

## *Employee Incentives*

### **Employers Can Attract Employees By Offering Career Aid**

**I**f you want to attract and retain employees, you have to offer them the prospect of career growth at your organization, consultants say.

“When focusing on employee development, you will see the impact on retention—they want to stay, they want to grow,” Hawley Kane, product manager and HR champion at Halogen Software, said.

This is necessary because “70 percent of U.S. workers are not engaged,” a number that has not changed much in several years, according to Gallup Poll numbers Kane cited. Worse, a significant percentage of the disaffected are so much that way, they are looking to discourage others, she said.

Internal mobility, a dynamic internal process for an employer to move employees between roles, “is effective when there’s an integrated strategy, and it has to have support from the top,” Julie Harrison, product marketing manager at Halogen Software, said. Simply posting available openings to your current employees isn’t enough, she said.

When there’s a key role to be filled, it has to be filled fast, Harrison said, and yet filling roles is taking longer than ever. Internal hiring saves precious time and money, eliminates the risk of organizational culture misfits, and is great for employee morale, she said.

**Test-Driving New Roles.** One way companies are encouraging their employees’ career growth is by creating “the equivalent of in-house career centers—internal career mobility centers that match someone with a job in one functional area” to another they would like to learn about and might want to transfer to, Jeanne Meister, founding partner at New York City-based HR executive network and research firm Future Workplace, told Bloomberg BNA Nov. 17.

This finding was based on a survey whose results Future Workplace released Nov. 14, based on a survey of 2,147 HR and hiring managers in 10 countries that tech Cisco conducted earlier this year.

“Millennials, the largest generational cohort as of 2015, want to stay in an organization that invests in their career growth,” a motivation that is one of the top three employees that age give for staying at a job, Meister said.

Luring and holding onto employees of this generation is attracting a lot of interest from employers and consultants. “Employers should focus on identifying, understanding, and aligning with millennials’ values and sup-

porting their professional development,” Jeff Schwartz, human capital leader, Deloitte Global, told Bloomberg BNA in a Nov. 17 e-mail.

“To retain millennials, employers can encourage mentorship and provide opportunities for them to progress and become leaders,” Schwartz said. “Having a mentor to guide them is incredibly powerful.”

In a study earlier this year, he said Deloitte found that “millennials’ loyalty to an employer is higher when they have a mentor who understands and supports their career and life ambitions.”

Another example of a key career development step employers can help with, according to Harrison, is encouraging each new employee to develop a “profile” as soon as he or she starts working for the organization, during onboarding. These profiles can then be made computer searchable by managers looking to fill open positions internally. Another example is mentoring programs.

Three other actions Harrison recommended were to identify one or two specific, clear goals (such as retaining high-potential employees) and tie them directly to business targets and financial impact; translate those goals into a policy, and be transparent about that by communicating it to all employees and managers; and identify measurements that can be traced back to the goals you set, which “will help you know what data to produce” in areas such as employee turnover costs and employee engagement.

**Training Is Key.** Training is also a key part of employee career development, but employers are not doing all they can to systematize it.

“Eighty-two percent of employees share important information in person to their colleagues, which means that information is not being formally captured,” reported speechme, a micro-learning and peer-to-peer skills and knowledge transfer platform, based on a September survey it conducted among more than 500 employees at companies with more than 500 employees each. Moreover, speechme said Nov. 14, “61 percent of employees have had a colleague leave the company with knowledge or skills that were not documented.”

“The failure is in not making training valuable to all employees,” Kader Garnier Aw, COO of speechme, told Bloomberg BNA Nov. 17. “The knowledge already exists among your employees,” but the organization has to stand ready to help them do this peer-to-peer training.

Kane and Harrison were speaking Nov. 15 in a webinar sponsored by their company and organized by Workforce magazine.

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Speechme survey results are available at [https://www.dropbox.com/s/q2wrg75smo5ywfo/speechme%](https://www.dropbox.com/s/q2wrg75smo5ywfo/speechme%20report.pdf?dl=0)

*20report.pdf?dl=0. An executive summary of a book on the Future Workplace-Cisco survey, *The Future Workplace Experience: 10 Rules For Mastering Disruption in Recruiting and Engaging Employees*, can be found at <http://www.futureworkplace.com/FutureWorkplaceForecastFindings.pdf>.*

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