

Increasing Employee Retention

UAMS Police Dispatch offers great pay, a substantial vacation policy, exceptional health benefits, and overtime. However, it is a department that is open 24/7 and doesn't close for inclement weather or holidays. The time constraints of the position can be very rigorous, and a typical day of work is extremely fast paced and can be very stressful.

Currently, the Police Department doesn't have a problem with new dispatchers meeting their quality or speed goals, and dispatchers seem to go through most tasks without any problem in regards to phone calls and data entry. However, due to the stress level of the job, Dispatch is experiencing a high rate of turnover of new hires and most new team members do not make it through their probationary period. Because of this, the Police Department is investing a lot of money in training new employees in various operator responsibilities and computer programs. In order to get a better return on that investment, management has been assigned the task of improving new staff retention.

In the past, during the hiring process, prospective employees participated in verbal interviews consisting of questions regarding the position and some of their personality traits. Based on these responses, employees were hired and initially put in a week training program watching a current team member perform the required job duties. However, these methods have not yielded desirable results.

To combat the staff retention problem, management has decided to change its hiring and training practices. In order to choose candidates who could meet the department's rigorous goals, every prospective employee will be required to display their multitasking skills

Running Head: INCREASING EMPLOYEE RETENTION

during the interview process. In the interview, each applicant must successfully perform 3 tasks that display the person's decision making, data entry, and map reading ability. The applicants who perform best on these 3 tasks will be offered employment and a two week training period will begin.

The new training will begin and consist of the use a self-efficacy scale to gain employee perception of the difficulty each team member believes they can perform. This can be done by creating a survey that each employee can take having them describe what level they feel they can perform their upcoming task. The results of the survey will be used by their mentor to develop areas where the team member is the weakest and help them through the program at a pace that coincides with the employee's survey.

During the first week of training, new team members will be assigned a mentor to assist them during their 90 day probationary period. During the period, mentors will inform new team members that the job will entail exactly what everyone has already successfully performed at the interview. In fact, if you scored above a certain level on the interview test you would have no problem performing your duties, because it is essentially very similar in nature. By informing new team members that they have already proven that they can do the job successfully, it should start them out with a good dose of self-efficacy (Ormrod, 2012). Additionally, during this week, new team members will be introduced to other successful members in the department. By observing other successful members in the department, team members could use their experiences to expect to become successful (Ormrod, 2012).

During the second week, new team members and their mentors will begin performing the required duties of the job. During this period, mentees will perform their duties with the mentor taking turns doing various tasks. This gives the mentees the opportunity to observe the job duties being performed by the mentor and learn from the consequences of his or her behavior otherwise known as vicarious reinforcement (Ormrod, 2012, p. 114).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the prospective employees who make it through the interview process will be reassured that they have the skills and qualifications to succeed at their new positions. This reassurance will help new team members develop a high sense of self-efficacy that will be reinforced by a mentor. By providing team members with vicarious reinforcement throughout the training process, negative feedback should be limited throughout the probationary period and beyond, increasing employee retention.

References

Ormrod, J. (2012). Human Learning (6th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson