

Your Next Great Hire

So tell me, what's the name of the next person you're going to hire? What??? You don't know? Maybe you think it doesn't matter because you're not hiring now anyway. Or if you are hiring, you're probably thinking that you would like to know the answer to that question yourself, because at the moment you have no idea. But the fact is that each and every one of us should have an individual, or a short list of individuals, we will contact when a position opens up.

People are a retailer's greatest asset and their best point of differentiation. Because of this it's important that we only hire GREAT people. Not good people, GREAT people. And to find GREAT people we have to be looking for them and recruiting them every chance we get. If you only start looking for an employee when you have an opening then the odds of getting a GREAT employee are not in your favor.

Here are five tips for always having a GREAT person ready to hire.

1. Get rid of that "Help Wanted" sign. Whenever you post a "Help Wanted" sign it just tells your customers you're understaffed. Instead, post a sign that communicates what a great place you are to work and that you're always looking for GREAT people.
2. If someone asks if you're hiring, don't say no. Tell them you're always interested in GREAT people. Always take the time to interview a hot prospect as it's your opportunity to sell him/her on your company. You can tell them at the end of the interview that you don't have any current openings but you're quite interested in having them join your team when there's an opening. Tell them you would like to stay in touch with them and then do so from time to time.
3. Always be ready to recruit your best customers. We all have those frequent shoppers who seem to really love the place. Well, love them back! Your best customers are already knowledgeable and passionate about your products. That's the sort of person you want to have working for you, isn't it? Make sure you have names and contact information for those people so when a position opens up you can get in touch with them. You do have the names and contact information of your best customers, don't you?
4. Be a GREAT place to work. Nothing attracts GREAT help more than a GREAT environment. Create a fun and enjoyable store for your customers and people will be begging you to work there. And remember, you're always looking for people!
5. As Nike says, just do it. We all know we should do these things but we don't always do them. If people are one of your greatest assets then shouldn't you, as an owner or a manager, be investing your time in finding GREAT people?

So start looking today for your next GREAT employees. Who knows, you might even know their names already, even if you're not hiring.

About the author: Doug Fleener is a veteran retailer with over 30 years of hands-on retail experience with world-class retailers including Bose Corporation and The Sharper Image. He has also owned and operated his own specialty stores. As the Director of Retail for Bose Corporation, Doug was instrumental in developing the unique and engaging retail methods that have become the industry's benchmarks for experience based retailing and superb customer service.

Doug is now president and managing partner of Dynamic Experiences Group LLC, a Lexington based retail consulting firm dedicated to helping retailers create unique customer experiences that results in higher sales and profits. Learn more at www.dynamicexperiencesgroup.com or call Doug at 866-535-6331.

Fleener also shares his knowledge of experience based retailing in a series of custom key notes and workshops designed for stores, businesses, corporations, non-profits, and trade associations of all sizes. His casual style and quick wit make him not just a crowd pleaser but also an incredible motivator, encouraging people to take action and deliver extraordinary experiences to customers and employees alike. Learn more at www.dougfleener.com.