



## Top 5 Strategies for Motivating & Retaining Top-Performing Employees

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# Top 5 Strategies for Motivating & Retaining Top-Performing Employees

## Introduction



The success of your organization is directly affected by the people you employ. Having the right people with the right skills in the right jobs can result in a significant competitive advantage.

All too often, employers overlook the importance of retaining talent. In addition, their inability to compete for talented employees will soon become evident as they recognize the challenges associated with hiring replacements:

- New hires do not have the skills or knowledge required for the position
- The new hire is talented but skill set does not match the position
- The company experiences high turnover or loses talent to competitors
- New hires do not fit within the company culture and create conflict in the workforce

As fewer workers with the required skill sets enter the job market, companies must find new ways to develop, motivate, and retain talent. This guide will provide you with the Top 5 Strategies for Motivating and Retaining Top-Performing Employees:

1. Employee Orientation
2. Performance Evaluations
3. Occupational Assessments
4. Succession Planning
5. Terminating an Employee

# Top 5 Strategies for Motivating & Retaining Top-Performing Employees

## 1. Employee Orientation



Employee orientation is an important part of the hiring process, but it is often the most neglected. It is designed to reduce first-day jitters and to introduce the employee to the work process as quickly as possible by familiarizing him both with his job and with company operations, policies, procedures, and products.

When done properly, orientation sessions can instill positive attitudes about the organization, ensure quicker productivity, reduce the likelihood of problems from misunderstandings and misconceptions about company policies, and improve communication among employees.

The more effort you put forth to get employees started right, the more likely they are to stay and become great employees.

The main objectives of an orientation program are to:

- Make a good impression starting on the first day
- Make new employees feel welcome and at ease
- Explain what the company is about and explain the policies, procedures, benefits, and programs
- Show the new employee the products and services, even if they are not part of her immediate department or job description

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## 2. Performance Evaluations



Frequent communication with employees concerning performance is essential to employee morale and performance. Positive communication can motivate and reinforce outstanding performance. Prompt discussions of problem areas will help prevent those areas from becoming major problems later.

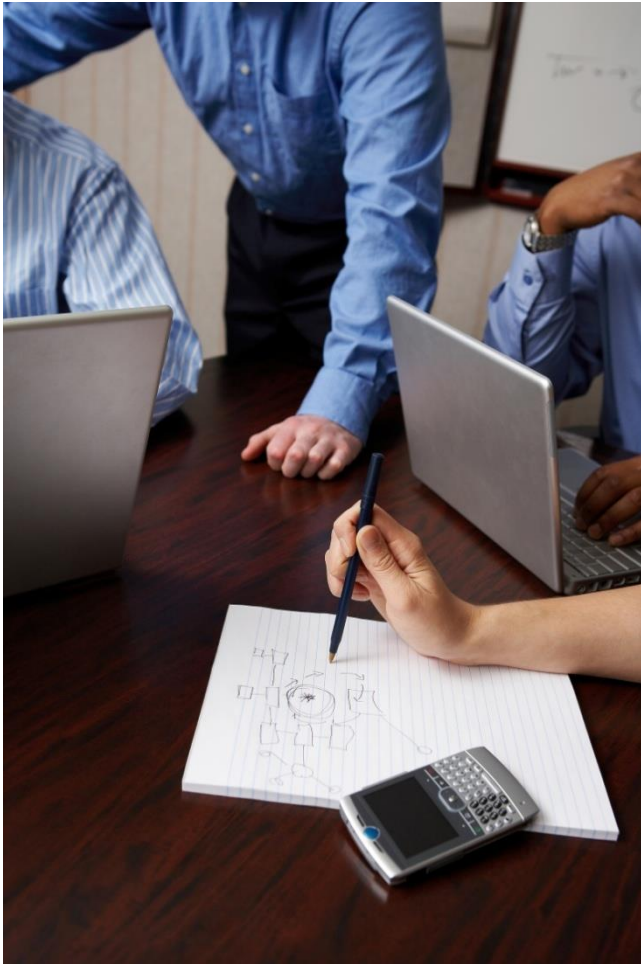
Employee performance evaluation data is traditionally used to determine wage increases and promotion decisions, but this data is also used to determine training needs, to determine the need for skill inventories, to validate selection procedures, and to document information regarding terminated employees.

A good performance evaluation will:

- Provide a direct link between the job's requirements and the standards used to measure performance
- Give each supervisor a means of determining the type of management guidance and development needed by the employee
- Provide direction to the employee to assure that the employee's efforts are channeled in the best direction for the company
- Give each supervisor the means for analyzing an employee's performance

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## 3. Occupational Assessments



Occupational assessments have become essential tools for managing a successful business. They provide the information that executives and managers use to make better human capital decisions. It's not enough just to have a hiring process that selects good people. Positioning people optimally within the company is even more important.

Companies hire the best people they can find, but they are often careless when they position their employees. Some employees may appear to be qualified, of course, but unless their personal attributes match those required by the job, performance results may be disappointing. The more leaders know about their people, the more likely they are to maximize their human resources and get the greatest return for the company.

Employee performance can sometimes be improved through training, and training often takes the "one size fits all" approach. But experience shows that people learn in different ways and at different rates. When everyone receives the same training, it's almost certain that more than half of them won't "get it."

The results of occupational assessments can provide the answers to many of the questions leaders have about how best to coach, train and motivate their people.

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## 4. Succession Planning



Ensuring the long-term success of your company is crucial, and succession planning can help you do just that. Managers are using smart succession planning solutions to identify employees who have the potential to be promoted and to accurately chart the employee's course to promotion.

**Why recruit outside your company for talented people when you can develop the ones you already employ?**

If you want to ensure your company's long-term success, you must think about career tracks for your existing employees. One of the keys to developing a leadership pipeline is understanding the competencies, skills and weaknesses of your existing workforce. When you have that information, you can match those in your pipeline with duties and responsibilities that maximize performance, employee morale, and company success.

Succession planning solutions will help your business develop an organization-wide view of your existing employees' leadership competencies so that you can build and create succession plans that will help your employees visualize their futures in the company.

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## 5. Terminating an Employee



Termination is usually a very touchy subject. The decision to discharge an employee for any reason— theft, misconduct, unacceptable job performance, excessive absenteeism, intoxication, etc.— should not be made hastily or without deliberation. Indefensible terminations can leave an employer vulnerable to wrongful discharge law suits and can have an adverse effect on morale throughout the workplace. One way to avoid making unjustified discharges is to build safeguards into the disciplinary process.

The exit interview is a standard separation procedure in most organizations. Many employers are hesitant to conduct exit interviews because, they say, the separating employee either will refuse to discuss any critical issues for fear of jeopardizing chances of a reference or exaggerate the circumstances to justify his/her actions that led to the termination.

Wrongful discharge is one of the leading causes of EEO audits and lawsuits. The termination of an employee may result from a number of circumstances. The reasons may be misconduct, unacceptable performance, poor economic conditions, or other circumstances (production cutbacks, plant closing, reorganizations or mergers, the elimination of positions). If termination is for cause, the actual termination should be the culmination of a reasonable process of discipline with ample and documented groundwork demonstrated along the way.

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## Summary

### 1. Employee Orientation

- Ensure quicker productivity and promote communication
- Instill a positive attitude about the organization

### 2. Performance Evaluations

- Increase employee morale and performance with frequent communication through the use of evaluations
- Identify problem areas to prevent them from becoming major problems later

### 3. Occupational Assessments

- Assess personal attributes to see if they match both the job requirements and the company culture

### 4. Succession Planning

- Ensure the long-term success of your organization by creating career paths for your current employees

### 5. Terminating an Employee

- Avoid making unjustified discharges by building safeguards into the disciplinary process
- Conduct an exit interview