



## We Can't Keep New Employees After We Hire and Train Them. What's Wrong?

By Margot Uson

When employees leave an employer, they frequently cite more money or returning to school as their primary or public reason for leaving. On the surface this may be true, but it may not be their real motive.

Minimizing high turnover can be difficult, but hiring less-qualified staff is not the answer. High employee turnover is typically an issue resulting from a problem between the employee and the work environment.

To stop your trend of high turnover, you must first determine three facts:

- ❖ What circumstances are causing the departures
- ❖ Why do some employees choose to remain with the business
- ❖ Characteristics of your most successful employees

All employees should receive an exit interview when they leave, regardless of their reason for leaving. The survey should be structured to give employees the opportunity to confidentially discuss the good, the bad and ugly about your company, without the fear of burning a bridge.

Remaining employees should be surveyed to determine why they stay. They too should be given the opportunity to discuss the good, bad and ugly about your company without fear of reprisal. If there is the slightest doubt about the issue of trust between employees and management, then have the survey conducted by an outside organization.

Next, using a valid assessment tool, develop a profile of your ideal employees. And finally, incorporate what you have learned from the exit interviews, the employee feedback and the employee profile into a hiring and retention strategy that includes a formal employee selection and retention process.

Actions speak louder than words. The final, most important step is to take the departures personally, but in a positive way. Employees are not leaving your company; they are leaving you. Therefore, you can change the situation.

### About the Author

Margot Uson is a human resources consultant with over 20 years experience. Her career in industry has been at the management and executive levels, where she was responsible for Canadian as well as international HR activities in large, multinational organizations.