
HR WITH A PERSONAL TOUCH

Employees are organization's assets. Heard this before, haven't we? And they are, for sure! But how do we manage these assets? "Retention" is the word here! Retaining employees is one of the herculean tasks for every HR professional. On the other hand, it has some simple techniques attached to it which would add to the list of monetary strategies to hold back your talent.

Normally, when you talk about Retention, you talk about 2 types of methods :

- a) Monetary (giving them higher designation, incentives, perks, fat pay cheques etc)
- b) Non-Monetary (care, empathy, trust etc)

When it comes to investment in terms of cost, it has to be calculated and put a check what the organization gets in turn of that investment.

But when it comes to non-monetary methods of retention, there is an investment of humanity and the returns are also long term. Below are the ways that you can use to add that personal touch to retain your employees:

Freedom: Don't chain your employees to their desks. Keep options open like work from home, work from discussion rooms, recreation area or may be a garden space of your office. The deal is simple : Most of the IT organizations are providing laptops. Employees can work on their laptops and need not be stuck at the workstations. This helps in breaking the monotony of the working system and they feel relaxed, rejuvenated and motivated!

Rights: Give them right to choose the way to do their job. You should set the goal right, agree upon a deadline and leave them to find they way to meet that deadline. Employees are like kids most of the times. They do not like to be told how to do the work. They like to be guided but not told. By doing this you are not only giving them stress free work environment but a sense of responsibility to own the task and take it to finish.

Lend an ear: As an HR professional I might not be able to solve all problems of all employees but by listening to them patiently would give them a sense that someone cares. And lot of times, when the employee vents out the problem seems very minuscule to him/her. It is very common, once you talk about your issues and concerns, you realize it was not a big deal after all. Moreover, upon discussing with the employee, you too might get a solution to the problem and solve it! If nothing else, at the end of it all, you feel better too, trust me!

Coffee with HR: This is a good exercise to perform regularly. An HR professional should always meet the employees one on one at regular intervals. This works as preventive exercise, to nip the problem in the bud if there is going to be any. If you are constantly in touch with your employees, meet them informally and keep a rain check without even letting them know, you'll have lot of insights into what is really

bothering your employees or what is simmering at the deep end and you get time to act before it becomes a big issue.

Be There: Last but not the least, be there in their good and bad times. It is good to attend ceremonies that you've been invited to and also attend funerals in their families, that you know of. An employee might not remember any other good thing that you did for him/her but will certainly remember that you were present to witness their life changing moments, you were available! It does make a difference, for sure!

That said, you are running an organization and there have to be policies around all the above. The trick is to make policies and trust your employees, both at the same time. You show trust, they show long term association & belongingness!!!