

Nearly Half of Retail Employers Say Retaining Employees is Harder than Last Year, CareerBuilder.com Survey Finds

- Competition to hire qualified workers increases with 81 percent of retail employers planning to hire new employees during 2007

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Customers may not be the only audience that needs selling as retailers struggle to retain existing talent and recruit new talent. Nearly half of retail employers (48 percent) say it's harder to retain employees this year compared to last year, according to a recent CareerBuilder.com survey. The survey also finds that nearly three in ten (28 percent) retail employees plan to leave their current jobs within the next year and 46 percent within two years. Retail employees cite lack of career advancement opportunities, unsatisfactory pay, increased workload and work/life balance concerns as contributing factors.

The National Retail Federation (NRF) predicts a nearly five percent growth overall in retail sales in 2007. To keep up with consumer demand, 81 percent of retail employers plan to hire new employees in 2007, according to the CareerBuilder.com survey. With 42 percent citing the inability to find qualified workers as the biggest impediment to hiring more people, retail employers say they are increasing workplace flexibility (34 percent), wage/salaries (32 percent), benefits (18 percent) and bonuses (16 percent) to retain current employees.

While 62 percent of retail employees report they are satisfied with their current job overall, nearly 70 percent (69 percent) are either actively seeking or would be open to a new job if they came across one. "Turnover isn't a new challenge for retailers. However, as the labor pool continues to shrink and retailers feel the pressure from consumers to keep doors open longer -- even 24 hours a day -- many retailers are embracing more competitive hiring and retention programs," said Rosemary Haefner, vice president of Human Resources at CareerBuilder.com.

When it comes to job satisfaction, more than a quarter of workers (27 percent) surveyed feel they have been overlooked for a promotion at their current job. Forty-four percent say they are unsatisfied with their pay. One-third (33 percent) are not satisfied with their work life balance, with more than half (54 percent) saying their workload is either heavy or too heavy, and 44 percent saying their workload has increased in the last six months. In terms of career advancement, 34 percent are dissatisfied with opportunities at their current position and 36 percent are dissatisfied with the training and learning opportunities.

Nearly two million retail-specific resumes are currently posted on CareerBuilder.com and job seekers conduct nearly four million searches for retail employment opportunities on the site every month.

Haefner recommends the following tips to improve recruitment and retention efforts:

- 1) Break through the clutter -- Treat your job posting like a candidate treats a resume. Communicate an employee brand that is accomplishment-based, highlighting growth and stability, work culture, career advancement, etc. Include testimonials from current employers and showcase examples of employees who have worked their way to the top.
- 2) Get specific -- The more definitive you can be in a job posting, the better your chance of attracting qualified candidates. Everyone says competitive salaries and benefits -- define what that means in your organization. Outline what flexible schedules and work/life balance programs entail, specifically address the training/courses available to employees in the first quarter, first year, etc.
- 3) Check your workplace temperature -- Measure employee satisfaction levels regularly whether it be through informal discussions or organization-wide surveys. If necessary, create action plans and implementation dates with employee input and deliver on what's promised.

Survey Methodology

This survey was conducted online by Harris Interactive on behalf of CareerBuilder.com among 90 Retail employers (employed full-time; not self employed; with at least some involvement in hiring decisions), and 468

Retail employees (employed full-time; not self employed; with no involvement in hiring decisions) ages 18 and over within the United States between February 15 and March 6, 2007. Figures for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region and household income were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

With a pure probability sample of 90 one could say with a ninety-five percent probability that the overall results have a sampling error of +/- 10 percentage points. With a pure probability sample of 468 one could say with a ninety-five percent probability that the overall results have a sampling error of +/- 5 percentage points. Sampling error for data from subsamples is higher and varies. However that does not take other sources of error into account. This online survey is not based on a probability sample and therefore no theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

About CareerBuilder.com

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