

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Five Questions to Ask New Hires

You've spent months remedying a major staff shortage. After reviewing countless applications, conducting interviews, assessing performance skills, and completing all the other necessary processes, you've finally hired the "cream of the crop" for your department. But it's too soon to breathe a sigh of relief. Attracting the best and the brightest is only part of the equation. Now that you have them, what can you do to keep them? According to healthcare management educator and leadership coach Quint Studer, you must find out what is really on the minds of new employees during their first three months. At one-on-one meetings with your new hires, ask the following questions to secure long-term relationships and gain insight into your organization:

1. How do we compare with what we said we would be like? When expectations aren't being met, new hires may feel as though you have misrepresented the situation. They may even feel lied to. This question will open a dialogue for clarifying new employees' expectations and will give you a good perspective on whether you are delivering what you promised.

2. What is going well? Healthcare workers are often trained to focus on what is going wrong. By asking what is going well, you give new hires a chance to concentrate on the positive aspects of the job. As a bonus, you will find out what truly matters to people.

3. Which employees have been helpful to you? By asking this question, you can discover which employees are valuable in the retention process and then recognize and reward them for helping new hires learn the ropes. Once other



staff see that these employees are being rewarded, they too will become involved in the orientation/training process. Employee turnover affects everyone, and everyone should have a stake in tackling the problem.

4. Are there things you did at your previous workplace that might be helpful to us? This question is a great way to harvest intellectual capital. Current employees may not be good at taking input from new employees, even if the advice is sound. Plus, new hires may be reluctant to offer input for fear of alienating co-workers. This question allows you to create a win-win situation. You get great new ideas for process improvements, and new employees feel as though they have made a valuable contribution.

5. Do you know anyone who might be a valuable addition to our team? At this point, your new employees are likely still in touch with former co-workers. If they are having a good experience with your organization, encourage them to let former co-workers know. This question can spark effective recruiting efforts.

Source: Quint Studer, *Hardwiring Excellence: Purpose, Worthwhile Work, Making a Difference*, Fire Starter Publishing, 2004.

"By asking for the impossible we obtain the best possible."

—Giovanni Niccolini

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