

Addressing the Current Talent Crisis in Shipping and Logistics

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The transportation and logistics industry has seen an exponential increase in demand as the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to shift consumer behavior. Unfortunately, global organizations still suffer from a lack of skilled labor to fill open roles. Logistics management teams are facing immense pressure to optimize their operations and deliver on customer promises while navigating a number of unprecedented obstacles.

All hope is not lost, however. Leaders and mid-level managers simply must adopt a creative approach towards solving problems in order to outperform competitors.

Adapt to Technology of the Future

Technology is driving changes to the way goods and services are moved, stored, and delivered from organization to end consumer. The digital evolution of the logistics sector is only beginning. Blockchain, automation, and artificial intelligence are all making waves through the industry because of their ability to save businesses a significant amount of time and capital.

Carriers and shippers are adopting these digital tools at peak levels to support their operations. According to a recent study, 87.5 percent of organizations indicated that embracing new technologies were necessary to compete in the workplace. The coronavirus pandemic has been an awakening to many legacy supply chains, forcing logistics professionals to strategize new ways to complete operational tasks and avoid disruption.

Establish Formal Training Programs

Change management should be a key consideration as logistics companies continue to improve their technology stack. Employees must get acclimated to new equipment in order to effectively incorporate it into their workflow.

Training is often only viewed as a benefit to workers, which is why these programs are the first to go in times of economic distress. Treating formal training as an investment, however, creates a greater incentive to align these programs with critical business objectives and will lead to better equipped, more efficient employees.

Stimulating a culture of continual learning is a positive externality of establishing these programs as well. Formal training presents a valuable opportunity to inspire young talent and provide a clear development path for new hires. Despite this, nearly 1 in 4 organizations indicate that education is missing from their employee engagement strategy.

Utilize Data to Improve Employee Retention

Global organizations have suffered from massive rounds of employee resignation since the onset of the pandemic. The key question business leaders should ask themselves is: why? Taking a data-driven approach towards answering this query allows companies to quantify the problem and accurately identify root causes.

After clarifying the specific issues that are driving employee turnover, companies can then develop a customized approach focused on rectifying the negative trend. For example, if leaders discover that new hires are most at risk of resigning within the first six months of their start date, pairing them with a senior employee may reduce turnover by providing extra support throughout the onboarding and transition phases.

The challenges facing many companies in the logistics and transportation industry will likely remain for the foreseeable future. Mitigating the harmful effects of these issues will not be simple, but is possible with a shift in mindset among business leaders and managers. Organizations that analyze the market consistently and are best able to pivot with evolving conditions are certain to succeed in 2022 and beyond.

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