**Recruiting and Retaining New Grads**

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Each May brings a surge of new, eager college graduates into the work force. If your organization is looking to hire this year and would like to tap into this job market, preparation is key. College graduates not only bring new ideas and experiences but also assist in keeping your organization moving forward. It’s important to understand the competition from other organizations and from your new grads as well. Here are some tips to assist you in being most successful when hiring recent college graduates:

1. **Re-evaluate and relax requirements.** Although college graduates have some experience under their belts, they probably won’t meet all your requirements, especially if it includes a specific number of years’ experience in one field, or how well they know a certain software. Too high of requirements may deter applicants that would make great employees. The good news is that college graduates are known for learning quickly on the job.
2. **Highlight your work culture.** Don’t be afraid to show off what makes your organization’s culture stand out. It’s important for applicants to know they will have some kind of community in their new place of employment, and be walking into a place that’s inclusive and ready to engage with them.
3. **Flexibility is key.** Work life balance is one of the biggest traits college graduates look for in a future employer. When it seems appropriate, ask your potential and current employees what it is they need to be the most successful in their jobs. Maybe it’s the ability to get in some exercise during their lunch break, go to a doctor’s appointment in the middle of the day, or be able to work from home one day a week to avoid their long commute. Whatever it may be, as long as it’s realistic and practical for the work that needs to get done, consider it an investment in making your employees more productive in the long run. Ultimately, college graduates want to know you care about their lives inside and outside work.
4. **Hire faster.** Most college graduates are eager to accept a job offer and are in high demand, especially those with more experience. Some ways that you can help accelerate this process is putting together a compensation package with an above average salary before posting the position. If a candidate makes a good impression, offer them the job on the spot or within 48 hours if possible. Not only does it make your job easier to make a decision quicker, especially if you have done all your interviews, but it shows respect to those applying when you get back to them as soon as you can. If you can’t get back to them that quickly, be upfront about your hiring timeline. Don’t forget that the efficiency of your hiring process impacts both your internal and external reputation.
5. **Offer coaching and mentoring opportunities.** It’s overwhelming to start a new position in a new company, especially when transitioning out of a college. To assist with this, make sure new staff receive both praise and constructive criticism. Check in regularly at the beginning of their time to create an open relationship of asking questions and talking about ideas together. This can also help your new employee understand expectations you have for one another as well.
6. **Listen to their wisdom.** Although some recent grads might not be very experienced in your specific field, they bring more to the table than you might think. Let your employees know they are crucial to the success of the organization and that new perspectives are welcome. A good way to do this is through multigenerational teams and getting them involved in mentoring relationships within your company. Each of these tactics can assist in transferring knowledge from senior to junior employees and vice versa.

Overall, recent college graduates want to work for you and will put in the time to show you that. By demonstrating your investment in them as future leaders within your organization and the world, you will improve your chances of attracting, retaining, and hiring workers from the class of 2019 and beyond.