



committed employees

Employees who feel like they make a difference in your business will work harder to never let you or the business down. Here are a few ways to make that happen.

By Carol Hacker



Delegating responsibilities can make your employees feel needed.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if all of the people who work for you were as committed to your business as you are? The reality is if they were *that* committed they would probably have a business of their own. However, there are exceptions, and if you have people who are as concerned as you are about what happens in your business, take good care of them! Employees who share your strong inner drive to succeed are special, and some are even willing to make great personal sacrifices to ensure profitability. These people are the backbone of your business. They are willing to make sacrifices for you. They are motivated and willing to help take your business to the next level. As for the rest of your employees, here are some ideas to get them to make a commitment to you and the business you love.

HIRE FOR ATTITUDE

Hiring the right people the first time has a lot to do with employee loyalty. One of your jobs as the owner or manager is to locate, screen and hire only those individuals who are the right fit for you and your business. Conduct a thorough interview, check references and hire for attitude. Then, teach them what they need to know. These steps take time, but they are worth it when you hire a motivated employee who is excited about his or her job. Here are some tips to help you get started:

Treat all job candidates like your best customers. Make sure that all of your employees understand the importance of showing interest in and respect for everyone who steps foot on your property.

Avoid the number one mistake that hiring managers make — talking too much during the interview. Speak 20 percent of the time and listen 80 percent of the time. Your job is to gather rather than give information during the interview. Only after you are through asking questions should you invite the candidate to question you.

Determine the candidate's weaknesses. They will be quick to share their strengths, which is also important. However, once you find out where candidates are weak, you should know immediately whether or not you want to extend a job offer.

Ask questions from your list that you have prepared in advance of the interview. Asking the same or similar questions of each of the candidates interviewing for the position is a good way to compare each candidate and their answers against each other more easily.

Check references. Make it part of your business's policy to check 3-4 work-related references. Personal references are next to worthless. References are easy to get. Simply put the responsibility for providing references on the candidate's shoulders. If they cannot come up with references that will do more than verify the fact that they were employed where they say they were, forget them.

GETTING THEM STARTED

An orientation to your business and the job has proven benefits. Consider an informal mentor program whereby current employees volunteer their time as a mentor to new employees for whatever length of time you feel is needed. Orientation is an on-going process and could last a year or more. Friendships that result are a bonus for all people involved.