

Progressive Employer **HANDBOOK**



Four  **County**
Labour Market Planning Board

Serving Bruce Grey Huron Perth

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Serving Bruce Grey Huron Perth

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Introduction

Are you concerned about the changes predicted for the Canadian workforce caused by globalization, an aging population, increasing technology and competition? Do you want to improve your business operations and employee management, but feel you do not have the time, money or other necessary resources?

Preparing for Change

This booklet may help you improve your bottom line and the overall operation of your business by providing:

- Strategies to decrease the costs of recruitment
- Ideas to help you find creative ways to retain your current staff
- Suggestions to increase employee job satisfaction
- Strategies to improve your reputation as progressive employer and a 'champion' to work for

This booklet was designed to assist **proactive** small to medium size business managers or owners. It lays the groundwork for building a more progressive workplace. The ideas presented can be implemented at little cost to your business, but could save you substantial time and money.

In the early part of this booklet, real-life testimonials of progressive employers are shared. These employers were highlighted because of the business excellence demonstrated in their operations. These employers increased their profits and gained a competitive advantage **by using some of the strategies presented in this booklet.**

This publication is based on research which includes academic sources; experts in the fields of training and effective business management and Human Resource (HR) professionals.

Every business has different needs and requires tailored solutions. As you read this booklet:

Consider Reciprocal Benefits:

- *These ideas and strategies may benefit your employees.*
- *These ideas and strategies may benefit your business.*



Progressive Employer

I

DS Capital

“Don’t manage your employees, manage your business operations”.

David Somerville

David Somerville is the founder of DS Capital Asset Management, a wealth management company located in St. Catharines. The DS Capital team consists of ten associates. One of the keys to the success of DS Capital is the loyalty and positive energy that clients encounter in contacts with this company. David’s employees love working for him. David treats his employees with respect and believes that the success of his company is a direct result of the hard work of his employees.

DS Capital offers employees a high degree of scheduling flexibility. Staff can choose to work 4 days a week, provided they work around core hours. David’s policy is not to question an associate’s need to take time off in the case of emergencies or in response to personal or family needs. In turn, David’s employees ensure that if they are absent, their responsibilities are covered by another staff member and the work gets done. David also provides his employees with benefit options to meet their needs. For example, most associate spouses have benefits in their jobs, so employees of DS Capital have the opportunity to re-allocate the \$2000 annual cost of benefits into salary, RESP’s or RRSP’s. David shows his employees he values them by his workplace policies. He has achieved high retention, high growth of the business and continues to see many satisfied clients remain with him year after year.



Proactive Employer

II

Boggio Pharmacy

“If somebody is having a bad day, we will find out who it is and we will do what we’ve got to do to make this person happy and change a bad day into a good day”.

Larry Boggio

Boggio Pharmacy is a very successful, family owned pharmacy in Port Colborne. The business has a loyal customer base and it’s owners are very popular with their employees. Cathy and Larry Boggio say that they “treat their employees as they would like to be treated”. They have been very creative in finding benefits and perks for their employees.

- Opportunities to attend annual Christmas parties and golf tournaments.
- Free lunches.
- Surprise bonuses and always, Christmas bonuses. The monetary bonuses increase as years of service increase.
- Discounts on products and a drug plan for their employees.

Cathy and Larry see ‘small perks’ such as providing employees with coffee on ‘Coffee Day’ or a slurpy on “Slurpy Day’ as an important part of the family atmosphere they invoke in their business. They are thrilled to be able to customize their benefits to satisfy individual employee needs. Staff are offered a bonus of an annual RRSP contribution which not only increases employee income, but also helps staff save money for the future.

The Boggio’s have been successful in creating a safe, friendly and warm atmosphere in their workplace. This warmth contributes to excellent customer service and has proven to be critical to the success of Boggio Pharmacy. Happy and satisfied employees ensure that customers are happy and satisfied!



Proactive Employer

III

Fonthill Sobey's

"Friendship and love are two things that make Fonthill Sobey's an excellent store"

Former employee

Fonthill Sobey's is a sole proprietor owned grocery store located in the heart of Fonthill. Cindy Cameron, owner, began her career in the grocery business as a part-time cashier and has never forgotten where she came from. Fonthill Sobey's currently has approximately 146 full and part-time employees to staff the operation. Cindy manages the store using a two-tiered management approach but never fails to walk the floor smiling and interacting with her employees and customers. One of the key mottos of this business owner is to encourage her employees to have fun at work. The focus should always be on the customer with an effort to garner 100% customer retention. The means to this goal? Happy employees who have confidence to do their jobs due to thorough training.

Cindy admits that training plays a huge role in her operation. She has created a climate that focuses on both in-house training and access to training opportunities not directly related to the Sobey's store. One excellent example is the recent provision of Dale Carnegie training provided to some of her managers to encourage them to improve themselves in many different ways (not just work related). Cindy believes in encouraging her employees to grow and take risks. The Carnegie training has had a ripple effect on her management system and she believes it has already paid off in spades for her store. Cindy demonstrates and encourages a positive mindset as she sees this, among other things, as the creation of a 'spill over' to her employees.

Cindy demonstrates good corporate citizenship to her employees, one look at her recognition wall and one is left with the impression of a very community oriented business owner. In addition Cindy provides opportunities for all store staff to get involved in local fundraisers for the United Way and beautification efforts for the community of Fonthill (Communities in Bloom). Camaraderie, flexible scheduling (around the life circumstances of employees), full benefits, and an owner who has an open door policy for all employees has resulted in a vibrant business that sees very little staff turnover and which has very loyal customer base.

Proactive Employer

IV

Homes by Hendriks

“It all has to look like a well oiled machine”

Ron Hendricks

Homes by Hendricks is a family owned small volume home building company. It consists of the team of seven employees, and two owners, Yvonne and Ron Hendricks. Multiple rewards, including Tarion 2006 (one of the best Ontario small volume home builder awards) help to prove the success of the company. It is not a surprise that Homes by Hendricks managed to achieve a high level of business effectiveness and productivity, they admit a key to success is to keep their employees happy by constantly looking for new things that can improve their relationship with them. They always share successes with their employees, examples of the methodology includes taking employees to Home Builder Association events or by simply communicating all positive comments given from customers. Another method is making work fun and increasing morale of all their employees. They admit that their employees enjoy working together and this seems to conjure the image of family. Yvonne and Ron make a conscience effort to get to know the families of their employees and share an interest in their lives as well. They take the time to participate in their lives by organizing family picnics, catered by Yvonne and Ron at their house. These social events at their family home add to this sense of a ‘family atmosphere’. Christmas time is a particularly special time where an annual poem (written by Ron) recaps company goals. A copy of this poem is gifted to all employees. In addition, gifts are given to spouses and children. Competitive salaries, profit sharing, provision of year round employment and matching retirement saving plans definitely puts Homes by Hendricks on the list of Best Practice employers. The bottom line for owners of this company is, “customer satisfaction connects with employee satisfaction” and this results in superior levels.

Do Benefits Matter?	
<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
Provide your workers with dental, eye and medical coverage.	Be creative with small perks that you may find at little or no cost.
Offer spousal benefits.	i.e. introduce a pizza night; free coffee; give birthday cards, give scratch cards or gas tickets.
IMPACT	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits and perks may help to retain valuable employees; may reduce employee absenteeism and log fewer sick days. • Customer Service is highlighted. When employees feel valued, they in turn value customers. 	
Match employee RRSP contributions.	Offer profit sharing or a gain sharing plan.
IMPACT	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matching RRSP contributions can increase goodwill and loyalty while helping employees save money to realize their personal goals. • Profit sharing increases employee income and provides a reward/incentive for their high performance and skill improvements. 	

Benefits	
<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
<p>Reimburse mileage costs or offer bus passes.</p>	<p>Negotiate free or cheaper parking with your landlord or city.</p> <p>Allow your employees to periodically work from home.</p>
IMPACT	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reducing transportation costs for your employees may reduce absenteeism and increase job satisfaction. Supporting employee needs outside the workplace may also increase productivity. 	
<p>Provide long-term group disability insurance for your employees.</p>	<p>Facilitate a voluntary group benefit plan. Employees pay the reduced premium and employers cover the administration costs.</p> <p>Smaller businesses could pool resources with another company for group rates.</p>
IMPACT	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long-term disability insurance provides employees with added personal and family security. Providing a benefits option may increase loyalty and retention of employees by demonstrating the concern you have for your staff on a more personal level. 	

Benefits	
<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
<p>Provide partially or fully subsidized facility or program memberships for employees and their families. i.e. fitness clubs; daycare; dance instruction; sport camp participation.</p>	<p>Provide information that supports the wellbeing and quality of life of your employees.</p> <p>Negotiate reduced group rates on behalf of your staff with a fitness club.</p>
IMPACT	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy living increases employee energy and reduces sick time. This results in more productive staff. 	
<p>Provide a workplace clothing allowance.</p>	<p>Provide your newly hired employees with small cash advances to help them cover start-up costs.</p>
IMPACT	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clothing allowance and supporting policy will guarantee a 'professional presence' in your workplace. • Assistance with start-up costs supports a positive employee-employer relationship based on mutual respect. 	

Benefits	
<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
<p>Create an employee loan fund which would be available for financial crisis.</p>	<p>With your purchasing power as a business owner, provide wholesale or discount prices from your suppliers and vendors. You could also facilitate a bulk buying cooperative for interested employees.</p>
<p>IMPACT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial worry can cause negative stress. Efforts to support cost-of-living savings could build employee loyalty. 	
<p>Provide your workplace with an ergonomic assessment of the facility.</p> <p>Small changes can reduce or prevent injuries.</p>	<p>Find multiple opportunities to convey the value and importance you see in your employees.</p>
<p>IMPACT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater job satisfaction reduces turnover and absenteeism. Research shows that employees experience higher levels of job satisfaction when they know that their employer is interested in their wellbeing. 	

Benefits	
<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
<p>Support your staff with free confidential counselling services through an Employee Assistance Program (EAP).</p> <p>Employees learn to effectively balance different aspects of their lives.</p>	<p>Provide your employees with a rehabilitation package policy that will accommodate an injured employee.</p> <p>Provide the employee with educational tools that will support a return to work more expediently.</p>
IMPACT	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research has shown that EAP's reduce absenteeism. These programs support health concerns of employees and potentially prevent crisis situations. 	
<p>Provide your employees with additional paid vacation time.</p>	<p>Allow your employees to take an additional week of unpaid vacation.</p>
IMPACT	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our European counterparts have found that increased vacation and/or leisure time is good for business. Reducing stress pays off. 	

Benefits	
<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
<p>Provide your employees with Christmas and birthday bonuses.</p> <p>Provide your employees with performance bonuses.</p> <p>i.e. \$10 per week for error free performance.</p>	<p>If you are part of the manufacturing or retail industry, select items your employees can choose to take home. i.e. from overstock, lightly damaged or discontinued goods.</p> <p>Provide your workers with discounts on goods and services generated by your company.</p>
<p>IMPACT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance incentive bonuses can improve safety, performance and efficiency. • Research indicates that any additional bonus may have a significant impact on job satisfaction and turnover. • Discounting goods may substantially increase the loyalty of your employees towards your company and the goods you produce. 	

How Competitive Should Compensation Be ?

<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
Be aware of what the Living Wage is in your area and what it means for daily living. At a minimum, pay this rate to your employees.	Conduct a cost benefit analysis : Compare the costs of current wages with high turnover vs. paying a Living Wage or competitive salary and less turnover.

IMPACT

- Research shows that retention rates improve when employees are happy with their compensation.



Competitive Compensation	
<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
<p>Benchmark rates of compensation in your industry or sector.</p> <p>Ensure that compensation is competitive.</p>	<p>Ask your suppliers and local businesses for free promotional gifts.</p> <p>Pass them on to your employees.</p>
<p>IMPACT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You can be an 'Employer of choice'. Satisfied and dedicated employees will increase your ability to attract new high quality recruits. This decreases your recruitment costs. • Fair compensation is socially responsible and supports the success of your operations. You will be a positive business presence in your community. 	

Competitive Compensation	
<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
<p>Create a system of cash bonuses for rewarding outstanding employees.</p> <p>Make the criteria for this benefit clear and achievable. Be consistent in awarding it when your criteria are met.</p>	<p>Publicize the outstanding performance of your employees through company bulletins or Newsletters.</p>
	<p>Provide small incentives such as free tickets to movies, local events or sport games. Little things mean a lot!</p>
<p>IMPACT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicizing and recognizing excellent performance encourages a 'Gold Standard'. Employees see that a work ethic pays off. Research shows that competitive compensation produces results by: <p style="text-align: center;"> Increasing Productivity Improving Business Operations Giving Outstanding Customer Service </p>	

Competitive Compensation	
<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
You can introduce periodic incentives and tie these to the short-term goals in your business plan.	Create a commission system for your staff . Consider variable pay based on years of service, performance or experience.
IMPACT According to research, fair compensation is tied directly to levels of employee achievement.	
Provide profit or gain sharing . If productivity increases are realized, some of the gains are distributed to employees based on a salary grid.	Implement an Annual Employee Awareness Day . Publicise successes and show how the employees contributed to that success.
IMPACT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Profit or gain sharing provides an clear incentive to employees. They see that their performance and compensation is tied to the success of the company. 	

Competitive Compensation	
<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
<p>Implement group incentive bonuses.</p> <p>Engage your staff in working with you to design incentives.</p>	<p>Prepare a promotion tool that explains your plans for a compensation package.</p> <p>Ask your employees for anonymous feedback. You can learn if your employees feel that they are fairly compensated. They may contribute ideas and solutions.</p>
<p>IMPACT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building teamwork takes effort and leadership, but the results of working cooperatively can be outstanding. • Asking for feedback and listening to your employees will show them you value their creative ideas. Incentives designed with employees could motivate performance. • Collaborating with your employees will help you to retain and satisfy them, your best business assets. 	

Competitive Compensation	
<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
<p>Job evaluations and performance appraisals help employees know your expectations for their roles.</p>	<p>A yearly review with all staff members can clarify how your teamwork has met strategic goals and objectives.</p> <p>(i.e. compare evaluation summaries; performance appraisals; financials; job satisfaction scales)</p>
<p>IMPACT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis and evaluation will help you and your employees see what gains you have made and where you need to improve. • Your cooperative business strategy will put you and your staff on the 'same page'. Annual reviews can identify what needs extra time and effort. • You will also identify HOW to make change happen. <p style="text-align: center;">Focused Performance Depends on Planning and Analysis</p>	

Implement Effective Training	
<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
<p>Enlist a professional Trainer and/or have employees select their own training opportunities.</p> <p>Provide a small budget expense fund to reimburse your employee's job-related training expenses.</p>	<p>Pool resources with other companies. Educational opportunities can benefit several businesses, reducing costs.</p> <hr/> <p>Recruit Mentors from your employees to orient and train new hires.</p> <p>Consider job 'shadowing' for entry level positions.</p>
<p>IMPACT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business operations: Increases productivity and efficiency. Your employees become better skilled and are better equipped to understand businesses operations. • Employee job satisfaction: Training opportunities and mentoring can increase job satisfaction and decrease turnover. Employees recognize opportunities for advancement. 	

Training	
<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
<p>Provide your employees with Health and Safety Training.</p>	<p>Educate employees about all Health and Safety Policies and Procedures.</p> <p>Identify authoritative sources of information:</p>
<p>Health and Safety Policies and Procedures must be accurate and current.</p> <p>Share responsibility, and enlist interested staff and management for a Health and Safety Committee.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Manual • Distribute pamphlets • Create fact sheets • Conduct an Environment Safety Scan • Web-site addresses • Consult public health • Identify existing resources (i.e already certified employees)
<p>IMPACT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PREVENT accidents at your workplace; reduce repetitive stress and other injuries. Decreasing insurance costs and time-off-work from injury will benefit your operations. • Compliance with relevant Health and Safety regulations...it's the law. Be proactive by preventing and reducing injuries in your workplace. 	

Orientation Training

Budget

New Hire Orientation can include learning about your workplace culture:

- Core vision, mission, values
- Policies and procedures
- Pay and incentives
- Physical facilities
- Dress expectations
- Customer service goals
- Strategic overview
- Advancement potential

Limited Budget

Network new employees with experienced employees.

Develop a Mentorship Program or assign staff to new hires.

Provide opportunities for Q&A and future feedback. (i.e. designate staff, set up an on-line News Group).

IMPACT

- New hires will more **quickly adjust and adapt** to your workplace.
- This **Best Practice** for new hires can decrease turnover and improve the confidence of new employees. Staff can focus on getting up-and-running in their new position.
- Research shows that an employee who understands Company expectations will work to produce what is required.

Orientation Training	
<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
<p>Develop an Employee Orientation Program with a professional.</p> <p>Employees learn about their job responsibilities, duties and expectations from a supervisor or Trainer.</p>	<p>Training in Small Steps:</p> <p>Schedule a time each day to introduce a new employee to aspects of their new job.</p>
	<p>Allow an adjustment period for new employees to shadow other employees.</p>
<p>IMPACT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees gain a realistic job preview and clear performance objectives. They acquire a broader scope of job-related learning and the services provided by your Company. • These efforts can reduce costly errors due to inexperience or lack of knowledge. Efficiency and productivity can improve. <p style="text-align: center;">Orientation and training programs can imbed a learning and quality improvement culture into your workplace.</p>	

Professional Employee Development

Budget

Set up an annual **tuition reimbursement fund and criteria** for your employees to access it.

Support self-directed learning and reimburse expenses that meet job related criteria.


Limited Budget

Accommodate work schedules so that your employees are able to take part-time courses.

Reimburse the cost of textbooks and materials incurred by employees for job-related courses.

IMPACT

- Employees gain and apply new job-related skills and knowledge. This can increase the productivity and efficiency of your business operations and support strategic planning.
- Employee job satisfaction increases.
- Continuous education builds a skilled workforce. By supporting the learning expenses of employees, employers help build on employee skill sets.

Professional Development	
<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
<p>Design a Training Program that gives an overview of your business operations.</p> <p>Your employees will become familiar with the “Big Picture” of your Company.</p>	<p>Job Rotation:</p> <p>Have your employees be responsible for creating their own rotating schedules.</p>
<p>IMPACT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seeing your “Big Picture” helps motivate employees to learn new skills. They will better understand how their work contributes to overall operations.• Empowering your employees by granting flexibility in creating schedules may increase job satisfaction and provide employees with a sense that they are trusted to get the job done. <p>Proactively Plan for growth.</p> 	

Professional Development	
<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
<p>Job Enlargement: Gradually employees take on more responsibilities as they adapt and improve their efficiency.</p> <p>Investing in potential:</p> <p>Confidence grows Flexibility develops</p> <p>Supporting: Self-Motivation Self-Empowerment Self-Improvement</p>	<p>Provide voluntary education programs for interested employees.</p> <p>Create learning opportunities so employees can expand their knowledge in all areas of your business operations.</p>
<p>IMPACT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees have opportunities to challenge themselves. • Personal empowerment can increase job satisfaction. • Supporting self-directed learning can influence employee job security, potential earnings and increased skills. 	

Professional Development	
<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
<p>Set up an annual training fund so that your employees can attend courses, training or workshops to upgrade their skills.</p>	<p>Build a small library of self-directed learning resources and training materials.</p> <p>Encourage employee access to learning.</p>
<p>Develop an annual training plan to address areas that need improvement.</p>	<p>Invite guest speakers on topics of interest to your employees.</p> <p>Create a free 'Speakers Bureau' for employees to request.</p>
<p>IMPACT</p> <p>Research shows that as employees upgrade their knowledge in any area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment brings them additional benefits. • Their job satisfaction increases. <p>Employers may see:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher retention rates. • Stronger performance and efficiency. 	

**You may gain a competitive advantage
thanks to a Diverse Workforce**

<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
Educate your workforce about minority issues through formal diversity training .	Find non-profit partners locally for advice and assistance in building diversity practices. Enlist minorities and persons with disabilities for their input as you plan diversity supports.
Reimburse employees that need English as a Second Language (ESL) support.	Local agencies can lead you through the process of implementing diversity in your company. <i>i.e. Canadian Access to International Professions and Trades (C.A.I.P.S.) in Niagara.</i>
IMPACT	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity education in the workplace helps individuals feel accepted and included. • English language courses can break down barriers to advancement for employees. 	

Diverse Workforce	
<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
<p>Provide access and information to employees with professional certification earned in another Country.</p>	<p>Integrate visual reminders and symbols of other cultures to display at your place of business</p> <p>Celebrate multicultural holidays and celebrations through cultural theme lunches.</p>
<p>Provide specially designed integration programs to support minority groups.</p>	<p>Participate in networking events provided by other organizations working with minorities.</p>
<p>IMPACT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hiring from a diversity perspective provides a competitive advantage in three ways: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increases the pool of candidates for job openings. 2. You expand your customer base. 3. You are better positioned to expand your business into new and existing culturally diverse markets. 	

Diverse Workforce	
<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
Provide your diverse workforce with support services directly addressing the issues they deal with on a daily basis.	Pool resources with other businesses in order to provide minority employees with necessary programs.
Hire an accessibility coordinator so that staff with disabilities have easier access to supports they may need.	Measure and evaluate the impact of your diversity practices. Local agencies can help you get started.
IMPACT	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research shows that staff who expand their overall knowledge and understanding of other cultures will become more respectful and tolerant of differences. • Implementing services designed to be supportive of minorities, newcomers and persons with disabilities helps retain loyal and hard working employees. 	

Steps to a Diverse Workforce

Effective Recruitment Practices

Step 1:

Recognize the knowledge and specific skills required for the positions. *i.e. Degree? Licensing vs. Experience?*

Step 2:

Recognise the contribution of soft skills. *i.e. Dedication, work ethic, values, creativity etc.*

Step 3:

Be clear about the position requirements in your job description. *Include that you are an equal opportunity employer.*

Step 4:

Encourage minorities to apply by using slogans such as "Diversity Champions" in your ads.

Step 5:

Be flexible in meeting the needs of your business. Be wary of stereotypes in the selection process.

Step 6:

Do not be discriminatory during the selection process, since this can have legal implications under the *Employment Standards Act*.

Step 7:

Once new recruits are hired provide equal access to training. Be clear about opportunities for career advancement with your company.

A Competitive Advantage Use Effective Communication

Budget

Set up a **1-800 hotline** where employees can give confidential feedback and suggestions.

Limited Budget

Prepare a **confidential survey** in your company to help you to understand what employees would like to see changed in the workplace.

Provide **performance feedback** informally on a weekly basis and formally at least once a year.

Give **verbal feedback to outstanding** employees. Explain clearly what the employee did well.

IMPACT

- Communicating performance feedback effectively may increase productivity and job satisfaction. Employees know what they have accomplished and where they can improve.
- Addressing problems and solutions early may prevent high turnover and absenteeism.
- Opportunities for confidential feedback can increase job satisfaction since it sends a message that you are willing to deal with complaints in a proactive way.

Effective Communication	
<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
<p>Participate in and benefit from team building exercises.</p>	<p>Get to know your employees. Show them that they matter to you as a person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know their first name. • Greet them by name.
<p>Hire a facilitator to conduct personality assessments.</p> <p>Value the communication and learning styles of your employees.</p>	
<p>IMPACT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Realize your employees have a 'comfort zone'. They will operate more effectively and efficiently in your place of business when they feel comfortable and valued. <p>Research shows there are benefits to team-building and healthy relationships in the workplace:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees who have more personal contact with their boss say that they are more likely to stay at that workplace. Performance also improves. 	

Effective Communication	
<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
<p>Create an open door policy for all employees.</p> <p>Ensure that management supports this communication strategy.</p>	<p>Provide a variety of options for communication channels.</p> <p>Create an atmosphere where employees feel comfortable expressing their opinions.</p>
<p>Create time to speak with staff during work hours.</p> <p>Be clear that your communication policy will be a benefit, not punitive.</p>	<p>Display positive comments from customers.</p> <p>i.e. Comment cards, small posters, internal e-mails, News Bulletins.</p>
<p>IMPACT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on your current human resources: Learn how you can retain your current employees. Avoid the recurring expense of recruiting and interviewing replacement employees. • Communication pays off by increasing job satisfaction, morale and the overall quality of your operations. 	

Effective Communication	
<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
<p>Develop a clear Grievance Policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues can be identified early and solutions found. • Ensure all staff understand the process. 	<p>Utilize the creativity of your staff.</p> <p>Provide a suggestion box.</p> <p>Acknowledge their ideas promptly. Share what is and is not being considered and why.</p>
<p>IMPACT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers: Your staff represent a view of internal or front line operations. Their feedback is crucial since they will have the most direct knowledge of how customer service can be improved. • Employees: Complaints can help create solutions for harmony in the workplace. Listening to simple complaints and implementing suggestions can increase job satisfaction and moral. 	

Be Socially Responsible Foster Strong Work Ethics

<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
<p>Help build a strong community:</p> <p>Offer a ½ day a month for the community service of your employees.</p>	<p>Encourage participation in charitable events. Circulate flyers or local charitable invitations to all staff. Demonstrate your support by attending also.</p>
<p>Match annual donations or staff fundraising proceeds to a charitable organization selected by your employees.</p>	<p>Encourage the spiritual growth of your employees.</p> <p>i.e. involvement with local churches or faith groups</p>
<p>IMPACT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build Teamwork: Employees can socialize while working on a common purpose or cause. • Increase Morale: Employees learn that investing in a strong community can be as important as profits. • Support spirituality: Spirituality can help provide balance in hectic lifestyles. Most spiritual pursuits encourage positive human values, work ethics and social responsibility. 	

Social Responsibility	
<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
<p>Create a staff Committee to examine the social responsibility performance of the business.</p> <p>Provide time to meet and a way for the Committee to communicate their findings with their co-workers.</p>	<p>Provide staff with information about volunteer opportunities in the community.</p> <p>Provide information on how their personal donations can reduce annual income tax owed.</p>
<p>Do an ecological assessment and compliance check of your business.</p>	<p>Provide recycling containers at your place of business.</p> <p>Consider other ways you can Reduce, Reuse and Recycle.</p>
IMPACT	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate responsibility can increase staff membership and commitment in community groups. People want their time and other contributions to make a positive difference in their communities. • Investing corporate time and contributions in admirable projects can reinforce a positive image in your community. Potential customers, employees and existing customers work along with you to strengthen the community you share. 	

Building Family Atmosphere	
<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
<p>Create an on-site day-care or subsidize childcare expenses.</p> <p>i.e. Provide the space and have interested staff look at sharing the expenses for on-site childcare services.</p>	<p>When possible, allow your employees to bring their children to work.</p>
	<p>Establish a phone-in policy where children can call their caregiver at work.</p>
<p>IMPACT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of affordable or accessible childcare creates barriers to employees trying to balance family and employment needs. • A family friendly workplace will reduce stress for care giving employees. Absenteeism can be reduced with a flexible childcare policy. • Children are often <i>the reason</i> employees work so hard. Honoring the caregiver roles of employees can build mutual respect and job satisfaction. • Families can contribute to creative childcare solutions. 	

Family Atmosphere	
<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
Organize family & work gatherings ; provide tickets for theme park attractions; provide tickets to support local culture...music, theatre or art events.	Encourage family pictures and drawings for wall decorations.
Organize birthday party celebrations for the children of your employees monthly, bi-annually or annually.	Note family milestones in newsletters, e-mails or internal bulletins.
IMPACT	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family and work are the two most time consuming factors in the lives of working parents. By linking work and family, you can have a positive influence on other work related values. • In getting to know your employees and their families, you will have a better sense of where to match personal characteristics and skills to promotions or new positions. • Fostering a family friendly workplace also encourages teamwork. Your employees will learn more about working cooperatively when sharing responsibility for challenges and successes. 	

Family Atmosphere	
<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
Provide flexible options for employees to balance their own work schedules .	<p>Understanding temporary under-performance:</p> <p>Be sensitive when an employee discloses personal issues to management. (i.e. Establish a confidentiality protocol for these situations.)</p>
Offer paid leave options to accommodate personal emergencies faced by staff.	
<p>IMPACT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodating Flexible Scheduling: Research shows that employees go the extra mile to demonstrate their achievements while they worked off-site or outside of regular business hours. • Paid Leave Options: Once back at work, employees typically give back more time than they were paid on leave. • Health and Wellbeing: Employees who enjoy good physical and mental health, have lower levels of alcohol and drug abuse. <p>Providing supports to employees who are experiencing difficulties may prevent future absenteeism and reduced performance.</p>	

Family Atmosphere	
<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
Develop policies and procedures in your business that promote a healthy balance between work and family life.	Build 'Family Connections' <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage socializing and sharing • Have 'family' days, i.e. Bring Kids to Work Day
Provide your employees with paid parental leave or supplement their legal entitlements.	Cooperative Savings: Organize clothing swaps for your employees or provide a space for your employees to exchange personal goods.
IMPACT	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased Productivity: In helping your employees navigate the complications of work and family life, they will be better equipped to deliver quality time at work or home. • Research shows that work-life conflicts are associated with higher turnover, absenteeism, decreased levels of productivity, poorer moral and lower job satisfaction. • Building the capacity of your employees to resolve conflicts between home and work can be a wise investment with long-term gains. 	

Recruitment and Selection

Save money and have fewer headaches!

<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
<p>Be Prepared: Have job specifications, job descriptions and job applications designed.</p> <p>(If you do not have a HR department, outsource this duty to a HR advising company.)</p>	<p>Involve your staff: they can help you identify the best knowledge and skills for the position (i.e. Degree, licensing vs. experience)</p> <p>Be clear in job descriptions, ads and interviews: what the requirements are for the position you are filling...</p>
<p>IMPACT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly stating your expectations during the selection process can reduce costly turnover of staff. The selected candidate will also have made an informed decision about their own suitability and aptitude for the position. • Clear job descriptions and specifications protect you and support new employees. You will match their skill sets with your requirements for the position and have an awareness of where you can be flexible. • Clear job specifications ensure that advertising is not misleading or vague. You will have higher quality candidates for the selection process. 	

Recruitment and Selection	
<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
<p>Allow internal applications, then extend your search if needed.</p> <p>Promotions can save time and money.</p>	<p>Develop clear job postings on your Website, in Newsletters or your Intranet to describe available positions.</p>
<p>Use a range of media to advertise your job openings. <i>i.e. Employment agencies, your intranet, professional and trade associations, Internet, local newspapers.</i></p>	<p>Partner with non-profit organizations who provide access to a pool of screened prospects. <i>i.e. an employment agency can provide you with access to work-ready employees.</i></p>
<p>Attend job fairs: Meet candidates and increase awareness of the job opportunities available in your business.</p>	<p>Keep a 'bank' of resumes and applications from walk-ins (people who submit unsolicited resumes).</p> <p>Consider them when looking to fill a position.</p>
<p>Build recruiting partnerships with local colleges and universities. You can establish internships or voluntary positions.</p>	<p>Never ignore word-of-mouth recommendations.</p>
<p>IMPACT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With a wider pool of candidates, your selection choices increase. <p style="text-align: center;">Find the Best Fit for Your Opening</p>	

Recruitment and Selection	
<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
<p>Human Resources professionals can help you review applications and shortlist for interviews.</p> <p>They can also help coach you to avoid negligent hiring practices and help ensure you do not overlook key questions etc.</p>	<p>Look for applications that list a number of your requirements.</p> <p>Consider applicants who follow up during the selection process. They show real interest in the position.</p>
<p>Use Expert Knowledge:</p> <p>When appropriate, conduct psychometric or psychological testing.</p> <p><i>i.e. skills assessments, personality testing, suitability tests, test of cognitive abilities, IQ, emotional intelligence.</i></p>	<p>Choose your candidate from a group of equally qualified applicants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community involvement? • Prefers a career over job? • Team player? • Enthusiastic? • Strong interpersonal skills? i.e. connects with coworkers and clients • Communication skills?
	<p>Keep records of why applicants were rejected. process.</p>
IMPACT	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These steps can eliminate candidates that you would not have otherwise retained. Effective recruitment saves time and money and lends support to your on-going efforts to retain employees. 	

Recruitment and Selection	
<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
<p style="text-align: center;">RECRUITMENT</p> <p>A Human Resources professional on a short term contract can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist you in developing a recruitment strategy. • Ensure you meet legal obligations. • Ensure you have the essential elements of a thorough interview. <p>Preplanning can help you avoid common pitfalls in the hiring process.</p>	<p>Learn interviewing techniques that avoid discriminatory or illegal questions.</p> <hr/> <p>Plan and rehearse your interview.</p> <p>Write questions in advance so they relate to the position.</p> <p>Enlist a staff member who knows what is required for the position.</p> <hr/> <p>Have clear “must criteria” and “want criteria” for your applicants.</p> <p>AVOID biases like “best looking” and others.</p>
<p>IMPACT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective interviews provide a thorough and bias free evaluation of skill and suitability for specific positions. • Minimize the costs associated with poor hiring practices. i.e. high turnover, low performance, inadequate skill sets, mismatched workplace culture and values. 	

Recruitment and Selection	
<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
<p>As you begin, start with the best tools:</p> <p>Engage an outside expert to evaluate your recruitment and selection process.</p>	<p>Be Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a statistical strategy when possible. • Identify the most valid predictors for successful candidates and run a multiple regression analysis.
<p>Be Courteous:</p> <p>Contact unsuccessful candidates. If they ask, let them know why they were not hired. They may be a good fit for future openings.</p>	<p>Provide a realistic job overview:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rewards and challenges of the job should be stated clearly. <p>Check the references of potential candidates.</p>
<p>IMPACT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each step of the recruitment process is important. Implementing a range of techniques to attract a wide array of applicants will add value to your company. • Minimize turnover: Potential employees need a realistic job overview to make an informed decision about working for your company. • Checking references can save money and ensure that you have accurately assessed your candidate. 	

Recruitment and Selection

Typical Steps in the Selection Process

1. Preliminary contact and initial applicant screening

2. Selection testing

6. Hiring decision

3. The selection interview

4. Background investigation and reference checking

5. The supervisory interview and realistic job preview

7. Candidate notification

8. Evaluation of the Process

Benefits of Flexibility	
<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
<p>Plan for Growth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote from within. • Hire additional staff to ensure quality of operations and the sustained high performance of staff. 	<p>Business Operations</p> <p>Invite employee input on decisions that effect them.</p> <p>Develop a consistent and fair system for voluntary flex time scheduling.</p>
<p>Hire strategically to offer position-based flexibility.</p> <p>i.e. filling summer hours; covering high volume days.</p>	<p>Tried and True Examples</p> <p>Daily flex time: staff select their 8 hours within a set time frame.</p> <p>Compressed week: staff work more hours in one day to earn time off.</p> <p>Part-year work: Some staff work seasonally.</p>
<p>IMPACT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These workplace initiatives increase employee commitment. Flexible scheduling helps maintain a healthy work-life balance. • Research shows that workplaces with flexibility and choice increase productivity and efficiency. 	

Flexibility	
<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
<p>Provide training to implement job sharing:</p> <p>Employees gain the knowledge and skills needed to perform in all operations.</p>	<p>Allow your employees to choose telecommuting (working from home).</p>
<p>Pool human resources with other companies: i.e. share specialized skills and knowledge for special projects.</p>	<p>Accommodate voluntary purchase of extra vacation leave or reduced work-days/weeks.</p>
	<p>Be flexible with emergency leaves (illness, personal).</p>
<p>IMPACT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternative flex solutions may increase job security. Employees are 'rented' to other companies and vice versa as needed. This can reduce lay-off and/or recruitment costs. • Allowing for voluntary time off may decrease turnover and absenteeism. • Flexible scheduling can make a job feel like the 'right fit'. Research shows that employees with more control over their work schedules enjoy higher levels of job satisfaction. 	

Effective Succession Planning

Coping with unavoidable workforce change

<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
<p>Plan and set long-term strategic goals for the company.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the future needs of your business. • Identify gaps between the skill set your employees have and the skill sets that you will require as your baby-boomers retire. 	<p>Create an opportunity for growth atmosphere in your business (e.g. strong promotion from within policy).</p> <p>Prospective leaders will not be as likely to divert their career to another employer.</p>
	<p>Attract talented, ambitious employees.</p>

IMPACT

- Increase the retention rates of your employees by effectively identifying the future needs of your business. Develop strategies that provide an incentive to employees who stay with your company.
- Promotion from within encourages loyalty and can develop a sense of job security for your employees.
- Promoted staff bring with them all the skills they have acquired working for your company.

Succession Planning	
<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
<p>Conduct talent assessments of your staff team in order to learn whether you can match your business needs with your employees' aspirations.</p>	<p>Employee professional development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create learning opportunities and activities that will support self-directed personal and skill growth of ambitious employees. <p>Learn from other organizations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful Succession Planning strategies. • Pool resources to provide leadership development through on-the-job skills training.
<p>Analyze the skill set, core competencies, business values, self perceived potential, behavior and personality traits of your best employees to establish a standard for evaluations.</p>	
<p>Outsource the design and monitoring of your succession plan.</p>	
<p>IMPACT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investing time and money to fill in key positions and provide your employees with professional development will help you cope effectively with your future business needs. <p style="text-align: center;">Be Prepared for change!</p>	

Succession Planning	
<i>Budget</i>	<i>Limited Budget</i>
<p>Maximize human capital through the implementation of formal coaching programs.</p>	<p>Knowledge and skill acquisition:</p> <p>Implement mentorship programs within your business. This builds strong interpersonal relationships among co-workers.</p>
<p>Develop an individualized learning plan for the leaders you identify within your company or business.</p> <p>Provide prospective candidates with internal and external university-based programs that provide expertise in the area of leadership training, management skills, work ethics, etc.</p>	<p>Imbed a culture of mentorship and continuous learning for staff at all stages of their careers.</p>
	<p>Provide opportunities for your company leaders to network with your business partners.</p>
<p>IMPACT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Succession planning will help to ensure retention of ambitious employees. Your staff are an integral part of your business and are already familiar with your business operations. <p style="text-align: center;">Build the Leadership Talent in Your Company</p>	

Additional Information



Additional Information

Tip 1

In designing your benefits plan (to reward and retain solid performers), ensure that your benefits are fair, reflect a level of contribution in conjunction with the job and are competitive within the industry.

Tip 2

For non-profit organizations, it is important to administer payroll and benefits in accordance with statutory requirements to guard charitable status and avoid government penalties.

Tip 3

Remember that everybody is motivated differently. Approach different staff using different intrinsic motivators.

Tip 4

You can make benefits available from the start of hire, or introduce a steps process.

Tip 5

Remember the *golden rule* if you keep your employee happy, they will keep your customers happy and your business will prosper.

Tip 6

In order to ensure that you have the most successful compensation plan for your employees, be prudent and pick compensation plans that respond to your employees' needs.

Tip 7

Reciprocal communication should be encouraged within your business. Management should be sharing and should also encourage staff to share their opinions and suggestions.

Additional Information

Tip 8

Involve your employees in decision-making. (i.e. focus groups; feedback mechanisms).

Tip 9

Make sure that your policies and practices fit the overall strategy and mission of your business.

Tip 10

Through collaboration and compromise, you demonstrate fair treatment of all employees.

Tip 11

Make a conscientious effort to implement intrinsic and extrinsic motivators (direct vs. indirect) for your staff complement.

Tip 12

Implementing Best Practices can be through a series of steps.

Tip 13

There are internal and external criteria to be used while deciding on the intensity of implementation for any of the practices.

Internal criteria may include your current ability to attract new recruits; short-term goals and strategic plans; financial health.

External factors may include; competitive position on the market; economic conditions; industry standards; consumer trends.

Additional Information

Addressing your challenges or concerns...


As a small or medium sized business you may worry that you cannot afford to implement benefits that larger organizations currently have in place. The purpose of this handbook is to bring to your attention that not all these benefits are costly. Using creativity and your willingness to try something new, you may be able to attract and retain excellent employees.

By recognizing whether your employees are motivated intrinsically or extrinsically (direct vs. indirect), you will be in a better position to address their needs, ambitions or concerns. When asked “Why have you been here for such a long time?”, many employees respond that they stayed because of little things.

Even though larger organizations can afford to implement many incentives and benefits, these are often impersonal and standardized. Smaller organizations have the flexibility to implement individually based benefits. By listening to employees’ input and requests, your program can have as much impact as your larger corporate counterparts.

With minimal cost, time and planning, you can discover new and innovative ways to provide benefits or perks to your employees. You can gauge how effective they were in motivating and supporting your employees.

Research supports the positive impact your benefits program can have on your operations. (e.g. flex time, prayer time, vacation, hunting or cultural considerations). A way to begin the process or reassess your current climate, is to find out through a survey what your employees might value and appreciate.



Additional Information

Benchmarking your current hiring practices and what your company offers in comparison with other companies, will help you assess your competitive advantage as a prospective employer.

Communication is always a critical discussion. Too little or too much (top down management) can factor into the way employees feel about working for you. Management is encouraged to be open to discussion, and should be aware that strong communication with staff (opinions and open ended suggestions) can greatly improve your bottom line.

Many employers think that “presence equals productivity”, This is a myth. Research indicates that employees work harder in telecommuting conditions to ensure that they produce tangible results. They verify that they have been working hard away from their place of employment. Another myth that needs to be dispelled is the one that states “give an employee an inch, they will take a mile”. This myth has been contradicted by research. In many cases employees will exceed expectations for an employer if he/she experiences job satisfaction and feels trusted.

One final point, small family owned businesses have managed over the years by doing things similarly to their predecessors. Today, demographic shifts and the global marketplace will impact business. Adapting to these and many other changes will ensure your business meets the challenges ahead.