

High staff turnover?

By Nathan Chanesman



"It's good turnover practice to recognise that whatever you do, it's not going to work. It's better for you and the employee to part. The golden rule is 'hire slowly, fire quickly'..."

I read in the health magazines that there's good cholesterol and there's bad cholesterol; there are good fats and bad fats so can there be good staff turnover and bad staff turnover?

Let's examine the differences:

- Good turnover includes people who have been fully trained but still do not meet expectations from a performance standpoint after a reasonable period of time. You trained them, they've had time, and they're still not where you need them to be.
- Good turnover includes people who are disruptive, who don't fit the culture, who don't share the same work ethic as their colleagues.
- Good turnover can mean staff who have been around a while and really not contributing anymore.
- Bad turnover includes people you have promoted who decide to leave the company.
- Bad turnover also includes star employees who drove revenue, so you loved them, told them, paid them and they left you anyway.
- Bad turnover includes new hires who leave your company (whether voluntarily or involuntarily) shortly after joining. Multiple reasons could be at play - wrong skills, wrong cultural fit or the wrong personality fit. The bottom line is that your interviewing process failed to control for the factor in question.

Most often managers will put their efforts into people who are not performing and forget those that are the real contributors. Star performers need attention as well. They need motivation, challenges and rewards to keep them focussed, highly charged and effective. If you ignore your best people then you do so at your peril.

Hire slowly - fire quickly

If you've made a bad hiring decision then move quickly to end their employment. It's good turnover practice to recognise that whatever you

do, it's not going to work. It's better for you and the employee to part. The golden rule is "hire slowly, fire quickly".

Hire slowly means ensuring that you've selected the right person for the job. Not only do they have skills but they have the natural talent that you need. The truth is people are hard-wired to perform certain activities better than others. These preferred natural talents are their "motivated abilities", meaning that people are naturally self motivated to use them and will make every effort to use them on their job. Managers frequently fail to make the distinction between *eligibility* to do the job based on trainable skills and *suitability* to do the job based on personality factors and natural talent.

If you are experiencing higher than usual staff turnover, check out the management first:

- Are the right people in management?
- Do their people management skills need improving?
- Do they understand people styles and how these determine communication and behaviour?

Remember, people leave managers not companies. Good people stay aboard longer when they like and respect their manager.

Selling the job to candidates

In a candidate-short market, you don't want to miss out on potential applicants. Having attracted talent to apply, don't lose them by saying the wrong things. Recruitment is about selling and you need to sell the job to candidates, but how?

Every candidate has their own unique style and each style buys differently. To sell the job to a candidate, you need to know what their buying motives are. Each style is attracted by specific issues that they deem more important than others. If these are answered then your chances of selling them the job are greatly increased.

Here's a guide to selling the job to people of four different Myprofile styles.

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Drivers

Appeal to their entrepreneurial instincts.

Describe the authority and control they'll have. Talk about the challenges, the rewards and the satisfaction they'll get from solving problems. Speak plainly without too much detail. Give them the big picture. Tell them how they are ideal for the job and the talent and skills they bring will get results, drive new initiatives and add profits to the bottom line. Be business-like without the hype. Explain the job has challenges, that it needs a decisive, fast-paced, competitive individual. Offer choices. Ask them how they would like the salary package structured. Don't give opinions, give options. Let them decide. They will and quickly.

Promoters

Discuss the people relationship opportunities the job offers.

It's a chance for them to show their organisational and presentation skills. Talk about the many new initiatives and opportunities now and in the future. Paint a vision of the company's goals and objectives. Explain how they fit into the big picture and how they can change and influence people. Meet for lunch or outside the office, allow plenty of time to shmooze. Give them copies of the company's newsletters, brochures, annual reports, directors bios. Explain the recognition and reward programs. Talk about innovation and new ideas the company is introducing. Outline who the management are, their backgrounds and social contacts, charities, interests and hobbies. Be enthusiastic about the job and get them to meet the CEO or Chairman.

Supporters

Explain the security the company offers.

Supporters are slow to change and want to know and trust the company before committing. They prefer to consider the job offer at their own pace and don't like being rushed. Explain how friendly the company and its staff are, how they look after their employees. Provide facts and details of the job and the company. Show the company's reporting/organisational

structure. Supporters want to know where they fit in to the scheme of things. Use referrals from employees to provide trust and endorsement that their decision is in their best interests. Focus on how they can meet their family and friends' commitments and still do a great job. Recommend salary package options. Focus on benefits and how the package will be financially beneficial to them. Discuss the strength of the company and if necessary get the Manager on the phone to talk to them.

Administrators

Ensure you have all the details and facts about the job.

Full job description and background on the company's products and services. Provide financial data and historical reports. Administrators don't like being rushed so give them time to digest all the information. If you say something you'd better be able to prove it. Don't over promise and work with them to list the pros and cons. Examine all the alternatives. If the company is well established emphasise this, if a new venture emphasise the quality of the management and the financial backers or strength. Go into great detail about the job. Describe exactly what they will be doing and the time frame to do it in. Explain the reporting structure and who they'll report to and what the qualifications are of the other staff members in the department or section. Administrators are proud of their expertise and technical skills and want to work with like-minded people.

About the author

Nathan Chanesman conducts workshops on "reading people styles" and "relationship selling". He is a published author on relationship marketing and teaches sales people how to improve their effectiveness by improving their people skills. Nathan is co-founder and CEO of Myprofile, an online personality assessment service. His company Employnow is a specialist recruiter assisting dental supply companies find the right people. He can be contacted on 0418-100-012 or nathan@employnow.com.au



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