

## Finding the Talent **Recruiting Best Practices**

1. Identify how to reach best drivers.
  - Where are they?
  - What do they read?
  - What & who do they listen to?
  - What do they watch?
  - Which competitors have the best drivers & why do they stay there?
2. Identify Demographics/Psychographics of your best drivers.
  - For example: Male, 30 to 40 year old, High School graduates, married, children under 12, sports fans, Christian, Country & Western Music, etc...
  - Knowing who they are gives you an advantage in attracting to a familiar culture, making friends faster, and identification with your brand image.
3. Position the job opportunity to leverage your strengths while being truthful.
  - Make only those promises you can keep.
  - Learn from your best drivers:
    - What keeps them on the job?
    - What exceeded their expectations?
    - What do you do better than your competitors?
4. Customize the job opportunity.
  - Have different configurations for people with different values. Examples:
    - Slip seating for those who want more home time.
    - Dedicated for those who need a somewhat regular schedule, etc.

## Starting Out in the Right Gear **Effective Onboarding Strategies**

5. Introduce the Fleet Manager a week before orientation – Either in person or by telephone – Put a face to the job. Begin the relationship. Break the ice.
6. Manage first impressions with effective on-boarding from the start.
  - Provide a warm welcome. If you send pre-arrival materials, include hats, t-shirts or other company logo branded symbols of belonging.
  - Consider first impressions. Make sure the first 24 hours reflects professionalism, cleanliness, user-friendliness, and appreciation.
  - Most new-hires decide whether they will be with you for a long time within the first 72 hours.
7. Conduct an *Expectations Exchange* – List the expectations for both sides of the partnership.
  - Itemize driver's expectations the company will meet (rate of pay, average number of miles, policies for various eventualities).
  - List the company's expectations of drivers.
  - Include the driver's family whenever possible.
  - Put it in writing.
  - Have both parties initial each expectation.
  - Ask for a personal commitment to a minimum period of time.
  - Most drivers keep their word.
8. Make (and be sure to keep on time) appointments with every department the new driver will interface with: Safety, payroll, maintenance, etc... for a face-to-face Expectations Exchange.
9. Communicate learning objectives – Communicate the learning objectives that the driver will attain during the orientation period.

10. Have upper management/owners meet new drivers during orientation.
  - Have the owner, President, or someone as high up as possible meet with the new driver to share history, folk-lore and organizational values.
  - Make it genuine, authentic and special.

## Keeping the talent **Retention strategies for keeping top drivers**

11. Assign a *buddy* or a mentor – Assign a go-to person for the first 30 days.
12. Establish a "retention budget" – Use this budget for coffee breaks, lunches, at-a-boy rewards, etc.
13. Establish an "open door" policy.
  - Communicate and enforce an "open door" policy for issue resolution or ideas and suggestions.
14. Have regular check-ins.
  - Have someone meet with each driver once per week for the first month, then once per month for check-in on how expectations are being met.
  - Do this for at least the first year.
15. Grade your drivers.
  - Know which drivers are good and which are better.
  - Use CSA scores, safety records, on-time performance, etc.
16. Offer On-Line Learning opportunities. Collaborate with local colleges and e-sources of classrooms. Some drivers have earned degrees while paying their way by driving. Even if the degree is not the goal, some drivers need to continue learning and growing.
17. Conduct an exit analysis program.
  - This will help you learn why good drivers decide to leave.
  - What went wrong? Identify key triggers of disengagement and attack these with interventions.
  - If it is a better driver, can the problem be corrected?
18. Offer the best drivers a "return ticket".
  - Give the better drivers who quit a "return ticket".
  - If things don't work out in their next job, let them know they will be welcomed back.
19. Provide feedback opportunities – Provide formal and informal feedback opportunities to always know what is going on with your drivers.
20. Provide continuous on-going displays of appreciation and offer positive reinforcement. Create special recognition designations, such as "Road Knight".
21. Provide leadership training to Fleet Managers and Executives so they can help the company communicate, communicate, communicate.

### **Timeless best practices:**

- ✓ Treat drivers with dignity & respect.
- ✓ Describe clear performance expectations
- ✓ Treat people fairly
- ✓ Be open and truthful with drivers, even in times of uncertainty or ambiguity
- ✓ Show that they are valued
- ✓ Communicate, communicate, communicate