Staffing Woes: Labor Shortages & Under-skilled Employees?

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Food Industry Faces Toughest Foe: The Labor Shortage

By Jennette Rowan
Stats from the article…

• “There were 898,000 open jobs in the accommodation and foodservices industry in August, an almost 20% increase from the same month in 2017, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics' most recent report.”

• [https://foodinstitute.com/blog/food-industry-faces-toughest-foe-labor-shortage](https://foodinstitute.com/blog/food-industry-faces-toughest-foe-labor-shortage)
Breaking Down Staffing Woes

• Hiring Challenges
• Staffing Challenges
• Engagement Challenges
• Ideas from other districts
Points of discussion

- Distinguish between hiring challenges and staffing challenges
- Gather the data to make your story compelling
- Brainstorm possible solutions
- Determine which of the solutions are applicable/transferable to your district
- Determine which solutions are sustainable for your district
- Identify unexpected outcomes of the staffing changes
Hiring Challenges – Slower than Fast Food!

• How to recruit
• Where to recruit
• Time from application to placement
  • Interview
  • Background checks
  • Drug tests
  • Placement determination
Hiring Challenges - recruitment ideas

Reaching out to the school and district community
❖ Flyers and presentations at PTA/PTO events
❖ Business cards with SNS hiring staff contact info – Recruit!
❖ Letters to graduating seniors inviting them to apply and preview
❖ Flyers with value-add for the job compared to other food service
❖ Having a table at job fairs and other community events
❖ Finders bonus for staff who recruit
❖ Collaborating with district work development programs
Interview ideas to screen candidates

- Read a scenario out loud and respond to it
- Complete a sample math problem
- Tour a kitchen in action
- Model uniform requirements and what can’t be in the kitchen - jewelry, fake nails and false eyelashes, etc.
- Others from audience
Staffing Challenges

- Staff skills – lack of entry level knowledge about food preparation
- Staff turnover – they get trained and move to something different in the district or another food service position
- Staff knowledge, understanding of and compliance with complex USDA regulations
- Physical requirements – physically challenging work
- Other…
Staffing Challenges - lack of entry level knowledge about food preparation

- Measuring
- Weighing
- Counting
- Following a recipe
- Cleaning
- Handwashing and food safety
Staffing Challenges - Turnover

- Leaving SNS for a better job in the district
- Leaving for a better paying job
- Leaving because the work is too hard
- Leaving because the work isn’t what they expected
Staff knowledge of USDA regulations

- Time and training are needed to understand USDA regulations – Offer vs Serve, Portioning, Meal Components for a complete meal
Case Study – Rapid City Area Schools

A. Developed a list of expectations with management staff from site and Central Office
B. Developed a belief statement for the department
C. Survey employees – why I like my job
D. Management tools to help staff solve problems –
E. Establishes a culture that welcomes others and employees want to bring people into
   1. The Dos – what did you do, what can you do, what will you do
   2. Scale from 1 -10 in assessment of problem
RCAS List of staff expectations

Expectations for All Staff
- Cooperative
- Seek to Understand Others
- Open/Coachable
- Understand the Why
- Patience
- Teamwork
- Effective Communication
- Respect for Everyone
- Come with Solutions
- Good Attitude
- Goal Oriented
RCAS Belief Statement

ensuring a SUCCESSFUL tomorrow through EXTRAORDINARY moments today
Survey Employees – Why do they like working for School Nutrition?

1. Like the hours
2. Like the people they work with
3. Like children and doing something that helps students
Ideas from other districts – Internal changes

• Change staffing pattern from several staff working short hours to fewer staff working long hours

• Use equipment that offers time savings
  • Hot water dispenser
  • Self portioning systems and tools
  • Combi ovens

• Centralize production
  • Commissary
  • Cold meals – salads, wraps and sandwiches
Vended Meals

- Complete meal options – pre-plating options made by an outside vendor
- Commercial Pizza delivered
- Commercial options for other meals such as meal kits, premade sandwiches
Creative Human Resources

• Create a full-time position by combining bus driving and meal serving
• Create a full-time position by combining meal server and building service helpers into a Hospitality position
• Collaborate with education to provide job experience for seniors and then work them into positions post graduation
Use multiple strategies

The outcomes will be greater than the sum of the parts!
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Thank You!