

Title:

9 Ways to Improve Staff Morale

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Summary:

Staff turnover costs American companies millions of dollars every year. The cost of lost work days, interviewing candidates, reviewing resumes, checking references, filing paperwork and training the new staff member is much more expensive, in most cases, than creating a work environment where staff members are happy and want to stay.

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Article Body:

Staff turnover costs American companies millions of dollars every year. The cost of lost work days, interviewing candidates, reviewing resumes, checking references, filing paperwork and training the new staff member is much more expensive, in most cases, than creating a work environment where staff members are happy and want to stay. If you're worried about waning staff morale in your company, here are some things you can do to keep employees happy and productive.

Give bonuses. Even a little bonus can mean a lot. Bonuses improve morale and increase productivity. Explore the possibility of different bonus structures including: holiday bonuses, birthday week bonuses, sales bonuses, hire date anniversary bonuses, and education bonuses.

Plan a staff retreat. Time to relax and get to know your colleagues in a social environment improves teamwork and again, productivity. However, many people won't want to spend a weekend away from their families even if you put them up in a nice hotel. Think one-day staff retreats twice a year. Close the office on a work day and spend the day at a spa, golfing, at a theme park, going to dinner and a movie, hiking, kayaking, or at the zoo.

Pay for education. Most community colleges and computer centers offer relatively inexpensive classes to help people improve computer skills, management and leadership skills, or language skills. If an employee is willing to spend time taking one of these classes, reward him/her by reimbursing part of the tuition or giving them a completion bonus. The desire to increase education

and learn new skills is an attribute of a good employee.

Involve their families. An annual holiday party or summer picnic is a great way to bring employees together along with their families. Even a barbeque at the park with a game of softball or water balloons can be a lot of fun. During the holidays, rent an ice skating rink or get everyone together to volunteer at a soup kitchen.

Buy new chairs and keyboard trays. Let your employees know that their comfort and safety is your concern. Most employees won't spend over \$100 on a keyboard tray, but you could. And who wouldn't appreciate a top-of-the-line ergonomically-correct keyboard tray that adjusts for height and tilt with the touch of a finger? We found great deals at Versa Products

Have casual days. Casual Fridays are nice, but so are special casual days once a month. Let people come into work in jeans and comfortable shoes and they'll be in a better mood.

Free kraft services. Most employers provide coffee for their staff but the staff end up making it. Bring in healthy snacks once a week like a fruit basket, individual mini salads, or trays of bagels. You can also stock up on Stash or Tazo teas, biscotti, yogurt, granola bars and those 100-calorie bags of chips, cookies, and pretzels. Having lunch delivered once every couple of weeks is also a nice gesture and employees will appreciate the money they save from having to buy lunch out. Another fun event is to have the employees make lunch once a month. Alternate between the men and the women, different divisions of the company, etc. Make sure even upper management gets involved. Staff will learn new recipes and techniques from other employees and they'll have fun. The rest will enjoy eating!

Flexible schedules. If possible, give staff schedules that accommodate their needs and reduce commute time.

Gym memberships. Paying for their gym memberships or paying a Pilates instructor to come once a week after work is a nice way to encourage employees to stay fit.