



## Retention Strategies for the Flathead Valley

Regardless of the size of your business, [employee turnover](#) is a major concern. Whether it's because of cutbacks or employee dissatisfaction, if it becomes a frequent occurrence, it can have serious implications for your business and [negatively impact your bottom line](#) due to direct and indirect costs. Now more than ever with the significant worker shortage, keeping the employees you already have is critical.

### Set Your Employees Up for Success from the Beginning

Have an accurate job description & hire the skill set you need.

Invest your time and effort to train your new employees to do the job successfully that you hired them to do.

Set expectations during your on-boarding process.

### Set Your Employees' Expectations for Ongoing Success

Evaluate your job descriptions & rate of pay regularly to keep them current & accurate with the expansion of knowledge, duties & responsibilities of employee.

Open door policies allow you to stay connected and know what's going on with employees.

Encourage open communication to make it easy for employees to discuss questions & issues with you. Be willing to listen to new ideas.

[Manage employee accountability](#) by providing your employees with frequent, actionable feedback - both positive and negative.

Staff in organizations with high turnover have often lost sight of why their job matters - the end results go unnoticed.

### Talent Development Reduces Rate of Turnover

Provide ongoing support and training.

Evaluate current job fit for employees; upskill, reskill, or cross-train when needed. [When a Good Employee Gets Bored, They May Start Looking Elsewhere.](#)

Invest in management & supervisor training.

[Incumbent Worker Training \(IWT\)](#)

[Flathead Valley Community College Workforce Training](#)

[ImagineIF - LinkedIn Learning](#)

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## Retention

### Incumbent Worker Training (IWT)

Help to off-set a portion of skills-based training costs for incumbent (existing) workers for Montana's small businesses with 50 employees or less

### Registered Apprenticeship

Being a Montana Registered Apprenticeship sponsor will help your business recruit & retain quality employees and invest in the future of your company. You'll build committed workers, training them to meet your specific needs. Contact Jimmie Rude at [Jrude2@mt.gov](mailto:Jrude2@mt.gov) or 406.758.6200.

### Workforce Development Grant

Hire or retain valuable employees and reduce turnover costs by providing additional employee benefits, upgrading employee skills, and/or providing employees with required equipment. Reimbursements up to \$5000 for qualified employees.

Contact: [Job Service Kalispell](#)



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## Efficiencies

Find efficiencies & run leaner; having too few employees for the volume of work and working around burdensome processes can all lead to work fatigue and [feeling burned out](#),

Contact Job Service Kalispell for assistance. <mailto:KalispellJSC@mt.gov> 406-758-6200

## Employee Sustainability & Longevity

Employee work schedule consistency & post their schedule timely.

Know your employees' needs, wants, and expectations of their employment. [Recognize when employees are stressed](#).

Offer flexible schedule, e.g., 4-10s

Adding or maintaining work from home employees? Please check out the [Remote Tool Kit](#).

## Workplace Environment and Culture are Key

Speak a language of support and respect which is essential to enable your employees to rise to the highest levels under the greatest of pressures. [The Language of Respect](#).

Establish a [culture of empowerment and trust](#); do what you say you are going to do.

Establish collective values and objectives.

Turnover disrupts and destabilizes that culture of constant improvement.

Maintain a positive work environment.

## Branding and Community Image

Live up to your brand.

Review regularly and respond timely to your social media activity: requests, comments, etc. Make social media accessible to employees so they can assist with these timely responses.

Exhibit professionalism.

Check that your employee handbook addresses standards of behavior, culture, etc.

## Outside-the-Box Incentives

Offer retention bonus for staying (30/60/90 days employed) & at year anniversary.

Offer employee referral bonus; increase amount of an existing referral bonus.

Pay shift differentials, e.g., 1.5x for weekends, evenings, holidays; summer or seasonal bonus.

Provide free food/meals, e.g., breakfast, lunch, snacks, etc.

Offer: stipend for travel or transportation, housing if available, daycare or stipend.

Offer on-site exercise such as a yoga class.

## Best Practices

Consistency in all your strategies and behaviors.

Give sincere praise for a job well done.

Genuinely thank employees on the spot or every day.

Create a recognition program; know how your people like to be recognized.

Provide an employee appreciation event.