

Keeping Key Talent



Retention Strategies & Best Practices



lepc

Local Employment
Planning Council

Contents

Introduction	2
Employee Retention Strategies used by Employers in Elgin, Middlesex, Oxford and London...	3
Hire the Right Person:	3
Career Advancement:.....	4
Work Environment:	5
Payment, Benefits & Incentives:	6
Recruitment checklist for small and medium businesses	8
Retaining Workers Tip Sheet.....	10
Success Stories	12
Keeping your employees happy: A retention strategy for local employers.....	12
Buckland successfully retaining employees in St. Thomas	13
A collaborative effort to create career success.....	14
London business successfully attracting and retaining talent	15
Top 5 Tips for keeping the right workers	16
Job matching provides Roberts Clinical Trials with the right candidates.....	17

Introduction

You've found the right fit, now how do you ensure that your employee doesn't leave you for another company? Failing to retain a key employee is costly to the bottom line, in addition to organizational issues such as training time and investment, lost knowledge, insecure coworkers and a costly candidate search aside.

In the 2016 EmployerOne Survey, employers identified expansion as the number one reason for anticipated hires in the coming year. This, along with 36% of employees 'quitting' their employment, (of separations reported for 2015 by employers completing the 2016 EmployerOne Survey), indicates the potential for a great deal of movement in the local labour market. This document contains various tips and tricks to help you increase the satisfaction of your employees with their job, and as a result lower recruiting costs and can make your company more productive.

Starting with a literature review of best practices to retain top talent, your Local Employment Planning Council (LEPC) continued to interview key stakeholders to hear what they had to say about keeping the right person. We hope you find these ideas helpful as you look for new ways to ensure your key employees continue to be a part of your workforce team.

We would like to acknowledge the local economic development offices, employers, and Workforce Planning groups for their assistance in helping us create and share these strategies and best practices to help your business attract & retain the right talent.

This is a living document. We encourage employers to contact us with any of their best practices in employee retention.

Employee Retention Strategies used by Employers in Elgin, Middlesex, Oxford and London

Hire the Right Person:

1. Recognize that small businesses have their own limitations and advantages while trying to attract and retain employees
2. Hire the right person the first time
3. Be strategic in the approach to attraction. This will help with retention
4. Create the right hiring process to get the right person
 - The hiring process is done slowly to find the right person and the right fit
 - Hiring process times can vary substantially. Some require resume screening, phone screening, interviews with HR and with supervisor (and sometimes with both), offer of employment, and negotiation of contract. Sometimes a third party evaluator can be used
5. Believe that the right person can be trained for the skills required
6. Hiring local people to negate commuting or transportation issues
7. Company delivers on what they promised when hiring
8. Let go of people early who aren't a good fit or don't want to be team players



Career Advancement:

1. Career advancement opportunities
2. Offer attractive apprenticeship opportunities
3. Upgrading certifications paid by employer
4. Ongoing education upgrading
5. Bursaries for continuing education
6. Financial incentives for returning next season i.e. paying for books
7. Encouragement for employee training, sometimes outside of the office
 - Courses, e-learning workshops, coaching workshops, etc.
8. Progression of responsibility in the workplace, especially for youth
9. Frequent, face-to-face performance reviews and assessments with attached bonuses applied from the performance reviews
10. Promote internally



Training and Development

"In 2011, we started setting aside 30 minutes each week for company-wide training sessions, the results have been a more knowledgeable, productive and happier workforce,"
(Local Employer)

Work Environment:

1. Safe working environment where workplace safety is taken seriously (i.e. Free work gear, such as hard hats, boots, safety glasses, etc.)
2. Be an equal opportunity employer
3. Have a holistic approach to workplace culture
4. Develop a welcoming, inclusive, diverse, caring and accepting workplace culture
5. Respectful and positive environment to work
6. Fun and flexible environment to work
7. Build a team environment, including social team building activities
8. Health is incorporated into the workplace culture (i.e. healthy work/life balance).
9. Employee programs, including incentives for fun activities
10. Staff recognition for achievements
11. Management view employees as an investment
12. Employees are treated like family members
13. Engage & empower employees by asking for their input on a variety of workplace decisions
 - Employee committees on corporate giving, health & wellbeing, mental health, social activities, etc.
 - Management is receptive to employees, open-door policies
 - Employees feel like their input matters in decision-making process
 - Management and employees are viewed to be on the same team, which promotes teambuilding
14. Great communication
 - Daily morning meetings
 - Management is aware of level of job satisfaction
 - Succession plans are in place
15. Engagement and promotion of community work
16. Appropriate level of structure

Workplace

“We believe in having a welcoming work environment. We want our employees to feel like their family,”
(Local Employer)

Payment, Benefits & Incentives:

1. Fair/Above-average wages
2. “in lieu” time
3. Employee paid lunches
4. Flexible hours
5. Health benefits, including health & wellness programs
6. Profit sharing
7. Employee programs, including incentives for fun activities

Investments

“We believe in investing in a person’s potential, that way they can continue to develop and grow within the company,”

(Local Employer)

PROVEN METHODS FOR INCREASING RETENTION



Career Development Programs

Companies can introduce career development programs. Studies show that when employees see opportunities to advance within their current company, they are more likely to be satisfied and to remain with the organization.



Culture

Research also suggests that culture plays a key role in reducing turnover. In the study, they were able to predict turnover fairly accurately in management-level employees. Specifically, the findings suggest that by reducing the prevalence of politics and increasing organizational support, organizations could retain employees at a higher rate.



Engagement

Increasing states like engagement may have more sustained effects. Employees who are engaged stay with their organizations because of what they give and do. Employee engagement is associated with the degree of fit between the employee and his or her job.



Fit

Person-job fit predicts three key employee attitudinal outcomes: job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and intentions to quit. Similarly, it showed that person-organization fit has a strong impact on job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Source: www.teambonding.com



Behaviours



Performance

Driven

Demand and achieve aggressive goals and deliver profitable growth. Maximize opportunities for continuous improvement and lean manufacturing. Execute with facts, urgency and decisiveness.

Passion for

Innovation



Push today's limits, challenge the status quo; thrive on originality and encourage risk-taking. Continue to be agile and flexible to embrace change.



Customer

Focused

Commitment to products, services, lean business practices and an attitude that creates customer enthusiasm, putting their needs and interests at the center of everything we do.

Energize

People



Recognize people are the cornerstone of our success. Empower and develop our associates, reward performance and initiative, challenging each of us to be our best.



Think Team!

Live Team!

Rigorously live teamwork. We share knowledge, responsibility, ownership and success. This collaborative energy continues to shape and build our future.

Uphold

Trust & Integrity



Treat our customers, suppliers, and each other with dignity and respect. Honor our commitments, be accountable for our actions, and provide an environment that promotes open, honest and constructive communication. Continue to ensure the health and safety of our communities and associates, and protect the environment in all that we do.

Recruitment checklist for small and medium businesses

Tips for success for recruiting entry, technical and management staff

1. WEBSITE

- ☐ Review your company website from a job seeker's perspective
- ☐ Is your website current and up to date?
- ☐ What is the pull for the Job seeker to want to work there?
- ☐ Is the career section informative and welcoming?
- ☐ Do you have team photos, activities, video testimonials etc?
- ☐ Check your job descriptions and postings. Is it clear, attractive and shares the value that this position has for your company? e.g. for a Customer Service role: "You give that most important first impression of all that we do"

2. SHARING THE OPPORTUNITY

- ☐ Share the opening with your staff and networks
- ☐ Implement/encourage a reward referral system or program
- ☐ Explore free non-profit agencies or educational institutions who are here to help you and can assist in the promotion/recruitment/ funding resources for talent recruitment. (Some funding is attached to the status of the jobseeker- most funding requires pre-approval)
- ☐ Use social media to promote the position and link to your posting on your careers page
- ☐ Select the best places to promote your opening that is most likely to attract your targeted talent. (Free sites available: Job Bank, Indeed, Kijiji, London's Job Match Network, London Tech Jobs, Post-Secondary job boards. Etc.)
- ☐ Utilize Low cost Job boards such as Knighthunter, Magnet and others such as LinkedIn, Monster, Eluta, Workopolis, and Work in Oxford.

3. BE AN EMPLOYER OF CHOICE

- ☐ Review applications daily for hard to recruit positions and respond quickly (Do not wait for deadlines, if they are applying to you then they will be applying elsewhere!)
- ☐ Are you competitive? Check that your wages, benefits, perks and working conditions are fair and well organized.
- ☐ Ensure that your professional development supports, company activities and communications are relevant and engaging
- ☐ Apply for recognition and reward programs that raise the profile of your company

4. BUILD YOUR PIPELINE

- ☐ Attend Job and Career Fairs that have relevant target audience for your position (Visit LEDC's [Job Fair Directory-Southwestern Ontario](#) to get started.)
- ☐ Build relationships and networks with educational institutions
- ☐ Build relationships with professional groups relevant to the talent you are trying to recruit
- ☐ Be a guest speaker
- ☐ Sponsor an event that targets the audience you want to attract or compliments your company
- ☐ Host a co-op or intern
- ☐ Host a company tour or open house
- ☐ Cultivate your local media by sharing company milestones, events and community contributions

5. RESOURCES

- ☐ [LinkedIn: 2016 Ultimate Hiring Toolbox For Small & Medium Businesses](#)
- ☐ Benchmark Salary websites: Creative Earners, Canadian Job Bank, Glass Door
- ☐ Add company to the London Economic Development Corporation (LEDC) Business Directory
- ☐ LEDC London Magazine to help with recruitment to London for Candidates and their families
- ☐ Cultivate your local media by sharing company milestones, events and community contributions
- ☐ Concierge Package is a self-serve guide to London, Canada; found on the LEDC website
- ☐ Links 2 Work is an online employment resource website serving London, Elgin and Middlesex County.
- ☐ Worktrends.ca offers access to local labour markets, jobs, and training/education information for Elgin, Middlesex and Oxford counties
- ☐ Utilize Career Services at local colleges and universities to find the right candidate
- ☐ Visit the London Middlesex Immigrant Employment Council website: www.LMIEC.ca for no-cost tools and resources for recruiting, hiring and retaining skilled immigrants.

Presented By:



Retaining Workers Tip Sheet

A study was done by the Centre of Organizational Effectiveness, on behalf of the Local Employment Planning Council project, on finding ways for people to return to work after noticing that in our area many people that are of working age are not working or looking for work. We did some research, talked to many people in our region and also talked with employers and employment agencies.

Here are some tips from the study and a checklist that might help you as you think about retaining workers.

Paying it Forward

Tips

- Share your stories of successfully hiring immigrants, Indigenous people and people with disabilities
- Become a mentor to a person wanting to find work
- Consider offering volunteer/paid internship opportunities so people can get their Canadian experience and learn about your work. This may also be a great way for you to get to know a potential employee

Check List

- ☐ We have shared our story of hiring immigrants, Indigenous people and people with disabilities with employment service agencies, other employers, our community and the media
- ☐ We have leaders and staff who have offered to be mentors to others (within our business) or for others who do not yet have work
- ☐ Where we can, we have volunteer/internship opportunities

Application Process

Tips

- Where possible, provide a buddy/mentor for new employees so they get connected with your people and learn how to fit into your work culture
- Provide orientation and training to set up people for success; give people timely feedback so they feel they can correct their work as needed
- Create a culture where 'everyone matters'; many people stop working because they feel like they 'don't fit in'. Be sure to include temporary and part-time workers in your work culture activities
- Remember that appreciation and kind words go a long way (even small gestures make a big difference)
- Where possible, provide flexibility and consider sharing some staff with other organizations to back-fill as needed
- Learn about how to accommodate for mental health challenges and other disabilities
- Offer training on how to work in a diverse work culture

Check List

- ☐ All new employees have someone in our business who acts as a 'buddy' or 'mentor'
- ☐ All new employees go through an orientation and are provided with timely and adequate training
- ☐ All new employees receive timely feedback so they can improve
- ☐ We work at creating a culture where 'everyone matters'. We have spoken to our employment service agency to assist us with this. All employees (including part-time and temporary) are included
- ☐ We have an intentional way of appreciating and thanking our staff
- ☐ Where we can, we provide flexible schedules
- ☐ Where we can, we share staff with other businesses for back-filling
- ☐ We have been trained on how to accommodate for mental health and other disabilities
- ☐ We have been trained on how to create a welcoming environment for a diverse work culture.

Success Stories

How are local employers finding the right fit? Take a look at the following articles to discover even more ways local employers are finding the right fit.

Keeping your employees happy: A retention strategy for local employers



Keep your staff happy! It seems simple enough, but for one local business, it's something their president lives by.

The employer, who has asked to stay anonymous, says “staff come first at their location”, in order to retain their employees. When a person is first hired on, they are given one week’s vacation but, after they are with the company for a year, that vacation time increases to four

weeks. Most of the businesses employees have been with the company for 10 to 30 years, while others have been there at least five years. But regardless of how long someone has been with the company, each year they take time to recognize staff members to ensure they are thanked for their hard work. The owner also ensures employees celebrate Christmas with a party and allows for “no meeting” lunches; in which staff can enjoy a complimentary lunch and talk amongst each other with no mention of work.

The owner says gone are the days with standard schedules and workplace arrangements. In order to keep her staff happy she offers a flexible schedule to her employees to ensure they can make medical appointments when necessary. Her philosophy is a solid balance of personal life and work life is crucial for all employees.

When it comes to looking for talent, she, like most employers, use word of mouth to find the right candidate. Although she also stays connected with Fanshawe College and the graduates of related programs to her business, to recruit fresh faces. You can also find her recruitment ads in the Local Media when she’s in need of new employees.

Buckland successfully retaining employees in St. Thomas

You hire them, train them and after several months they leave. Sound familiar?

Buckland was beginning to experience this phenomenon until the company made a commitment to improve employee retention.

Vice President, Therese Van Es says they started encouraging feedback from their employees through an employee opinion survey to discover some of the ways that Buckland could help improve engagement and retention. She says senior management reviewed the results and made a commitment to focus on the top three areas for improvement that were reported through the survey. Following the survey and subsequent analysis, the team at Buckland worked to create the culture they wanted in the workplace and have been successful in reducing turnover by 17%.



Van Es says they wanted to become an “employer of choice” and started hiring people with the right attitude to contribute to the positive workplace culture. Here’s a list of some of the ways they’re keeping great talent:

- Offering five paid sick days and five paid appointment times (staff are paid two hours for a scheduled medical appointment)
- Hosting potlucks and social events
- Casual dress code No more dress code
Holiday bonuses
- Employee Opinion Survey, listening to the needs of employees, sharing the results and taking action to make improvements
- When it comes to attracting the right talent she says she’s found success advertising in Latino Magazine, but also posts career opportunities on their company website, LinkedIn, Knighthunter and uses employee referrals when applicable.



Three years ago, Adam Chenoweth was unemployed and handing out resumes non-stop in hopes of a career. He was laid off when the St. Thomas Ford Assembly Plant closed down and relocated to his home base in Woodstock in search of a new career outside of manufacturing. Chenoweth then turned to the Woodstock Community Employment Services for help. Concurrently, Al's Tirecraft in Burgessville was in desperate need of tire technicians. President of People Management Group, Cheryl DeCooman provides a number of HR services to various businesses in

Oxford including Al's Tirecraft. With her help as a member of the Oxford Workforce Development Partnership, she reached out to Community Employment Services in Woodstock. DeCooman explained, "usually employers post a job and say these are the required skills we need. They interview and hope to find the right person for the position. This time, we said we want the right attitude, we can teach the skills. If [Community Employment Services] can help us cover the cost of training we can guarantee people jobs," said DeCooman.

She said the Community Employment Services offices in Oxford County "moved mountains" to find Tirecraft the right people, "their job developers went to their employment councillors and said, I've got this great job with this great company- they are willing to train your people. If someone is having a hard time finding work, really wants a change as well as a career, the training would be paid for. If it wasn't for them we wouldn't be able to make it go."

Cheryl also wanted to make sure the training would be recognized with some type of certificate. She spoke with Conestoga College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning who is also a member of the Oxford Workforce Development Partnership and with their help, Cheryl was able to find an instructor through the Tire Industry Association who would provide the education at the Ingersoll Skills Training Centre.

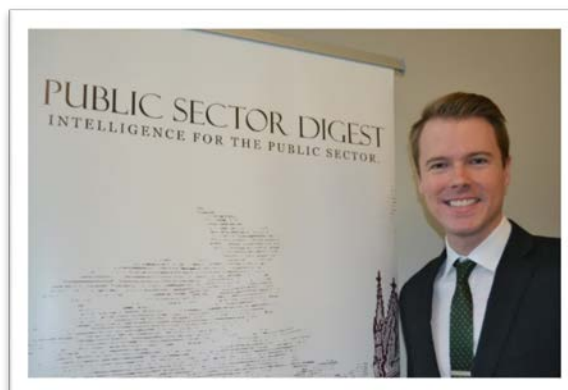
It's now been two years since Chenoweth received training thanks to the employment service training incentive offered at Woodstock Community Employment Services. "I learn something new every day. If I didn't go through the employment agency, I wouldn't be where I am today, I'd be unhappy and still looking for a rewarding career. Since starting at Tirecraft, I haven't called in sick once. I'm happy and enjoy my job," he said.

London business successfully attracting and retaining talent

Are you having a hard time filling positions? There can be challenges in attracting the right talent but according to Research Lead, Tyler Sutton of The Public Sector Digest, it is improving. From a small family business to a tech firm of fifty employees, The Public Sector Digest Inc. has successfully attracted and retained local talent in the Forest City. What started out in 2003 as a publication for municipal managers has now grown to include a webinar series, benchmarking tools for municipal governments and software applications to help government's better plan for the future.

According to the 2016 Employer One Survey results, most employers hire by word of mouth, but that's not the case for this tech firm. Sutton says when it comes to acquiring talent, they post on University or College job boards or in the local newspaper. "It's about tailoring your job posting to the right audience. So it's posting wherever [you] can, to make sure [you're] getting that exposure and getting those applicants in. We don't restrict posting only in London... it's whatever platform makes the most sense."

While you may need a specific technical skill set or a specific language to program software, Sutton says it's really about trying to find someone who has a passion for the company and fits within their corporate culture. He says he utilizes co-op and internship programs offered at Western University, Fanshawe College, The University of Waterloo and Lambton College to give students real life experience in hopes of having them stay within the company. "We do our best to create opportunities for young talent in the City to come work for us, get to know us and the many departments and divisions that we have, so that we are building the talent pipeline and can have experienced younger staff," says Sutton. Of course it can be tough retaining those employees without the proper strategy. Sutton says some staff had never been to London before moving for the job. He says



the company hosts monthly town hall meetings to encourage staff feedback, in hopes of maintaining that family-like environment. He says employees are also encouraged to take online courses or additional training to help them grow their skills. Furthermore, Sutton says opportunities are frequently provided for staff to collaborate between the different divisions of the company because the more ideas there are the better the results. The company is also a member of Emerging Leaders, an organization focused on the retention, development and engagement of emerging talent so, it has helped provide their staff a chance to expand their network and get involved in the community, which could be one of the reasons The Public Sector Digest is so successful at retaining their talent pool. Apart from fostering a great corporate culture, Sutton says there has been a shift in the traditional incentives offered to employees in order to keep them happy (i.e. more benefits and more vacation time). He says those incentives do have a place today, but more importantly, employees see the value in a corporate culture with opportunities to get out of the office, learn, experience and keep growing within the company. "Those are the big game changers that seem to create excitement and keep staff engaged in their job."

Top 5 Tips for keeping the right workers

So you've found the right candidate, but how do you keep them from leaving? According to a recent study conducted by the Centre for Organizational Wellness, through the Local Employment Planning Council project, there are many people who can work, but are choosing not to. After speaking with people, employers, and employment agencies within the London region, we've compiled some useful tips to help you keep your workers.



1. Where possible, provide a buddy/mentor for new employees so they get connected with your people and learn how to fit into your work culture
2. Provide orientation and training to set up people for success; give people timely feedback so they feel they can correct their work as needed
3. Create a culture where 'everyone matters'; many people stop working because they feel like they 'don't fit in'. Be sure to include temporary and part-time workers in your work culture activities
4. Build a strong relationship with a local non-profit employment service agency. These agencies work with employers to assist them in getting the right person for a job
5. Where possible, provide flexibility and consider sharing some staff with other organizations to back-fill as needed

Job matching provides Robarts Clinical Trials with the right candidates

Are you looking to hire someone with a specialized skill-set? It can be difficult to find someone with a highly specialized skill who is also the right match for your company but not when you're connected to the London Middlesex Immigrant Employment Council (LMIEC) Job Match Network. The network provides an integrated job matching service for internationally trained immigrants and employers in Southwestern Ontario. In collaboration with community partners, the network attracts, screens, short-lists and markets qualified talent for jobs that are going un-filled in the London region.



“We’ve had nothing but success [working with the LMIEC Job Match Network],” says Moe Mohamed, Manager Human Resources & Business Partner for Robarts Clinical Trials. Robarts provides medical research and clinical trials services for large pharma companies; employing physicians, data managers, statisticians, biostatisticians, medical imaging specialists and project managers to name just a few of the highly specialised roles.

“[Through the LMIEC job matching network] we worked with WIL Employment Connections and they referred us to several qualified candidates that went through our recruitment process and were recently hired,” Mohamed explains. “We find the talent we need and the candidate comes with global experience, bringing new and innovative ideas and diversity to our workplace.”

While Robarts utilizes the network to tap into hidden talent, it also demonstrates its support of/belief in the benefits of new Canadian talent as a member of the LMIEC Leadership Council and a Corporate Champion of the LMIEC Mentorship for Immigrant Employment programs. This means the organization provides guidance on the needs of employers, has agreed to find mentors within their company to take part in the programs and helps create additional program awareness.

Corporate Recruiter for Robarts, Robert Pitman says it’s been a great experience both ways. “Not only do the mentees get a better understanding of the workplace and learn more about the sector-specific language used in Canada, they establish some valuable networking contacts to help them in the future.” Pitman explains, “... as a mentor, it’s given some of our management staff a chance to grow their leadership and communication skills. The mentor also gets to be a part of helping the mentee discover their career potential in a relaxed atmosphere. The mentorship program really appeals to some of our staff as they see it making a difference in their community.”

Finding talent through post-secondary connections; keeping them with flexible hours

Are you looking for an employee with a specific skill set? Have you ever considered reaching out to one of the local colleges or universities to tap into top talent? That's exactly what London Life does when they are in need of actuaries.

What is an actuary? An Actuary is a qualified professional who can apply mathematical and statistical methods to assess risk in insurance, finance and other industries. It takes up to six years to become certified and most students work while completing their studies and exams.



Manager of Individual Insurance, Product Development & Pricing at London Life, Karen Data started out as an intern at London Life and now helps support employed "students" (who are currently employed by London Life, but still studying to become certified as an Actuary). She says she stays in close contact with colleges and universities that offer the actuarial program. "Because the skill is so specific, we partner with different colleges and universities to find the candidates we're looking for. We understand that these students will be studying and taking exams as they work, so we offer flexible hours and "study days" that allow them to prepare for exams while still getting the experience on the job and being paid," says Data.

Several years ago, Brandon Wallace was a high school student, considering university. With a little research and direction from his parents he spotted the Statistics and Actuarial Science program at Western University. He also liked the idea that if he didn't want to continue in the program he could also apply to the Ivey School of Business, as a back-up.

Brandon was accepted into the Statistics and Actuarial Science program at Western. While studying, his professor informed him about the London Life Actuarial Scholarship at Western which came with a paid summer placement. "It was a great opportunity," explained Brandon, "by gaining some experience through the summer job placement, I knew the job was for me."

After spending two summers with London Life, while studying at Western University, he was hired on full-time in 2014.

London Life already has hiring plans in 2017. Data says the company will be bringing on eight new employees this summer to continue to fill the need for the company.

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