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Small Business Bulletin

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Attraction and Retention Tips for the Summer

Summer can present a strategic opportunity for employers with seasonal employment, internships and graduations. This time of year is also often the peak season for many small businesses, driving up the need to hire more workers to keep up with increased demands. As such, summer is an ideal time for employers to review their efforts to attract and retain quality talent for seasonal or long-term employment.

According to Goldman Sachs, 89% of small businesses find it challenging to recruit qualified employees.

How to Attract and Retain Employees in Summer

Employers can use the following tips to help attract and retain employees:

- **Focus on Generation Z (Gen Z).** Gen Z (individuals born between 1997 and 2012) can offer organizations new talent, in-demand skills and creativity, driving innovation and efficiency. Many Gen Zers are high school or college students who may be looking for summer work, so employers must tailor their attraction and retention efforts toward this generation of workers. Gen Z employees generally expect modern communication methods, meaningful work and inclusive workplaces, and they value employer transparency and job flexibility. Therefore, to attract these employees, employers should emphasize the purpose and impact of their work, offer flexibility, use updated technology, provide feedback and recognition, and create an engaging and inclusive culture. Offering career development opportunities can contribute to these employees' longevity at a business, potentially turning a summer job into a career path and cultivating the future workforce.

- **Recruit from colleges.** To appeal to summer graduates and soon-to-be graduates, employers should establish a presence on campuses to strengthen their businesses' brand. This visibility can generate interest in an organization and lead to employment opportunities in the summer or long term. Employers can leverage several recruitment methods to attract as many graduates as possible. These methods include attending career fairs (both virtual and in-person), using career platforms to connect with students, and developing relationships with faculty and career centers to get referrals and insights into potential candidates. Even later in the summer, there may be some recent graduates or current students who are still looking for work.
- **Consider an internship program.** Internships can be attractive opportunities for undergraduate students, recent graduates and graduate students to learn from on-the-job training and experience in their chosen field. These programs can last several weeks, a semester, a summer or a whole year, offering a unique opportunity for both the intern and an employer looking to meet staffing demands.

Conclusion

Summer can bring a surge in business and available talent. Whether looking for seasonal workers or full-time employees, attracting and retaining employees in the summer requires a strategic approach. Every workplace may vary regarding which efforts will work for them, but the right strategies may enable organizations to meet their immediate staffing needs and build a strong foundation for their future workforce.

Small Businesses Brace for Job Cuts and Layoffs

According to a [new study by Harvard Business School](#), small business owners across the country expect to increase prices, decrease staff and minimize business investments due to new U.S. tariff policies.

With the economy under pressure, many small businesses now face the tough possibility of cutting jobs and laying off workers. Rising interest rates, fluctuating consumer demand and persistent inflationary pressures may force many small business owners to make difficult decisions to preserve their operations. Unlike large corporations with deep financial reserves and diversified revenue streams, small businesses often operate on thinner margins, making them especially vulnerable during periods of economic instability.

About 1 in 5 small and medium-sized businesses expect job cuts in the next 12 months, according to a report from the Harvard Business Journal.

The prospect of reducing staff is never easy, particularly for small teams where every employee plays a critical role and relationships often feel more like family than formal employment. However, when the business's survival is at stake, strategic workforce adjustments may be necessary. The best way to manage layoffs is by being transparent, respectful and planning ahead.

How to Handle Layoffs at a Small Business

Small employers tend to have a close relationship with their employees, which can make layoffs emotionally difficult for everyone involved. Consider the following tips for handling layoffs as a small business:

- **Plan ahead.** Layoffs don't have to be the first option. Small businesses may not be able to avoid layoffs completely, but taking proactive steps can minimize or even avoid job losses. For

example, finding ways to cut costs, implementing a hiring freeze or opting for furloughs can help organizations avoid or reduce the need for layoffs.

- **Develop a communication plan.** Be transparent with your employees. Your communication plan should explain the reasons for the layoffs to remaining employees and address their concerns. Allow employees to ask questions and be prepared to answer them honestly. Outline role changes and responsibilities early and effectively.
- **Be empathic.** Recognize that layoffs are difficult, and it's normal for employees to experience a range of emotions. Offer resources to help employees cope with the emotional impacts of the layoffs.
- **Support employee morale.** After employees witness their co-workers being laid off, they may feel betrayed and less motivated. It is crucial to improve the mood after layoffs and show employees how much you appreciate their continued dedication.
- **Focus on the future.** Once the dust has settled, it's essential to rebuild trust. Check in with employees often to share updates on company goals and ask for feedback.

Conclusion

Layoffs are one of the more difficult decisions a small business owner can face, but in times of economic uncertainty, they may be necessary to keep the business afloat. By approaching the process with honesty, respect and a solid plan, small businesses can reduce the negative impact on their teams and operations.

Reach out today for more resources.