



Low Cost/High Impact Employee Retention Tools for Alberta Food Processors



Alberta

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New Employee On-boarding Process Model

What is Employee On-boarding?

Employee on-boarding is the process of welcoming new recruits and helping them become happy, productive fully engaged workers. On-boarding should be seen as a process and not as a single event. On-boarding is not to be confused with new employee orientation. Orientation is an important phase within the overall employee on-boarding process. The on-boarding process consists of the following phases:

1. Recruiting & Pre-screening – Testing The Waters
2. Job Offer & Welcome Package
3. First Day – First Impression
4. First Week – Getting Acquainted
5. First 30 Days – Settling In & Avoiding “Hires Regret”
6. First 60 Days – Adjusting & Becoming Fully Engaged
7. Maintenance and further relationship development

Benefits of Employee On-boarding

Employee turnover is costing Alberta food processor, a tremendous amount of time, energy and money. In fact it has been identified that the largest proportion of production line employee turnover occurs in the first 60 days of employment. In the fall of 2007, a comprehensive survey *Benchmarking and Demand Forecast for Alberta food processors* unveiled that...

48% of all responding plants had job vacancies that had been unfilled for more than four months. Plants of all sizes, province-wide, experienced difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff for all shifts, job titles and skill sets. In fact, of seven key operating costs, production labour costs were identified by 36% of respondents as the largest cost pressure affecting profitability. According to the study, challenges related to attracting and retaining labour include: reduced labour productivity in 77% of respondents; limited growth in 56% ; and in 26%, increased incidence of employee health and safety violations.

The benefits of adopting and implementing an effective employee on-boarding process are:

- Reduce employee turnover & enhance continuity of labour force
- Increase levels of productivity
- Reduce workplace accidents
- Reduce wastage and reworks
- Improve employee morale and levels of engagement
- Improve communications
- Increase profits

7 Common Mistakes to Avoid

1. “Mind-Stuffing” trying to cram 20 hours of information into 4 mind-numbing hours.
2. “Fake it til you make it” unprepared, disorganized and frenzied process. The reality of food processing is that it is a fast paced industry. That being said, the notion of “go slower, to go faster” applies here. A formal orientation process should be well thought out and should include clear instruction regarding safety and productivity expectations. Care taken at this stage will result in a shorter training cycle, less waste and increased production.
3. “Like watching paint dry” hours of data dumps, form-filing marathons and “death by training videos.”
4. “Sink or swim” throwing a new employee into the fray without support and coaching. Many food processors have some form of a “buddy system” to assist the new recruits. The key to fully capitalizing on a buddy system is to ensure that the right people are selected as buddies, that they receive training in their roles as buddies and perhaps most importantly, that they actually want to be a buddy.
5. “No news, is good news”, no formal/informal “check-in” with new employee to gauge their development.
6. “One-size fits all”—not accounting for an individual’s age, gender or culture.
7. “It is not my job” to welcome a new employee.



12 Disciplines of an Effective Employee On-boarding Process

1. New employees feel welcomed and valued.
2. New employees feel proud that they made the right decision to join the company.
3. New employees feel that they are part of the “big picture”.
4. Recognition and rewarding of new employees’ contributions.
5. Collect and share company stories to make learning points memorable.
6. Make the experience interesting and interactive for new employees.
7. Design the process from the new employees’ perspective.
8. Select the most effective time and method of communicating orientation information.
9. Deliver your program in bite sized chunks of information.
10. Have an effective buddy system as part of your orientation program.
11. Get early evaluation of orientation from new employee and supervisor.
12. Remember, leadership is everything. Ensure that managers, supervisors and buddies have the needed training for their portion of the on-boarding process and they also have a positive attitude.

Your On-boarding Process Should Address These Issues:

7 Most Common Concerns of New Employees

1. Is this the right job for me?
2. Will I be able to do the job?
3. Am I “in over my head”?
4. What will my supervisor/lead hand be like to work with?
5. Will I fit in and be welcomed?
6. I’m younger/older/or I am from a different cultural background. Will I be understood and respected?
7. The pace here is so busy. Will someone actually be able to take the time to train me?

20 Common Questions from New Employees

1. What is this new job really about?
2. How well will I be able to handle the physical, repetitive nature of the work?
3. How well will I cope with the cold or hot production area temperatures?
4. Where do I report to first?
5. What are the priorities?
6. What do I need to know to become productive?
7. Will I receive enough training to keep me safe?
8. Where do I go when I need help or more information?
9. What am I going to do for lunch? Will I be alone?
10. Who are the other people in my department, and what do they do?
11. How can I best “fit-in” with my co-workers?
12. Who has the right information when information conflicts?
13. Who do I go to for answers to problems?
14. How will I remember all this new information?
15. How does the phone work? How are messages handled?
16. Where is the rest room, lunch room, break room, changing rooms and lockers?
17. Will clothing and personal protection equipment (safety boots, hard hat, ear protectors etc.) be provided for me?
18. What are the “unwritten rules”?
19. How and when do I get paid?
20. How available is my boss or supervisor when I need help?

Common Emotions Felt by New Employees during Successful On-boarding

- Welcome
- Safe
- Important
- Proud
- Happy
- Confident
- Respected

Note: If your new people experience these emotions they will be on their way to becoming engaged with their work and your company.



Common Emotions Felt by New Employees during Unsuccessful On-boarding

- Confused
- Frustrated
- Worried
- Bored
- Nervous
- Afraid
- Upset

Note: If your new people experience these emotions they will be on their way to becoming dis-engaged with their work and your company, which leads to poor levels of productivity, and higher rates of turnover.

Whose Job is it Anyway?

Leadership is everything – Senior executives need to define and model the vision that all staff – especially new employees – are welcomed, supported, encouraged and developed.

Human Resources – It is a common misconception that it is solely the role of Human Resources to help new employees through the on-boarding process. Human Resources should be seen as the support mechanism that helps co-ordinate all departments in welcoming new hires.

Supervisors – Because they have the most daily direct contact and communications with their teammates, it is vital that supervisors have the training, skills, support, resources and positive attitude towards their role in welcoming and developing new employees.

Quality Assurance Personnel & Trainers – These people work with employees on the line and have a great opportunity to ensure high production and safety standards as well as to model and encourage high standards in dealing with co-workers.

Peers – It is important that the entire organization is part of the support system for all new staff and of particular importance is the role provided by buddies.

Individual – Lastly, we must also recognize that it is up to the new employee to take the initiative to capitalize on the opportunities that the on-boarding process and new job offers them.

The Employee On-boarding Process

Phase I: Recruiting and Pre-screening – Testing the Waters

- Are your recruiting messages consistent with your organization's core values and mission?
- Do your recruiting efforts attract quality job seekers? Given today's competitive labour market some companies will settle for "a warm body". The danger with this approach is that by lowering recruiting standards, a company is ultimately weakening their labour force. The cost of employee turnover for food processors is very expensive when factoring all costs of hiring, training and developing new staff. Very conservative average turnover costs for Alberta food processors range from \$1,100 to \$1,900 per person. These costs directly affect the bottom line performance of a company.
- Is your pre-screening and interviewing process applicant-friendly? Does it communicate a favourable impression and reinforce the decision to apply for work at your company?
- Are you able to conduct a plant tour and review of the job duties with the job applicant as part of the selection process prior to making the hiring decision? The rationale for investing in this small additional effort is that it provides the applicant with realistic expectations of the job while providing you the opportunity to gauge their reaction to the work environment. If the person is not likely to "work out" it is best to know this prior to hiring and orienting them.

Phase 2: Job Offer and Welcome Package – Prior to Starting the Job

- Are you able to screen job applicants quickly in order to make firm offers? Most food processors are experiencing tight labour markets: don't lose good applicants to the competition by taking too long to act.
- Do you provide a written job offer detailing the job position, start date, wage information and who, when and where to report to on the first day?



Your new employee may benefit from reading information about the organization prior to beginning their new job. Determine the information that is appropriate to send to the new employee for review prior to the first day on the new job. Identify which information is simply informational and which requires action by the new employee. At the end of this section is the “Customize Your Own Orientation Content Checklist.” This checklist is a tool that can be photocopied and used by your Human Resources department to create an orientation process uniquely tailored to your company’s *needs*. On the accompanying CD Rom there are additional resources to assist temporary foreign workers’ transition into living in Alberta.

Note: Given that many people may have challenges reading, it is very important to maintain effective communications. All documents should be written in easy to understand English, and include commonly understood visuals (pictures, drawings etc.).

Your welcome package could include the following:

- Welcome letters
- Employee handbook
- Relocation kit
- Local area maps
- Parking areas; sticker or pass
- Transit route information
- Supervisor’s name and location
- Copy of job description
- Normal work hours
- Uniform-ordering information
- Dress-code information
- Safety information
- Benefit-plan information
- Food handling practices
- Organizational chart
- Organizational newsletter
- Length of probationary period
- Union information
- Community links (churches, restaurants, schools, health-care facilities, etc.)



Sample Welcome Letter from Plant Manager

[Today's Date]

[Employee's Name]

[Employee's Address]

Dear [Employee's Name]:

Welcome to [Organization's Name]! We are delighted you are going to join our organization as a new [job title]. Your role is critical in fulfilling the mission of our organization.

As you go through our orientation process, keep our mission in mind. We will do our best to help you become a productive member of our staff through orientation and training. In the next few weeks you will meet many of your co-workers, supervisors, and managers. They can be of help to you; feel free to let them know what you need to accomplish your new responsibilities. You will also receive a great deal of written information. Refer to it often. Whenever questions arise, ask your supervisor, assigned buddy or someone from the Human Resources department.

We are looking forward to a long-term relationship and your success at [Organization's Name].

Sincerely,

[Plant Manager's Name]

[Title]

encl: mission statement



Sample Welcome Letter from Human Resources

[Today's Date]

[Employee's Name]

[Employee's Address]

Dear [Employee's Name]:

I want to formally confirm your acceptance of our employment offer to begin work on [start date] as [job title]. When you arrive at [arrival time & date], please come to my office in the Human Resources department at [building and room number].

Your first morning will be spent with one of our Human Resources representatives. Enclosed are some materials that can be helpful for you to review prior to your first day of work. There are also some forms that you can complete and bring with you on your first day.

We will help you enroll in our payroll and benefit systems. To prepare you to make some of those decisions, please review the forms and pamphlets enclosed. We will also go on a facility tour before you report to work on your first afternoon.

You will be our guest for lunch on your first day. The welcoming committee is looking forward to meeting you.

If you have questions before [start date], please give me a call at [Human Resources manager's phone number].

Sincerely,

[Human Resources Manager's Name]

[Human Resources Manager's Title]



Sample Welcome Letter from the Supervisor

[Today's Date]

[Employee's Name]

[Employee's Address]

Dear [Employee's Name]:

On behalf of our entire department, welcome to [Organization's Name]. We are looking forward to your joining us as a new [job title] on [start date]. To help you become more familiar with our organization, I've enclosed a current organizational newsletter. To help you become more familiar with your new job, I've enclosed a current job description.

I've also prepared your work area for your arrival. When you arrive on [start date], you will have an opportunity to meet your co-workers. I'll also assign you to a "buddy," who will serve as a guide and trainer during your orientation. Your "buddy" can be a helpful resource to answer a number of questions.

We're all looking forward to your arrival.

Sincerely,

[Supervisor's Name]

[Supervisor's Title]



“Buddy” Announcement from the new Employee’s Supervisor

[Today’s Date]

[Name of “buddy”]

Dear [Name of “buddy”]:

On [start date] we are welcoming [New Employee’s Name] into our department as a new [job title]. Please do everything you can to make [him/her] feel welcome. During the new employee orientation period you will be assigned as a “buddy” to [New Employee’s Name].

The enclosed checklist describes the items you will need to cover with [New Employee’s Name] during the first week.

Please make a point of taking [New Employee’s Name] to lunch during [his/her] first week on the job.

Sincerely,

[Supervisor’s Name]

[Supervisor’s Title]



7 Steps to Setting Up a Buddy System

1. Determine what the role of a buddy is:

- Provide information for the new employee on policies, procedures, work rules, norms
- Help the new employee clarify assignments
- Help socialize the new employee
- Assist in training the new employee
- Be a lunch companion
- Be a tour guide
- Provide feedback and encouragement to the new employee
- Identify resources
- Help, temporarily, to sort priorities for the new employee
- Provide introductions

2. Determine who will be a buddy. The most effective choice for a “buddy”:

- Has been employed more than one year
- Is compatible with the new employee (age, education, temperament, culture, language)
- Is given time to be accessible to the new employee
- Has a good performance history
- Is skilled in the new employee’s job
- Is proud of the organization
- Is a peer of the new employee
- Has patience and good communication and interpersonal skills
- Wants to be a “buddy”
- Is a positive role model (well-regarded and accepted by current employees)
- Has been selected in advance and trained in “buddy” role.*

3. Determine time line and time

commitment required to train the buddy on their role and allow for adequate time for the buddy to assist in the new employee’s on-boarding.

4. Train the buddy so they understand their role and responsibilities. For example, do they have copies of all your training documentation? Do they understand the kind of support that they are being asked to provide?

5. Monitor the relationship. Once buddies are matched with new employees, it is important to keep in touch with both parties to make sure that the relationship is working out. You don’t need to sit down every week with both people, but you might implement an “open door” policy where either party can contact you if they are having problems. Alternatively, you might review the relationship and how it is working after the first two weeks.

6. Implement ongoing improvement. It is important that there is an ongoing evaluation for buddy systems to ensure that the system itself is working. A simple exit survey can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the buddies you are using and the structures you have in place to support the program. Give the new employee a chance to give you some feedback – this empowers the new employee to contribute to possible improvements in the system.

7. Recognize the buddy’s efforts. buddies bring tremendous value to the employee on-boarding process and should be recognized for their efforts in some meaningful way. Some food processors pay extra to their buddies, others acknowledge their contributions with gift certificates or other low-cost yet highly appreciated examples of recognition.

** Please contact Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development to discuss possible training opportunities for buddies.*



Phase 3: First Day – First Impression

- This is the single most important phase in the on-boarding process. The experience that the new employee has during their first day on the job greatly impacts how they feel about the job, their supervisor, peers and the company. It is critical that you create a very favourable first impression in the mind of the new recruit during the first day.
- The new employee should report to Human Resources which should introduce the new recruit to their supervisor. The supervisor can introduce the recruit to their team mates and their assigned buddy.
- The supervisor should do an informal check-in at the end of the first day with the new employee to see how the first day went, how they are feeling and to respond to questions that they might have.

Phase 4: First Week – Getting Acquainted

- By the end of the first week the new employee should be very well acquainted with the basics of their job, including safety and food handling standards. They should know who to seek information from, and be acquainted with company policy and procedures.
- The new employee should be acquainted with their supervisor, buddy and co-workers.
- The supervisor should do an informal check-in at the end of the first week with the new employee to see how the first week went, provide preliminary performance and developmental feedback, ask how the new recruit is feeling and respond to questions that they might have.

Phase 5: First 30 Days – Settling In and Avoiding “Hires Regret”

- By the end of the first month the new employee should be settled in and feeling like “part of the family”. They should be performing their job independently and at or near the expected production output level. They should be fully knowledgeable and compliant with safety and food handling standards, and be well acquainted with company policy and procedures.
- The new employee should be accepted as “part of the family” by their supervisor, buddy and co-workers.
- The supervisor should do an informal check-in at the end of the first month with the new employee by obtaining feedback on the new employee’s on-boarding experience, seek feedback on the new recruit’s first month on the job, provide performance and developmental feedback, ask how the new recruit is feeling about the job, the company and respond to questions that they might have.



Evaluating Employee On-boarding – After First Month

Use the rating scale below to tell us how you feel about the new-employee orientation process that you recently completed and to tell us how you feel about your job and the organization now.

- 5 = excellent/very much/very high
- 4 = good/a great deal/high
- 3 = OK, average/somewhat/medium
- 2 = weak/not very much/low
- 1 = not covered, missing/not at all/very low

The Program

- _____ Information received prior to first day
- _____ The first-day work assignment
- _____ Introductions to key employees
- _____ Quality of written materials
- _____ Amount of written materials
- _____ Video or slide presentations
- _____ Orientation activities
- _____ “Buddy” program
- _____ The guided tour
- _____ Skill training
- _____ Safety information
- _____ Food handling information
- _____ Benefit information
- _____ Information on policies and procedures
- _____ Product or service information
- _____ Information on performance expectations
- _____ Resources for further questions/information

How I Feel Now

- _____ I am eager to begin work.
- _____ I feel welcome here.
- _____ I anticipate a positive working relationship with my supervisor.
- _____ I anticipate positive working relationships with peers in my department.
- _____ I anticipate positive working relationships with those outside my department.

Overall Rating of the Program’s Value to Me:

Additional Comments



Evaluation of Orientation Objectives by Supervisor

Use the rating scale below to indicate your opinion of how well the new employee orientation process accomplished the following objectives. Rate the parts of the program according to this scale:

5 = very definitely/very clear

4 = yes/mostly clear

3 = somewhat/OK

2 = not sure/need more information

1 = no/insufficient

- _____ Objectives of the orientation program were clearly stated to the new employee.
- _____ The new employee received essential information.
- _____ The new employee received information in a timely manner.
- _____ The new employee's job responsibilities were explained to him or her.

- _____ The new employee was clearly informed about his or her supervisor's expectations.
- _____ The new employee was clearly informed about the expectations that his or her co-workers have of him or her.
- _____ The new employee has essential supplies and equipment to do his or her job or has been told where to find them.
- _____ The new employee has received sufficient skill training to do his or her current job and meet the expectations of the supervisor.
- _____ The new employee received adequate information to understand his or her benefits.
- _____ The new employee has enrolled in the benefit programs of their choice.



Phase 6: First 60 Days – Adjusting and Becoming Fully Engaged

- The supervisor should do formal evaluation at the end of the second month with the new employee. This is to obtain feedback about the new employee's on-boarding experience, seek feedback on the new recruit's first two months on the job, provide written performance evaluation and developmental feedback, and ask how the new recruit is feeling about the job, the company and respond to questions that they might have.

Phase 7: Maintenance and Further Development of Relationship

- Formal evaluation should be done at least on an annual basis.
- Informal and formal recognition should be used to provide ongoing feedback and positive reinforcement to the employee. Employee recognition is covered in more detail in the next section.



Post-Orientation Evaluation by New Employee

It has been two months since you attended your initial orientation event. Please answer these questions to help complete your on-boarding and to assist us in improving our on-boarding program.

During your first few days with the company how often did you feel

(Please circle one number for each word)

	Never	Almost Never	Fairly Often	Always
Welcome	0	1	2	3
Safe	0	1	2	3
Important	0	1	2	3
Proud	0	1	2	3
Happy	0	1	2	3
Confident	0	1	2	3
Respected	0	1	2	3
Confused	0	1	2	3
Frustrated	0	1	2	3
Worried	0	1	2	3
Bored	0	1	2	3
Nervous	0	1	2	3
Afraid	0	1	2	3
Upset	0	1	2	3



Please read the following statements and *circle the number that describes how you feel:*

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I know what is expected of me	0	1	2	3
It was easy to get answers to my questions	0	1	2	3
I had enough training to do my job	0	1	2	3
I received all the things that I needed to do my job	0	1	2	3
The people involved in my orientation were helpful	0	1	2	3
The paper work was easy to understand	0	1	2	3
My supervisor cares about me as a person	0	1	2	3
My co-workers care about me as a person	0	1	2	3
I know how well I am doing at my job	0	1	2	3
The job is what I expected when I was hired	0	1	2	3
I am satisfied with my job	0	1	2	3
I am happy that I am working with this company	0	1	2	3

1. What were the most helpful items covered during orientation?
2. What items were not helpful, not needed, or could have waited until later to be addressed?
3. What items were not covered during the initial meeting that you want to know about?
4. What questions do you have about information presented that did not occur to you at the time of the first meeting?
5. Are there issues you want to discuss in confidence with a Human Resources representative?
6. Have you discussed these confidential matters with your supervisor?
7. Did you have enough guidance to complete the self-directed portion of the orientation?
8. How can the “buddy” program be improved?



Post-Orientation Evaluation by Supervisor

It has been two months since your new employee, [name] _____, attended his or her initial orientation event. A great deal of information was offered and presented concerning our policies, procedures, and benefits. Your perspective on the information that was given is important. Please answer these questions to help complete the first phase of your new employee's on-boarding and to assist us in improving our orientation program.

1. What information has the employee asked about that could have been included in the initial meeting?
2. What items at the initial presentation were not helpful, not needed, or could have waited until later to be addressed?
3. What further information does the employee need?
4. What skill training does the employee need?
5. What issues about the new employee do you want to discuss in confidence with a Human Resources representative?
6. What follow-up by the Human Resources department does the new employee need in the next three months?
7. What additional guidance did this employee need in order to complete the self-directed portion of orientation?
8. How can the "buddy" program be improved?



Request for Follow-Up Evaluation from Human Resources

[Today's Date]

[Employee's Name]

[Employee's Address]

Dear [Employee's Name]:

During the past two months you have been completing our new employee on-boarding process. We would appreciate your help in evaluating the quality of this program and the materials you have received. Also, if there are any questions left unanswered, you may ask them now by completing the enclosed form.

Please return the completed form in the enclosed self-addressed envelope.

Sincerely,

[Human Resources Manager's Name]

[Human Resources Manager's Title]

encl: evaluation form

cc: [Supervisor's Name]



Customize Your Own Orientation Content Checklist

The “Orientation Content Checklist” is designed to assist those who design and conduct new employee orientation. The checklist recommends a comprehensive list of topics, to help the new employee function productively. To avoid overwhelming the new employee on the first day, it is necessary to identify the *best timing* for each item. Information is most beneficial when it is given to the new employee closest to the time when it is to be used.

Next, identify *who* is the best source of information. Some information is best learned and retained if the employee “discovers” it himself or herself. Most standardized information is best delivered by the Human Resources function. Information that varies from one department to another is best given by a supervisor. A buddy is a good resource to a new co-worker; and the supervisor can provide career and development advice as a relationship grows.

Orientation Content Checklist

Decide *when* each item is to be done by using these codes:

- P = prior to first day
- FD = first day
- FW = first week
- FM = first month
- SM = second month

Decide *who* takes care of each item by using these codes:

Human Resources = Human Resources function or department

- S = new employee’s supervisor
- E = employee – self directed
- B = new employee’s assigned “buddy” or co-worker

Organization

Who	When	
_____	_____	History/Mission/Vision/ Organizational philosophy & objectives
_____	_____	Organizational structure
_____	_____	Products and services
_____	_____	Customers
_____	_____	Employee’s department
_____	_____	How departments relate to employee’s department
_____	_____	Plant Tour & facility layout with map
_____	_____	Union representation referral

Compensation

Who	When	
_____	_____	Pay schedule
_____	_____	Timecard
_____	_____	Overtime
_____	_____	Payroll deductions
_____	_____	Direct deposit options
_____	_____	Employee Records
_____	_____	Charities
_____	_____	Workers’ compensation
_____	_____	Salary reviews

Benefits

Who	When	
_____	_____	Medical plan
_____	_____	Dental plan
_____	_____	Life insurance
_____	_____	Pension plan
_____	_____	Credit union
_____	_____	Savings plan
_____	_____	Incentive programs
_____	_____	Service and recognition awards
_____	_____	Employee purchases
_____	_____	Profit sharing



Professional development

Who	When	
_____	_____	Tuition reimbursement
_____	_____	Training and development programs
_____	_____	Buddy program

Attendance

Who	When	
_____	_____	Work hours
_____	_____	Rules about lateness, sickness, absence

Leave and holidays

Who	When	
_____	_____	Holidays
_____	_____	Leave policy
_____	_____	Family Medical Leave
_____	_____	Vacation
_____	_____	Jury duty

Health and safety

Who	When	
_____	_____	Safety
_____	_____	Emergency procedure
_____	_____	Evacuation routes and fire drills
_____	_____	HACCP
_____	_____	First aid
_____	_____	What to do in case of an accident
_____	_____	Driving company equipment
_____	_____	Child-care program
_____	_____	Wellness program
_____	_____	Employee-assistance program
_____	_____	Drug-free workplace

Security

Who	When	
_____	_____	Security procedures
_____	_____	Restricted areas
_____	_____	Name badge
_____	_____	Confidentiality and non-competition statement
_____	_____	Loyalty oath
_____	_____	Drug testing

Internal communications

Who	When	
_____	_____	Organization newsletter
_____	_____	Organization bulletin board
_____	_____	Employee handbook
_____	_____	Voice-mail operation
_____	_____	Standards for outgoing voice-mail messages

Transportation

Who	When	
_____	_____	Carpooling/ride sharing
_____	_____	Parking
_____	_____	Public transportation available
_____	_____	Permits, restricted areas



Personal comfort

Who	When	
_____	_____	Rest and meal breaks
_____	_____	Meet teammates
_____	_____	Cafeteria/break facilities
_____	_____	Recycling programs
_____	_____	Smoking policy
_____	_____	Rest-room locations
_____	_____	Safeguarding personal belongings/ lockers
_____	_____	Lunch the first day
_____	_____	Sports activities
_____	_____	Recreational facilities and programs

Performance

Who	When	
_____	_____	What is expected of employees – Job Description/Job Standards
_____	_____	Food handling
_____	_____	Ethical standards
_____	_____	Conflict of interest
_____	_____	Probationary period
_____	_____	Dress code - Whites/No exposed jewelry
_____	_____	Probationary Period
_____	_____	Promotions
_____	_____	Performance reviews
_____	_____	Disciplinary process
_____	_____	Causes for termination
_____	_____	Personal calls and visitors
_____	_____	Suggestions
_____	_____	Sexual harassment
_____	_____	Who to go to if you have a problem



Employee Recognition

What is Employee Recognition?

Look up the words *recognize* or *recognition* in any dictionary and you will find definitions that use words such as “see”, “identify”, and “acknowledge”. These words are at the core of what effective employee recognition is about. Employee recognition means management cares enough to take the time to see, identify and acknowledge the organizational contributions, valued behaviours and good efforts of employees. Recognition is an essential element to any successful working relationship. Employees must know that their work matters and is important to the company. As individuals, not all people value the same recognition for similar activities or behaviours. Personalizing the recognition process is the most effective way to motivate and increase performance, develop employee skill, acknowledge contributions, and meet organizational objectives.

A simple, yet powerful way to understand employee recognition is CARES.

Compensation

Assistance & Benefits

Recognition & Rewards

Equal Work/Life Balance

System of Career Development

Note: In the absence of providing most of these elements, by default, compensation will become the primary motivator for the employee. When this happens, the highest bidding company wins.

“No one cares how much you know until they know how much you care.”

Cavett Roberts

Defining Elements of CARES

Compensation

Pay provided by an employer to an employee for services rendered (i.e. time, effort and skill).

Assistance & Benefits

Programs an employer uses to supplement the cash compensation that employees receive. Programs like health care, income protection, savings and retirement assistance programs provide security for employees and their families.

Recognition & Rewards

Acknowledges employee actions, efforts, behaviour or performance. This fulfills the employees need for appreciation for their efforts and supports business strategy by reinforcing positive behaviours that contribute to organizational success. Rewards can be cash or non cash (e.g., verbal recognition, trophies, certificates, plaques, dinners, tickets, etc.)

Equal Work/Life Balance

A specific set of organizational practices, policies and programs, driven by a philosophy that actively supports employees achieving success at work and at home.

System of Personal & Professional Development

A set of learning experiences within the employee’s career plan designed to enhance their applied skills and competencies. Development engages employees to perform better and engages leaders to advance their organizations’ people strategies. The company supports career opportunities internally so that talented employees are deployed in positions that enable them to deliver their greatest value to the organization.



Compensation

Base Wages	Premium Pay	Variable Pay
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flexibility Opportunities Tuition Reimbursement Salary Pay Hourly Pay Piece Rate Pay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shift Differential Pay Weekend/Holiday Pay On-call Pay Call-In Pay Hazard pay Skill-Based Pay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commissions Team-Based Pay Bonus Programs Referral Bonus Hiring Bonus Retention Bonus Project Completion RSP Co-Contributions Bonus Incentive Pay Profit Sharing Individual Performance - Based Incentives Performance-Sharing Incentives Restricted Stock Performance Shares Performance Units Stock Options/Grants



Assistance & Benefits

<p>Legally Mandated Unemployment Insurance Worker’s Compensation Canada Pension Plan</p>	<p>Health & Welfare Medical Plan Dental Plan Vision Plan Prescription Drug Plan Life Insurance Spouse/Dependent Life Insurance Short-Term/Long-Term Disability Insurance</p>	<p>Retirement Company Pension Plan Cost-Savings, RSP</p>	<p>Additional Vacation Holiday Sick Leave Bereavement Leave Leaves of Absence (Jury duty, Personal, Medical, Family Medical) Maternity/Paternity Leave Adoption Leave Sabbaticals</p>
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Recognition & Rewards

<p>Recognition Service Awards Retirement Awards Peer Recognition Awards Spot Awards Managerial Recognition Programs</p>	<p>Organization-wide Recognition Programs Exceeding Performance Awards Employee of the Month/Year Awards Appreciation Luncheons</p>	<p>Outings, Formal Events Goal-Specific Awards (Quality, Efficiency, Occupational Health & Safety Productivity) Employee Suggestion Programs</p>
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Equal Work/Life Balance

<p>Workplace Flexibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flex-Time Flexible Schedules Telecommuting Compressed Workweek Job Sharing Part-time Employment Seasonal Schedules 	<p>Health & Wellness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee Assistance On-site Fitness Facilities Fitness Club Discounts Wellness Programs On-site Massages Immunization Clinics Health Screenings Nutritional Counselling On-Site Nurse Mentoring Programs Disability Management Return to Work Programs Reproductive Health/ Pregnancy Programs 	<p>Community Involvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Volunteering Matching Gift Programs Shared Leave Programs Disaster Relief Funds Sponsorships/Grants In-Kind Donations 	<p>Caring for Dependents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dependent Care Services On-site Childcare Support Groups Adoption Assistance After-School Care College Scholarships
<p>Financial Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial Planning Services and Education Bus Transit Subsidies 	<p>Voluntary Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long Term Care Auto/Home Insurance Legal Insurance Identity Theft Insurance Employee Discounts Bicycle Program Parking 	<p>Culture Change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work Redesign Team Effectiveness Diversity/Inclusion Initiatives Women’s Advancement Initiatives Work Environment Initiatives 	

Recognition & Rewards

<p>Learning Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tuition Reimbursement Tuition Discounts Corporate Universities New Technology Training On-the-Job Learning Attendance at Outside Seminars and Conferences Access to Virtual Learning, Podcasts, Webinars Self-Development Tools 	<p>Coaching/Mentoring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership Training Exposure to onsite Experts Access to Information Networks Formal or Informal Mentoring Programs 	<p>Advancement Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internships Apprenticeships Overseas Assignments Internal Job Postings Job Advancement/Promotion Career Ladders and Pathways Succession Planning Job Rotations
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Benefits of Employee Recognition - the Link between Recognition and Performance

There are a number of recognition-performance links that directly impact food processors in the following ways:

- Recognizing employees helps management motivate staff.
- Providing recognition to line workers when they do good work increases performance.
- Recognizing employees provides them with practical feedback.
- Recognizing employees for good work makes it easier to get the work done.
- Providing recognition helps achieve corporate goals.
- Providing recognition helps achieve job specific goals.

12 Benefits of Employee Recognition for food processors

1. Motivates employees by acknowledging their achievements.
2. Enhances individuals self-worth and self-confidence.
3. Reinforces positive behaviours to both individual and entire team.
4. Positive workplace draws passive job seekers & increases likelihood of employee referrals.
5. Reduces employee turnover & absenteeism.
6. Fosters a sense of pride in work and company.
7. Enhances relationship between supervisors and workers.
8. Promotes positive open communications.
9. Creates loyal employees.
10. Improves productivity.
11. Reinforces company culture and values & aligns desired behaviours with company goals.
12. Increases profits.

Building an Employee Recognition Program

While there is more than one way to design an effective employee recognition program, many successful programs share common attributes. The most effective recognition programs typically use a systems approach to develop a “culture of recognition.” They reflect the organization’s values and business strategy. They are clearly defined and well-publicized. They involve employees in program design and implementation, and are multi-layered (organization-wide and unit-specific). While maintaining creativity and fun they can still have a mix of formal and informal programs. To avoid stagnation, programs need to change periodically. Building a timely and specific recognition program is more meaningful when supported with educational tools and when the reward is personalized to the individual.

The characteristics of effective recognition are:

- **Timely** – as soon as possible after the positive achievement
- **Proportional** – matches the action in type and degree of recognition
- **Specific** – identifies the positive behaviour
- **Individual** – recognizes the person involved in the action
- **Sincere** – comes from the heart and shows you care
- **Personal** – reflects the personality of the recipient

Three Keys to Effective Employee Recognition

1. Invest Time

To engage employees, you may want to consider making time for personal talk such as going for coffee periodically together or making time to inquire about their life outside of work. When you make time to show interest in a fellow employee, you are demonstrating recognition for the individual. Employees are more likely to share their interests, challenges and successes, if they feel that you are genuinely interested in what they have to say. Showing interest and engaging employees will be a zero cost, yet effective way to begin a relationship, and to provide meaningful individual recognition.



2. Determine What is Important

Know what is important to employees, at work and outside of work. Recognition encompasses accepting each other as unique individuals and acknowledging that each of us has a life outside of work. This will enable a better understanding of employees, their values, and how you can demonstrate recognition effectively on an individual basis. In order to make recognition a valuable and meaningful tool, it is essential to determine what is important or perceived as valuable from an individual perspective.

3. Individualize

Finally, break into the core of recognition. Find out specifically when, what and how employees like to be recognized. Having employees who feel valued is an essential step to creating a healthy and positive workplace and enhancing performance. Employees who feel valued are likely to have increased performance, decreased absenteeism and turnover rates, and may be able to influence the morale of other employees in a healthy and positive way. When providing recognition at a personal level - keep it simple! Keep it spontaneous yet sincere. Start to take note and comment on the things that are valued by that individual.

Essential Elements of Recognition

- **Match** the recognition to the person according to what is important to them.
- Directly **link** recognition to performance and goal achievement.
- Be **timely** by giving recognition as soon as possible after desired behaviour.
- Always **state** why recognition is given to ensure clarity and repeat behaviour.
- Make it **fair** by allowing all employees equal opportunities for recognition.
- Be **creative** by using a variety of methods to recognize employees' accomplishments.
- **Involve** your team in determining what recognition they value.
- Give **ongoing** words of praise according to accomplishment.
- Always remember the golden words "Thank You".

Three Approaches to Recognition

Day-to-Day	An ongoing no-cost approach given to anyone at anytime. The most powerful motivator is immediate recognition. Example: praise, thanks...
Informal	Includes low-cost, tangible gestures of appreciation. Example: certificates of appreciation, Tim Hortons gift cards...
Formal	Higher profile organization-wide events where all employees can receive recognition. Example: Long Service Awards, Company President's Award of Excellence...



Questions Worth Considering When Setting Up an Employee Recognition Program

- Why is a recognition program needed? (purpose, goals)
- What needs to be recognized? (achievement, service, safety, production output, reduction in wastage, zero accidents)
- What funds are available? (if needed)
- Get input from production workers on their recognition preferences.
- Decide on recognition strategies.
- Who gives and receives the recognition?
- What criteria will be used?
- When or how often the recognition will occur?
- How will the recognition be accomplished? (formal awards, celebrations, informal praise)

Possible reasons why a production worker should be recognized:

- Performed duties of increased responsibility.
- Accomplished something others have not.
- Served notably in an important position.
- Covered for an absent line worker.
- Accomplished more than peers.
- Performed the job with exceptional efficiency and/or effectiveness.
- Made recommendations that had a positive impact.
- Accomplished the same quality of work but with less people, less money, or shorter deadline.
- Displayed extra initiative.
- Demonstrated unusual creativity.
- Demonstrated extra enthusiasm.
- Saved money and/or time.

The following is a list of possible low cost/high impact ways to recognize employees:

- “Welcome to the team” coffee with co-workers on the first day of work.
- Whenever something positive happens, put it in the “smile box” – read once a week – draw one for a winner (\$25 gift certificate).
- Brown bag welcoming lunch to meet new employees.
- Post a sign in cafeteria with new employee’s name and picture.
- Survey employees to learn what forms of recognition appeal to them.
- Hand written thank-you notes.
- Gift certificate to popular stores (Canadian Tire, Marks Work Warehouse and Wall Mart).
- Pizzas for lunch.
- Tim Horton’s cards.

- Certificates for dinner for two at local restaurant.
- Lunch and Learn meetings.
- Certificates for course completion.
- Company shirts and hoodies.
- Paid time off certificates.
- Safety Recognition Day.
- Coffee and doughnuts for entire production line.
- Employee of the Month with free lunches for Friday during the month.
- Extra Mile Award: For doing anything extra.
- Spark plug award, bright idea/suggestion.
- One-on-one lunch with plant manager.
- Weekly toolbox meeting with a good news piece shared.
- “All Hands on Deck Meeting”: Quarterly meetings with award presentations. Managers Club Award: Voted on by employees.
- Sports tickets or concert tickets.
- A night at the movies passes with coupons for food.
- “Hall of Fame”: Display employee awards and certificates on company’s “Hall of Fame.”
- Extra lunch time.
- Bonuses based on goals (such as safety); tied to group and individual incentives.
- Peer Award: Team member to team member.
- Thank-you card with chocolate bar.
- On-the-spot awards.
- Birthday cards and Birthday notices on staff boards.
- Morale Squad: Small group of volunteers with a small budget that they use for any type of morale building event.
- Send an item of recognition to someone’s home.
- Quarterly perfect attendance: Choice of 1/2-day pay or 1-day paid time off.
- Annual perfect attendance: Lunch with plant manager and choice of a gift.
- Massage therapy.
- Pre-paid cell phone minutes card.
- Bring popcorn for employees to share.
- Give out free soft drinks/juice to employees on hot days.
- Give employees company products in thanks.
- Mugs and t-shirts commemorating achievements.
- Recognition in company newsletter.
- Lunch barbecue for employees hosted by management.
- “Night-out” certificates including child care.
- Celebrate holidays not usually celebrated such as Philippines Independence Day and summer solstice.
- Individual departments set up their own recognition programs.



The following tool is a great way to quickly identify which forms of on-the-job recognition are most valuable to you. Please answer these questions to assist us in improving our recognition processes.

Assess the results

Please read the sentences below and circle the number that tells us how important these things are to you:

	Not Important	Sort of Important	Quite Important	Very Important
Being thanked by your supervisor	0	1	2	3
Being told you do a good job in front of the people you work with	0	1	2	3
Getting a certificate that proves you have done a good job	0	1	2	3
Getting thanked for your attendance at work	0	1	2	3
Getting a letter from the company thanking you for doing a good job	0	1	2	3
Getting a company award	0	1	2	3
If you have a company newsletter, being thanked in the company newsletter	0	1	2	3
Getting cash for doing a good job	0	1	2	3
Getting a pre-paid card to buy something when you do a good job	0	1	2	3
Getting tickets to go to a special event	0	1	2	3
Getting a “years-of-service” award	0	1	2	3
Being named employee-of-the-month	0	1	2	3

Please read the sentences below and circle the number that tells us how often these things happened for you:

	Never Happened	Sometimes Happened	Often Happened
Being thanked by your supervisor	0	1	2
Being told you do a good job in front of the people you work with	0	1	2
Getting a certificate that proves you have done a good job	0	1	2
Getting thanked for your attendance at work	0	1	2
Getting a letter from the company thanking you for doing a good job	0	1	2
Getting a company award	0	1	2
If you have a company newsletter, being thanked in the company newsletter	0	1	2
Getting cash for doing a good job	0	1	2
Getting a pre-paid card to buy something when you did a good job	0	1	2
Getting tickets to go to a special event	0	1	2
Getting a “years-of-service” award	0	1	2
Being named employee-of-the-month	0	1	2



Employee Referrals

What is an Employee Referral?

An employee referral occurs when an existing employee encourages someone they know to apply to work for the same company or when the employee notifies their employer about a potential future employee that is part of their social network. By encouraging your good workers to invite their friends and family to apply to work at your company you are turning your entire team into recruiters that can sell your company—and its available positions—to some potentially great candidates.

Benefits of Establishing an Employee Referral Program

Your employees can be your best recruiters. By implementing a well thought out employee referral program, your company will enjoy many significant benefits. Research has shown that employees hired through referrals typically display the following positive qualities over their non-referral counterparts:

- Less cost to “reach”, resulting in reduced advertising and search firm fees
- Less time to recruit
- Have greater understanding of what the job entails
- Adapt more quickly to new job and company culture
- Display higher levels of performance sooner
- Fit-in quicker with existing team
- Stay with companies for longer periods of time

“I have found that referred employees are 20-40% more productive when starting their new jobs than non-referred hires.”

Dave Lefkow, Senior Director, Jobster

“Referred employees stay at the job four times longer and are fired about four times less than employees who were not referred.”

**Prof. John Sullivan,
San Francisco State University**

The main difference between working with a new hire that was referred by an employee and one who is hired “off of the street” is that the referred hire already has a realistic expectation of the job, has been endorsed by your employee and comes with a point person within the company.

Lessons from Customer Service

Imagine receiving very poor service and under cooked food at a restaurant. Upon paying for the meal the manager says, “I hope you will encourage your friends and family to come check us out, and if they do we will give you a coupon for a free appetizer.” This example is similar to how many companies execute their Employee Referral Programs. They encourage employees to recruit friends and family members to work for an organization that is less-than-stellar and they then offer a token referral bonus. It should come as no surprise that this approach to employee referrals yields little to no results.

It is All About the Experience

If you want a more successful Employee Referral Program, you first need to make sure you are giving your employees something to brag about.

The following slogan applies to both the world of customer service as well as creating an organization that employees will be proud to share with others. *“People will go to where they are invited, will stay when they are appreciated and will tell others when encouraged to do so!”*

Bill Gibson, professional speaker/ author

To turn your workforce into a team of recruiters, you need to take an honest look at the work experience you deliver.



If You Create the Right Experience, They Will Talk

Asking questions about the work experience you deliver to your employees will help you design the kind of experience that employees want to talk about. They will want to tell their friends and family because they will feel so lucky, and they know how exceptional their employer is. They will WANT to give the people they care about and respect an opportunity to be as lucky as they are.

Not only does creating such a satisfying, motivating, inspiring work experience turn your workforce into a band of head-hunters, it also improves morale, productivity, engagement, and customer service quality. This is not a “nice to do if we had the time” project. Doing this well has far reaching implications for the very sources of your financial viability.

12 Commandments of Being Referrable

So, how do you create this kind of experience? First, to make it more manageable, break down the “Employee Experience” into the following 12 sub-experiences. Think about what “Moments of Truth” comprise the total employee experience. Some of the most important – and often botched – “Moments of Truth” that shape the overall employee experience are:

1. Recruiting and Pre-selection Experience

- Does your process leave applicants feeling respected?
- Does your process lead people to view your company as a well run outfit?
- Does your process lead people to view your company as an employer who cares about and respects its employees?

2. Job Offer and Welcoming Package Experience

- Does the job offer clearly state the job being offered; start date and time, pay and benefits?
- Does the welcome package provide valuable information for the new recruit to review prior to the first day on the job?

3. Orientation Experience

- Is your orientation program inspiring or does it leave new employees with “Hires Regret”?
- Does your orientation program leave new hires with the impression that you’re a well run, professional outfit that does things right, or a fly-by-the-seat-of-your-pants, clumsily run organization?
- What does your on-boarding process have (or does not have)? for integrating new hires into the workforce in the first 60 days... would it lead to new hires feeling that they are valued, that their employer cares about their well-being and success... or is it more of a “sink or swim” experience?

4. Receiving Directions and Delegating Experience

- Do supervisors and managers clearly communicate expectations, the “how to” when appropriate, and other factors that help employees, understanding of what is expected of them... or do employees, often feel like they’re “flying blind”?
- Do supervisors and managers make it clear how they prioritize the various tasks and give reasonable workloads and time frames?

5. Receiving Informal Feedback Experience

- Do supervisors and managers provide regular feedback to employees, or wait to surprise them in the annual performance review?
- Do supervisors and managers know how to give feedback in clear, concrete terms or only in vague terms that leave employees feeling frustrated and without direction (e.g. “You need to be more of a team player, OK?”)
- Do supervisors and managers know how to give corrective feedback respectfully or only in a scolding way?
- Do supervisors and managers know how to invite employees to share their point of view, so they feel understood or do they just “talk at” and “preach to” employees?
- Do supervisors and managers integrate these conversations into a development plan?



6. Formal Performance Evaluation Experience

- Are performance evaluations seen as a waste of time by managers and supervisors, or as a useful performance enhancement and professional development tool?
- Is the information contained in the performance evaluation truly a review of previous conversations or is it late-breaking news?
- Are employees active participants in the review process, assessing their own performance, or is it primarily something that the supervisor or manager “does to” the employee?
- Is it safe for employees to disagree and not be perceived as disagreeable?

7. Dealing with Employee Concerns Experience

- Do supervisors and manager listen to what employees have to say, or do they dismiss, talk at, or lecture their employees?
- Do employee concerns get addressed, including employees being advised of the status and outcome of the issues they raised?
- If an employee concern doesn't result in change, is an explanation provided?
- Do employees have to badger their boss to get them to act on a concern, or do managers respond with the same interest they would if their boss asked them?
- Do employees feel heard?

8. Responding to Employee Ideas/Suggestions Experience

- What message do employees get about their ideas and input: highly valued or don't bother?
- If an employee comes up with an unworkable idea, how does the manager handle it... in a way that leaves the employee feeling respected and appreciated or feeling stupid, irrelevant, and/or patronized?
- Do employees receive the information and the “big picture” context that makes useful ideas possible?
- Are employees advised of the status of their ideas, and if an idea isn't used, do they understand why it was not implemented?

9. Introductions of Changes Experience

- Are employees kept in the loop – or kept in the dark – during change processes?

- Do employees get the truth or do they get spin?
- Are employees asked for input and/or feedback about possible changes?
- Does management make the “rules of the game” clear when asking for input or feedback – i.e. whether employee feedback will actually impact decision-making?
- Are employees allowed to dissent without being seen as “not a team player”?

10. Resolving Conflict with the Boss Experience

- Is it safe for employees to voice their disagreements with their boss or is it considered a career limiting move?
- Is it safe for employees to be honest with their boss if they feel their boss's managerial behaviour is counterproductive?
- Is honesty and openness valued, supported, and encouraged?
- Are managers coached about how to make it safe for employees to be open with them?
- Are managers held accountable for their behaviour toward employees or is one of the perks of power the freedom to mistreat one's staff?

11. Employee Recognition Experience

- Do employees feel taken for granted or do they feel appreciated?
- Do employees feel that going the extra mile is recognized and appreciated?
- Do employees feel that hard work and high performance is recognized by their boss and by the company?

12. Employee Referral Experience

- Is the process involved in referring someone easy to do?
- Are employees aware of the employee referral program?
- Does the company quickly act upon the referral provided by contacting the referred person?
- Does the employee that provided the referral get acknowledged in some way?
- Are thanks given after referral?



Now What?

The following list will get you started with analysis of the work experience that you deliver. Here is how to use it for maximum benefit:

1. Use the experiences as a starting point to generate a more complete checklist of experiences that defines the total employee experience.
2. Use the questions under each experience to analyze how you can improve the way you deliver that experience. As always, involve your management team and your Employee Advisory Council in this process.
3. For each of the “12 Commandments”, ask:
 - “What do our employees say they want from this interaction?”
 - “The way we handle this step... what emotions and perceptions does it leave with our employees?”
 - “If we do it this new way, what emotions and perceptions would that leave with our employees?”
 - “What emotions and perceptions do we want this moment of truth to create... and what do we need to do to create them?”
4. You can get the ball rolling by asking your employees “Do you have the kind of work experience at our company that makes you want to tell others that we’re a great place to work? Does it make you want to recommend us to your friends and colleagues?”
5. Make sure you involve employees not only in data gathering, but in implementing changes. As in any change or organizational development initiative, the more you involve your employees in the process, the more invested they’ll be, the better your data, and the better the results.

Building an Employee Referral Program

There is no one right way to build a referral program – every company is different. An important fact to keep in mind is that each referral program you run has a shelf life. To keep your employees interested you need to change the theme of your program every 6 months or so.

As was mentioned before, the most important factor in determining the success of an employee referral program is the “referrability” of the company. The following are a few additional things you should consider doing to ensure that your referral program will be a success.

Get employee buy-in

The first step to building a program is to get your employees, from management to line workers, on board, as they will become your source for new hires. This is called getting a buy-in. Your employees need to believe in the referral program to become involved in it. A successful referral program starts at the top with continual reinforcement from the president/general manager or plant manager. If you can’t get your management team on board with the referral program your employees won’t find value in it.

Promoting your referral program is one way to reinforce its importance and keep enthusiasm for the program alive. Continuously promote the referral program every chance you get; one on-one, or in weekly meetings. Showing that you are excited and active in the success of the program will help win over the rest of your company. Track and publicize all the numbers related to your program for all to see.

Determine the reward

The rewards will be different depending on whom you are targeting for the referrals. If your reward is financial, be cautious. Sizeable cash rewards may result in an overwhelming number of unqualified candidates. If the reward is too small, or something your employees aren’t interested in, no one will pay attention. If you are committed to giving out a cash reward ask your employees what amount it would take to motivate them and base your reward on their answers. Money is a motivator but shouldn’t be the only motivator considered as a reward for a successful referral.

Here are some non cash suggestions for rewards:

- NHL Hockey Tickets
- Paid days off
- Gift card for popular store (Wal-Mart, CDN Tire etc)
- Certificate for dinner for two at local restaurant



Some people reward each employee individually for a referral that was hired while some put the names of all the employees that passed on excellent referrals into a hat for a draw. These rewards tend to be bigger, since only one reward is given out. Prizes can run the gamut from free airline tickets or a cruise vacation, to an extra paid week of vacation time. You can reward your employees however you see fit, but you need to be sure the reward is something your employees will respond to or the program simply won't work. After all, what might sound enticing to one person may sound foolish to another. Consider a cross promotion with a supplier or sister company, or perhaps a sponsor to provide a draw.

Be creative when promoting the program

When building a referral program think like a marketer. Find a fun and clever theme that grabs your employees' attention. The most important thing is the audience – know what they will respond to. Some people will respond to a cash reward while others will respond to gift cards or electronic gadgets. Find out what will drive your employees. One company recently used a clever theme to promote their referral program. It was called “Go Fish” and all around the cafeteria huge, colourful paper mache fish hung from the ceiling. Whenever an employee referred a useful candidate to the company they got a miniature version of the big fish and their name went into a fish bowl for a raffle at the end of the program.

Maintain the program with open communication

Open communication is key. If your referral program is not giving you the results you had hoped, talk with your employees and managers to get to the root of the problem. Also, it is important to keep your employees in the loop when it comes to where their referrals stand so that their contributions are taken seriously. One way to do this is to guarantee an interview with anyone who was referred by an employee. You also must be honest with the referred candidates. If a referral isn't quite right for the position or company, they may know someone else who might be. A referral program is about building relationships – the more relationships you have the bigger the pool of candidates.

Assess the results

As with any business practice, a referral program must be reviewed regularly for effectiveness. The most common way to assess the success of a referral program is to look at the percentage of new hires that come from referrals, how well they work out, how long they stay with the company, how quickly vacancies can be filled and how the overall cost-to-hire is reduced. You also should measure your referral promotions against each other to find out which ones garnered the best results. If something didn't work, learn from the experience. Remember to change your referral program to keep it interesting and rewarding for your employees. By using different themes and rewards you will breathe life into your referral efforts.

Things to Keep in Mind

There do not seem to be many pitfalls to having a referral program, but there are a few things you must keep in mind to keep one running effectively.

- **Life span of the program** – No matter how wonderful your referral program is it still has a shelf life. To keep your employees motivated you need to change the theme or rewards of the bonus program to get their attention.
- **Problems with the attribution of referral** – It is a small world and having two employees refer the same great candidate does happen. Make sure to establish some ground rules and stipulations on referrals before promoting your program.
- **Make the rules simple** – Complex submission rules will dissuade employees from participating. Try to create guidelines that are easily understood. However, make sure you address problematic areas, such as how to deal with a situation in which two people claim to have referred the same candidate who ultimately was hired.
- **Maintain clear records** – By time-dating each resume that has a properly filled out referral card, for example, you can avoid potential problems. Keep data that list the referral, the date, the name of the candidate, all pertinent candidate data, a copy of the resume/application, and a copy of the referral form. Also, when the status of the referral changes, update it accordingly.



Communicating Employee Referral Program

Use pay cheque stuffers and the company newsletter or intranet to publicize the program. Announce special events, such as giveaways or quarterly drawings, as well as the status of the overall program and the status of individuals referred. Consider sending out a direct mail piece to all of your employee's home addresses. This works on two levels. First, the advertisement is at home and it is easy to show friends and family. Secondly, if a spouse or family member learns that the employee is eligible to receive a nice bonus for referring someone, they will often encourage or remind the employee to submit the referral.



Sample

Employee Referral Program

Employee Name: _____ Employee # : _____

Name of Referred: _____ Contact Information: _____

To be completed by Human Resources

Position Hired For: _____ Date Hired: _____

Referral Incentive Time line: (Length of time worked by referred employee)

- \$ 100.00 - 480/hours worked Check # _____ Date issued/Direct deposit: _____
- \$ 100.00 - 960/hours worked Check # _____ Date issued/Direct deposit: _____
- \$ 100.00 - 1440/hours worked Check # _____ Date issued/Direct deposit: _____

Notes:

- It is the responsibility of the referring employee to notify Human Resources by completing the top portion of this form and submitting it directly to a Human Resources representative.
- The employee that made the referral will be notified if their referral was hired or not.
- Referral incentive cheques will be paid on the pay run following the new hires fulfilling each time line milestone.
- This program is open to all employees except Human Resources and senior management.
- Referral incentives are subject to income taxation.
- The referring employee must be currently employed with the company in order to receive payment.
- Employees are allowed to refer multiple people over the duration of the Employee Referral Program
- Referred employees must not have been employed with the company during the past 90 days in order to qualify for this program.



Insert Logo	Insert Logo
Employee Name: _____ Name of Referral: _____ Contact Information: _____ To learn more about our exciting job opportunities please contact our Human Resources department	Employee Name: _____ Name of Referral: _____ Contact Information: _____ To learn more about our exciting job opportunities please contact our Human Resources department
Insert Logo	Insert Logo
Employee Name: _____ Name of Referral: _____ Contact Information: _____ To learn more about our exciting job opportunities please contact our Human Resources department	Employee Name: _____ Name of Referral: _____ Contact Information: _____ To learn more about our exciting job opportunities please contact our Human Resources department
Insert Logo	Insert Logo
Employee Name: _____ Name of Referral: _____ Contact Information: _____ To learn more about our exciting job opportunities please contact our Human Resources department	Employee Name: _____ Name of Referral: _____ Contact Information: _____ To learn more about our exciting job opportunities please contact our Human Resources department
Insert Logo	Insert Logo
Employee Name: _____ Name of Referral: _____ Contact Information: _____ To learn more about our exciting job opportunities please contact our Human Resources department	Employee Name: _____ Name of Referral: _____ Contact Information: _____ To learn more about our exciting job opportunities please contact our Human Resources department
Insert Logo	Insert Logo
Employee Name: _____ Name of Referral: _____ Contact Information: _____ To learn more about our exciting job opportunities please contact our Human Resources department	Employee Name: _____ Name of Referral: _____ Contact Information: _____ To learn more about our exciting job opportunities please contact our Human Resources department



Please check (✓) one: I was hired: less than 6 months ago more than 6 months ago

(Please circle **one** response for each question)

Did you know that the company has a program that gives you money if you get someone to work at the company?	Yes	No
Do you know how the Employee Referral program works at the company?	Yes	No
Do you feel that the company wants you to tell people to work at the company?	Yes	No
Have you ever told someone to apply for a job with this company?	Yes	No
If you have not told anyone to apply for a job with this company, why not?		
Is it easy to use the company's Employee Referral Program?	Yes	No
If you did get someone to apply for a job at the company in the past, did you like the way that you were treated by the company for getting that person to apply?	Yes	No
Do you feel that the company contacted the person that applied for the job fast enough?	Yes	No
Did the company thank you for getting the person to apply for the job?	Yes	No
Was the person that you got to apply for the job hired by the company?	Yes	No
If the person that you got to apply for the job was hired, are they still working with the company?	Yes	No
If the person is no longer working for the company, why did they leave?		
In the future would you likely refer someone to work here?	Yes	No

If you were the boss of the company, how would you get your employees to ask people to apply for jobs at your company?



Materials for this manual have been adapted from the following:

Photos: iStockphoto

Successful New Employee Orientation, Pfeiffer, Jean Barbazette*

How to Keep Your Staff Productive & Happy, Kendal Hunt Publishing, Dr. Denis Cauvier

For a More Successful Employee Referral Program, Think Experience, HumanNatureAtWork.com, David Lee

1001 Ways to Reward Employees, Workman Publishing, Bob Nelson*

Breathing Life into Your Employee Referral Program, Monster.com

Total Rewards Model, Worldatwork.com

* These resources are so useful that Human Resources departments are encouraged to obtain their own copies.