



HOW TO RETAIN TOP TALENT AS YOU EMBRACE REMOTE WORK

Remote work isn't just here. It's here to stay, according to 82% of executive respondents from a [recent Gartner survey](#) who plan to make flexible working status quo post-2020. Nonetheless, it's shaking up traditional company processes, including recruitment and retention.

To be sure, telework was taking off before the pandemic. However, COVID-19 caused a seismic shift in the acceptance of working from home, and the shift revealed how challenging it can be to keep employees engaged when they're not in the same space.

For instance, effective communication is tough for many supervisors to master remotely. Occasional Zoom meetings and Slack conversations don't make off-site employees feel important and respected unless they're part of a broader system of staying connected. Yet it can be tough to figure out how to be helpful and supportive while still getting everything done.

Ultimately, the answer to keeping workers involved and motivated lies in flexibility (and a bit of trial and error). Businesses everywhere are beginning to recognize that empathetic leadership matters — and may mean the difference between keeping talented people or losing them to more compassionate competitors.

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BECOMING A HANDS-ON EMPLOYER TO YOUR REMOTE TEAM

What would any CEO like to have workers say when asked about their experiences?

- “I feel deeply aligned with the company’s culture.”
- “From the time I started, I’ve felt like an integral part of the team.”
- “I feel like my manager listens to me instead of just doing it to check a box.”

Nevertheless, getting employees to have this kind of connection with an employer rarely happens organically. Rather, this type of 360-degree engagement occurs when businesses emphasize their people above all else.

Knowing this, organizations that want to keep employees from leaving must show them fresh levels of respect. And respect doesn’t end with a competitive paycheck — money won’t tether someone to a position forever. As Integrity Staffing Solutions’ partner PayActiv noted, “Ask 100 managers if their employees feel respected, and 100 hands will go up. Ask the employees, and 46 hands will go up.”

An unforgettable, satisfying job experience isn’t really about the job or the salary. It’s about the little touchpoints along the way that, of course, require extra effort when working with virtual

employees. There’s no swinging by someone’s office or catching up near the coffee maker. Staying connected isn’t impossible, though, and it’s well worth the investment considering **how costly turnover can be**. Group lunches, impromptu contests, and unexpected communication ratchet up engagement and help remote workers feel like they’re part of something bigger.

Shopify is a terrific example of an enormous company that’s not too big to pivot or remold its image. As noted by Tobi Lütke, Shopify’s founder and CEO, the brand is committed to operating in the digital space. In **Lütke’s own words**: “Office centrality is over.”

His declaration shows a commitment to revamping what it means to be a Shopify employee instead of trying to pigeonhole telecommuting into an existing model.





FOSTERING AN IMPROVED REMOTE EXPERIENCE

If you're wondering how to facilitate a thriving partially or fully remote work culture with your current team members as well as new hires, know that you don't have to reinvent the wheel. Focus your attention on making changes to your operations and processes — or even overlaying procedures on top of existing protocols.

1. Know Your Company's Value Proposition.



Why would an exceptional applicant jump at the chance to work for your company rather than go elsewhere? Be honest. If you can't answer this question, you'll have trouble getting people to stay — particularly if they're based out of their homes.

You must bring value to an employee's life, which means knowing how to promote collaboration and connection. Thankfully, those efforts will also increase the collective output of your team. **According to a Boston Consulting Group survey**, 63% of U.S.-based workers who felt socially connected said they were at least as productive during the pandemic as they had been before it — despite the challenges of working from home.

Integrity Staffing Solutions' internal social platform enables us to publicly acknowledge someone for exhibiting one of the company's core values, which allows us to foster a culture of gratitude. Businesses that want to implement their own values-based recognition programs might consider offerings like Motivosity to keep their employees engaged.

Again, the key to consistent effectiveness for remote workers is a perceived alignment and connection with colleagues. Highlight what sets your company apart from others throughout your company messaging. Plaster it on your website, repeat it on social media, and mention it during networking encounters. Know what makes you special — and then illustrate it to your remote employees regularly to remind them why your company is the place to be.

2. Make A Solid First Impression Before Day One. Then, Capitalize On It.



Between the moments a candidate accepts a position and starts work, do your best to personalize the experience. Send a thank-you note to the new hire's family members — or a welcome packet to everyone in the household. If the individual will work in the office some or all of the time, have something fun waiting such as a game, a handwritten note, or perhaps even a gift card. Give newbies a copy of internal communications, especially if you put out something noteworthy.



At Integrity, we send our full-time staff members gift cards and flowers to celebrate every anniversary. The longer the team member is with us, the bigger the gift — and we always include a hand-signed card from our CEO.

By starting on a strong, positive note, you're setting the stage for employees to feel respected and accepted. After the first day, you should build on that momentum by finding the right mix of engagement for each new worker's needs. Some employees may like to occasionally touch base with leaders, while others prefer to have weekly meetings set on the calendar. Your mission is to figure out how to keep newer workers engaged based on their preferences.



3. Listen To The Leavers.

No matter how hard you try, some people will leave. Instead of allowing them to walk out the door, talk with them about their decision to go. Ask for their honest answers, and listen to what they say. Then, use what you learn to avoid losing similarly great folks down the road.

Imagine an employee says during an exit interview that they didn't feel they had opportunities for advancement. In this situation, you could make changes to provide other workers with the chance to hone their skills or try something new.

Similarly, suppose you hear that communication isn't as strong as you'd like among remote workers. In that case, you could implement a strategy to improve dialogue and share information throughout departments, silos, and the organization as a whole.

At Integrity, regrettable attrition is a KPI we measure and try to keep below a certain percentage. We actively report on this each week during our leadership meetings, which helps ensure we're doing everything possible to retain our top talent.

RISING TO THE TOP THROUGH RETENTION

You may not have intended for your workforce to be largely remote when 2020 started, but life had a different plan. And that's OK. Instead of trying to put the genie back in the bottle, work to foster and explore the magic that can come when you have a team of engaged and committed virtual workers.

The remote revolution is here. It's time to make sure you have the employees you need to keep everything rolling.



Integrity Staffing Solutions is a full-service staffing agency and ranks in the top 2% of agencies across the country for quality service based on ClearlyRated's "Best of Staffing" client survey. To learn more about Integrity or for help with your hiring needs, visit [integritystaffing.com](https://www.integritystaffing.com) or call 833-446-1300.