

7.4 Motivating your team

PRODUCT
DISTRIBUTION
PROMOTION
PEOPLE
FINANCE
RISK
GROWTH

- > *Attracting staff*
- > *Retaining staff*
- > *Training*
- > *Performance feedback*
- > *Terminating employees*

Attracting staff

You can increase your chances of attracting quality people by

- > highlighting the benefits of working for your business in advertisements and interviews
- > wording advertisements carefully to attract the best people
- > providing training opportunities and a career path
- > offering attractive wages and conditions
- > including incentives or commissions
- > showing courtesy and respect to your staff
- > being fair and consistent in your decisions, and giving sensible reasons for saying yes or no
- > being flexible about work arrangements

Retaining staff

Quality people can easily find work with other employers. Once somebody has decided to leave your business, it will be very hard to persuade them to change their mind, and may be quite unproductive. With unemployment rates at historic lows, you need to keep your people happy and motivated if you want to retain them. The cost of recruiting and training even base level staff can be thousands of dollars, and it is worthwhile building on your investment.

You can help to retain your quality people by

- > regularly appraising performance and providing feedback
- > rewarding with praise and opportunities, not just money
- > providing new challenges to develop skills
- > providing ongoing training
- > treating your people with respect, listening and responding to their aspirations, and acting on their ideas and suggestions
- > regularly reviewing salary levels to ensure they are competitive
- > building profit-linked bonuses and other performance incentives into pay packages

Training makes a big difference

Training your employees improves long-term productivity. Case studies show that training reduces staff turnover and leads to better work performance. Your staff will appreciate the investment you make in them.

Although it takes time, and often costs money, think of the consequences for your business if the employee is not trained and does not work to her or his best ability. Training doesn't cost—it pays.

If you are offering training or expecting the new employee to undertake it, then this should be talked about in the interview. It is especially important if you are encouraging new employees to take on training in their own time, or willing to assist them with this in some way, such as time off for study.

If you are taking on an apprentice or a trainee then you are legally obliged to train the employee. These obligations should be explained to you when you take out the Contract of Training through the Accreditation and Registration Council.

National industry training advisory bodies can advise you where you can get training materials specific to your industry at a reasonable cost.

Performance feedback

If you and your employee are to make the business work well, and work towards a worthwhile working relationship, then you should consider making regular performance appraisals part of your routine.

Performance appraisals are no substitute for constant praise, feedback and constructive advice. However, a regular formal process underpins a culture of reinforcement and support in the workplace.



Ideally these should be done every six months and set out in a form so that both you and the employee can comment on their work performance, your expectations and any requests for further training that might result.

Both you and your employee should see the meeting as an opportunity to share suggestions about improving work processes, customer relations, identify training needs and talk about their future career opportunities. It can also provide you with a chance to praise the employee formally for good work done and to give constructive criticism that can assist him or her to improve skills and performance in areas where they need help.

All comments should be made in the context of the employee's contract and job documentation, including any performance agreement in place.

Terminating employees

What you do to sign off an employee depends upon the circumstances under which the employment is terminated and any legal contracts that might be involved.

If it is a dismissal you must have given the employee the required warnings in the correct form. There are some circumstances where you might feel an instant dismissal is warranted on safety, ethical or other grounds. You should ask the Workplace Services Division of DAIS, Business SA or the Office of the Employee Ombudsman for advice on this before you approach the employee. You may have the right to suspend the employee from work pending an investigation of the matter if a serious breach has occurred. The conditions of termination will be advised to you, and pay in lieu of notice, plus any holiday or other pay accrued, may be required.

If you have to make an employee redundant for any reason you should ask for advice on the manner and length of notice required and any obligations for special payments that this might incur.

If you have an employee who is due to retire or who resigns, then you and the employee should seek advice about the notice required, any special pay that might be due and forms for transfer or rollover of superannuation funding.

If you want to cancel indentures (Contracts of Training) then you should apply to the Accreditation and Registration Council for detail of the procedure to be followed.

Full statements of entitlements to leave and other benefits must be supplied together with a Separation Certificate for Centrelink.

Websites

Australian National Training Authority (ANTA)
www.training.com.au