employees dedication by wiping their staff account!</p> <p>Great for retail businesses, and really can be quite a low cost reward.</p>	<p>One business had an employee book up a few things for a back yard remodel with the intention of paying it off. Instead they wiped the account!</p> <p>Employee discounts for retail businesses</p>

CAREER PLAN TEMPLATE

Name:	
Current Position:	
Employer:	
Date:	

In an employee/employer assessment discuss openly career aspirations, strengths and development. Informal discussions throughout the year with staff are encouraged.

Part 1: Knowing Yourself

The first step in planning your career is evaluating and understanding your aspirations; strengths; interests; drivers and other influences. Please indicate which aspects of the planning process you have evaluated:

Identify skills to develop:

Development Opportunities:

Part 2: Explore Possibilities

Research the development possibilities and career pathways that are open and attractive to you. Consider your self assessment outcomes and future health workforce needs.

Pathway Option 1:

Prerequisites and requirements to achieve this option:

Pathway Option 2:

Prerequisites and requirements to achieve this option:

Part 3: Making Choices

Consider the suitability of each option and decide (with the assistance of the person you report to) which one is the best match to your aspirations and workforce needs. Before making the decision, consider also:

- What are the perceived barriers/obstacles and how can they be overcome
- Outside of work commitments
- The level of involvement required
- Which of my options responds best to my employer and workforce needs?

Based on the choices you have made, and the development opportunities you have identified now write your goal(s). Aim to make each goal as specific as you can.

Goal 1 :

Required to achieve goal 1:

Goal 2:

Required to achieve goal 2:

Goal 3:

Required to achieve goal 3:

Part 4: Make it Happen

In order to achieve your goals you need to have an agreed course of action. You and your manager need to have a clear understanding of what steps you will be taking, the commitment needed by both you and your manager and relevant timeframes.

You are now ready to detail who has to do what to make things happen.

Agreed course of action/action plan

start date	completion date	Skill, experience, knowledge to be gained	How will this be gained? (e.g. on the job experience, formal/informal seminars/courses, coaching/mentoring etc)	Provider (e.g. workplace educator, university, coach/mentor etc)

Assessing the effectiveness of the action plan

Specify how to assess the extent to which the agreed course of action has achieved the stated goals

Portability

This career plan belongs to the employee/trainee. It provides the basis for ongoing career discussions within current and future employment and professional relationships. Any transfer of information to future employers or others requires the employee/trainee's consent.

Review Dates

Progress on the agreed course of action will be reviewed on

This career plan will be reviewed on

Manager/Supervisor sign-off

Name:

Title:

Date:

Employee/trainee sign-off

Name:

Title:

Date:

SPONSORSHIP AND DECISION MAKING MATRIX FOR BUSINESS

Businesses in Wheatbelt communities often are approached for donations from various sporting clubs seeking support. Ensure your investment will see some return for both internal and external stakeholders.

- Give focus and outline criteria that will align your community orientated objectives with your business objectives.
- Link this exercise with your vision and mission
- Incorporate your staff, so they understand and support your decisions

Question	Comment	Consider
What is the history of the organization and your relationship?		Have you had a long standing partnership? Is this a relatively new club needing support?
Where are you based?		If you are in the same town, or if it is regional
Where do you operate/what is your market?		Is there any way there might be a reciprocal sponsorship that is not monetary? i.e a café that can offer discounted catering for a sports event?
What are the services and/or products you provide?		Consider again the opportunity for a non-monetary sponsorship. Could you provide labour for a sports day? Or offer any equipment your business might have e.g. shade tents, utes for moving equipment

Question	Comment	Consider
What do you want/need from a relationship?		Think of how the sponsorship could benefit your business, ensure the club members will support your business outside of the club - discount vouchers that you can track, voting systems in store for various clubs, tracking club purchases etc
What do you want to achieve in the short and long-term?		What is your aim through this sponsorship?
Are you offering a specific project, fundraising event or require sponsorship?		This could limit your overall obligation, and help you spread your funds evenly.
When are you looking for a partner?		Ensure mutual support is an option.
Promotion and increased profile of the organisation, increased business, increased staff morale, goodwill etc.		What is the club offering your business in regards to promotion? Where is your logo going to be seen? How will you be recognized etc?
Would there be an opportunity to market and refer business?		Find the mutual benefits of the sponsorship - can contact details of participants be shared?

Question	Comment	Consider
Is this club important to your employees?		Do you have an employee actively engaged in the club?
Recognition for your sponsorship		Logo placement, introduction to clients, speaking opportunity, media promotion, banners, awards
Tracking the return on your sponsorship		Purchase data from club representatives, number of Facebook hits / likes/ reach, number of media opportunities, number of attendees to event (if applicable), number of other sponsors for the event / activity etc

Additional Factors to Consider	
How would you describe the organisation?	
What is their vision?	
What is their mission?	
Is their vision/mission compatible with ours?	Yes No If yes please specify:

Does anyone already have a relationship with the organisation and/or people using the organisation?	Yes No If yes please specify:
Have you talked with someone who has partnered with them before?	Yes No If yes please specify:
Do they currently have community/business relationships?	Yes No If yes please specify:
Are these relationships similar to your organisation?	Yes No If yes please specify:
Do they promote these relationships and how?	Yes No If yes please specify: