



Retaining Gig Workers During the Holidays

Insights

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The holiday season is here; the time for toys and time for cheer. While many will deck the halls with boughs of holly, others will take on extra work for extra cash. For years, retail jobs made up the lion's share of holiday work. But nowadays, countless individuals are earning cash independently and finding their holiday hustle in the gig economy. Various holiday gigs include the usual suspects: Uber, Task Rabbit, Rover.com, etc. However, with the surge of employment needs during the holidays, many industries can take advantage of the numerous individuals seeking temporary or contract gigs during the holiday season (i.e. in the technology, accounting, and marketing industries).

SCORE, the largest volunteer and expert business mentors network, just released survey data last week showing that small businesses heavily rely on gig workers during the holiday season. It reported a 37% increase in hiring gig workers in the last six months versus a 22% increase in hiring part-time workers. Why? As explained on a recent Techonomics podcast, business owners find value in hiring seasonal gig workers because they tend to have specialized expertise that meet the business's temporary or seasonal needs.

Mixing and mingling holiday gig workers with your existing employees can complement your work environment by giving you the extra hands needed during this busy season. But, without a structured onboarding process, there is potential for friction that can bring out the Scrooge in any worker. Here are some tips you can incorporate during this holiday season. That way, when Santa Claus is making his list and checking it twice, he will find your employees to be less naughty and more nice.

- **Set expectations with seasonal gig workers.**

On day one, clearly outline to each seasonal gig worker their role, how long the temporary employment position will last, and how they fit in to the work environment.

- **Communicate to existing staff.**

Communicate to your employees that you are hiring seasonal gig workers. This will aid in fostering an environment of comradery and understanding.

- **Integrate your seasonal gig workers and permanent staff.**

Engage your temporary workers in meaningful ways by pairing them with a permanent worker and consider creating a holiday partnership similar to a mentor/mentee relationship. An increasing number of seasonal gig workers are becoming regular employees when their gigs are complete, and this is a great way to make your gig workers feel part of the organization.

- **Metrics, anyone?**

Build in metrics at the macro level by reviewing the gig workers as a category, and individually reviewing each worker. This gives employers insight to what is or is not working, and which gig workers you may want to keep beyond the holiday season.