



5 WAYS GROWING RESTAURANTS

CAN TRAIN AND MAINTAIN HIGH-PERFORMANCE EMPLOYEES

 HungerRushTM360



Every restaurant owner knows how hard it is to hire and maintain good staff right now. While the world steps out of lockdown, you should be focused on providing an excellent dining experience, not managing the never-ending hamster wheel of hiring.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the restaurant industry had an average staff turnover of **130% in 2020**. That's compared to 78.9% in 2019, and **costs businesses around \$5,864 per employee lost**. But it doesn't have to be that way.

Companies that nurture their employees retain them longer and have a healthier work environment—we'll show you five powerful ways to make it happen.

In this e-book, we unpack how to:

-  Hire smart instead of managing hard
-  Respect your employees and reduce the hiring load
-  Give your staff opportunities to grow—and reasons to stay

By the end of this article, you'll be able to make the most of your staff and stem the endless employee drain that's endemic in the restaurant industry. Let's jump right in.

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Tip #1: Hire Emotionally Intelligent People

Creating great food and customer experiences always begins with great ingredients. The same goes for hiring. It's much easier to keep the right people around if you source the best from the start. Here are a few things to keep in mind:

The 51% Solution. **In this book** by acclaimed New York restaurateur Danny **Meyer**, he suggests hiring for emotional intelligence (51% of what makes a good employee) over skillset (49%). His reasoning? You can always teach skills, but the emotional intelligence required to fit into a team — like careful listening and thoughtful emotional expression — is much harder to drill into people.

Screen your candidates.

When you're interviewing, screen for things like natural

optimism, empathy, and work ethic. As a manager, you have to ask yourself; will this person fit right in? Meyer suggests implementing a "trailing" period during interviews. Have the potential hire shadow a senior team member on the job, and see if both sides think they're a match.

Quality, not quantity.

Times are tough. We get it. But while hiring a bunch of cheap temps with zero experience might sound like the right thing to do, it's not going to save a sinking ship. It will just translate into bad service and poor online reviews.

Jordan Boesch, founder and CEO of 7Shifts, **told CNBC**, "There's no way to develop the wrong person," and we're inclined to agree. Even for roles as innocuous as **being a delivery driver**, it's essential to



find team members who will understand and embrace your brand values, mission, and personality, then channel that into customer interactions. Attitude, outlook, and emotional intelligence are essential.

Following the above tips will ensure you're hiring the right kind of people for your restaurant or franchise. But that's just the tip of the iceberg. The tricky part is keeping them there—which brings us to our next point.

>> [Also Read: Short On Labor? How Restaurant Technology Can Reduce Labor By 21%](#)

Tip #2: Serve Up Fresh Training

Research by LinkedIn suggests **93% of employees would stay at their jobs longer if companies invested in them and their careers. The first 90 days** of employment are key—after that, turnover tends to drop.

Here's how to keep your employees where they are:



Make training and onboarding a priority.

Throwing employees headfirst into a busy shift isn't exactly a recipe for success. Instead, establish a training plan and onboarding process that any supervisor or manager can run to get them up to speed before braving the kitchen or front of house.



Have new hires shadow experienced staff.

Shadowing is a great way to show new employees how it's done. Not only does it teach employees the core skills they need to excel, but also integrates them into the company culture.



Provide growth opportunities.

Do you have on-the-job training available? Does your company have a positive attitude toward learning and self-improvement? What are the chances for promotion?



Providing room for growth **gives employees a reason to stay** and saves managers hours interviewing their replacements.

Higher federal minimum wages are incentivizing restaurants to invest more in training, [Rosemary Batt](#), Chair of HR Studies at Cornell, told CNBC. Restaurants have to retain workers in order to justify the wage increase and to improve quality, service, and productivity.

Not to mention, the [National Restaurant Association](#) cites “quality of training” as one of the top attributes people look for in a restaurant job. Without having good training in place, it will be a struggle to keep talented employees at your restaurant for those critical first 90 days.

Tip #3: Check the Temperature on Employee Engagement

Highly engaged workers outperform unengaged workers by [147%](#). But a staggering 86% of employees are not engaged at work—and when many on your team are standing in front of food prep lines for hours, you have to go the extra mile to keep them feeling captivated and appreciated.

It’s hard to improve workforce morale and engagement rates if you’re not actively tracking them. One way to go about this is by [running pulse surveys](#).



You can do this on a physical device or send a survey link to your employees’ phones or emails. They can complete a survey in seconds; simply have staff rate their mood on a scale of 1 to 10. Employees might not want to talk to you about what’s bothering them, but with anonymous data like this, you can get a sense of how people are doing and when.

Maybe staff morale drops when a certain manager is on shift. Maybe all the newbies started the busy shift at the same time. Maybe the schedule was changed at the last minute and nobody’s happy about it but they’re afraid to say anything. All of these things can contribute to a toxic work environment and higher staff turnover.

At the end of the day, you can't address problems if you don't know about them.

That's why we think pulse surveys are a great way to get a sense of what's really happening in the kitchen—even when you're not there.

>> [Also Read: How to Increase Delivery Sales with Integrated Delivery Management Technology](#)

Tip #4:

Deliver a Side Order of Respect

YOUR EMPLOYEES AREN'T ROBOTS THEY'RE PEOPLE —AND PEOPLE NEED TO FEEL RESPECTED AND APPRECIATED IN ORDER TO THRIVE.

Your employees aren't robots. They're people—and people need to feel respected and appreciated in order to thrive.

In fact, a study by Gallup said [lack of recognition](#) is cited as the most common reason employees quit. A little kindness goes a long way.

 **Make sure you are respectful to each and every employee, and that they are respectful to each other.** Get to know them and create a personal connection so they don't feel like just another cog in the machine.

 **Ask employees regularly for their suggestions of ways to improve your restaurant.** You'll probably find that they have good

ideas, and they'll feel a sense of ownership and validation when you implement one of their suggestions.

 **Say “thank you” more.** This is one of the easiest ways to show employees appreciation, but we're so busy, we often forget how important it is. An employee who feels appreciated will give you their best.

Be kind to your employees. Not only is it the right thing to do, but [studies show](#) that an increase in respect at a workplace leads to lower turnover, higher customer loyalty and satisfaction scores, and increases in general productivity.



Tip #5:

Help Employees Create a Better Lifestyle



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Research from Citrix shows that **76% of employees** want a job that enables a more desirable lifestyle.

Employees are concerned about spending time with their families and enjoying their hobbies—so offering perks like flexible schedules and rewarding hard workers can go a long way.

Small gestures like this are easy to implement and make

Why not offer your top workers:

-  The best parking spot at the shop
-  A surprise day of paid vacation
-  Free meals or a family discount for friend and family get-togethers

your employees feel like part of the team.

To identify your rising stars, try reviewing social media comments or holding in-store sales competitions (like upsells per hour or quality-speed faceoffs).

Ask your employees what would make them feel seen. You might be surprised that it doesn't take much.

Bonus Tip:

Working in
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It's not easy keeping your staff happy. And sometimes hiring can feel like a never-ending chore. The tips and tactics in this article are a great starting point for any restaurant owner. But if you need a little extra help managing the spinning plates of your shop, we invite you to check out [HungerRush restaurant management system.](#)

Designed for smooth integration with all your restaurant systems—from orders to inventory to scheduling—the HungerRush 360 approach brings all your systems and tools under one platform for the most comprehensive, all-in-one system in the industry.

Whether you have ten locations or one hundred, all that vital restaurant administrative data is at the tip of your fingertips.



HungerRush helps restaurants and chains of all sizes leverage advanced technology to understand their customers, run more efficient operations and drive more revenue so that they can set a path towards sustainable growth.

 HungerRush.com

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