SIGMA
Leadership Series

Great Leaders Attract and Retain Top Talent

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GREAT LEADERS ATTRACT AND RETAIN TOP TALENT

> " If you pick the right people and give them the opportunity to spread their wings and put compensation as a carrier behind it, you almost don't have to manage them.
>
> — Jack Welch

To spare their organizations the cost and headache associated with hiring and losing talented employees, leaders need to hire the right individuals and to keep these employees engaged so they want to remain with the organization.

Hiring new employees can be a major investment for an organization. Not only is it costly to advertise roles, assess candidates, and make selections, but new hires often need to be trained in their new role and adjust to the organizational culture and policies. This investment in new employees is forfeited if employees choose to leave the organization after only a short period of time.

Attracting Staff is the ability to hire and keep talent, maintaining turnover at an acceptable level. Leaders who exhibit this trait are not only skilled at selecting and hiring talented employees but are also able to keep these employees long term. Leaders that are effective at Attracting Staff keep turnover low.

Do You Attract and Retain Top Talent?

In assessing your ability to attract and retain staff, consider the following:

- Have I considered the traits an individual would need to be successful in this job?
- Do I provide an accurate picture of the organization to potential candidates?
- Am I using effective tools to help me hire the right person?
- Do I provide a positive, empowering environment for my employees to work in?
- Do I listen to and address the issues my employees have brought to my attention?
- Do I use managerial skills, such as communication and conflict resolution, to foster a positive climate?

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Create a Talent Magnet

Start at the beginning. Choosing the right person doesn't start with a resume or interview – it begins in how you recruit potential employees. Be mindful of how you advertise your open positions. Choose your target audiences and ensure your channels reach the right people. Keep in mind that research shows differences in candidates depending on where you recruit — opening your job to those outside your organization often results in a large candidate pool with diverse experiences and training. Asking internal employees to recommend possible candidates reduces this diversity; however, it often results in quality new hires who are likely to remain with the organization longer.

Make use of the available knowledge and tools. Unlike some competencies, leaders can use validated tools to improve hiring and retention. Personality assessments are effective screening tools; personality traits such as conscientiousness predict success across many roles. Similarly, standardized forms exist to evaluate the performance of individuals in interviews. Using evidence-based tools to aid in selecting employees can greatly improve your chances of hiring the right individual.

Choose employees who choose your organization. Remember, good fit is about more than the employee having the skills and traits you desire. A new employee also needs to feel comfortable and competent within the culture of your organization. When hiring a new individual, be candid about the role, the environment, performance expectations and the day-to-day structure. Candid previews help candidates self-select — leaving a pool ready to perform the role and commit to the realities of the organization.

Start Doing These 4 Things Now to Attract and Retain Top Talent

The following steps can help you become better at attracting staff:

1. **Ensure you understand the position to be filled.** Before you can begin to search for someone to fill a role, you must understand what the role entails. What are the tasks someone in the job would be expected to perform? What level of performance is expected from employees? What types of education or experience is required to do well on the job? Will this new employee need any special or specific skills or abilities? Analyzing the job, and the traits someone needs to be successful on the job, can give you a place to start when looking for new employees. Tools exist online to help get you started.

2. **Be rigorous.** When hiring a new individual, set a formal procedure for the selection process. Use the same criteria when assessing resumes, ask the same questions during interviews, and provide candidates with the same information about the open position. The only way to fairly evaluate who is best suited to a role is to ensure you have all the information from each candidate.

3. **Use motivational tools to retain employees.** First, being positive and friendly with employees can go a long way toward creating a supportive environment in which employees want to work. When employees can bring forward issues to their leaders, they can feel confident that their concerns are heard. Set goals that benefit both the employee and the organization. Employees who feel that the organization supports their development will feel motivated to stay. Finally, provide recognition for employees who are hard-working or successful. Acknowledgment is a quick, easy, and cheap way to encourage employees in their current and future endeavors.

4. **Provide opportunities for employees to grow.** Research has shown that employees tend to be most satisfied when they feel a sense of autonomy in their job. Where available, try to give employees the freedom to choose how to do their work. Giving employees control over their work and how they complete it can be a great way to motivate employees and increase their feelings of competence while ensuring they are happy working for you as a leader and for your organization in general.

Assess Attracting Staff With the LSP-R®

The Leadership Skills Profile – Revised® (LSP-R) is a personality-based leadership assessment that measures 50 core competencies, including Attracting Staff. The assessment can be administered online in 25 minutes, and comes with an automatically generated Focus Report, including scores, personalized feedback, and templates for creating competency-based leadership development plans (view a sample Focus Report).

LSP-R® Free Trial

See how you score on ATTRACTING STAFF.

Experience the LSP-R for yourself and see how you score on Attracting Staff. Receive customized feedback and templates for creating a personalized action plan. Take 25 minutes and experience the impact that data-driven personality insights can have.

➤ Start Your Free Trial

Learn More

Analyze what's important for a given position by visiting ONET.

How to Use Personality Tests and Structured Interviews to Hire the Best.

10 Ways to Improve Employee Retention

Develop leadership competencies with SIGMA's one-hour, high-impact Leadership Development Workshops, led by our experienced coaches.