



Meeting the HR Challenge for Small and Startup Businesses

(Five 90-minute modules)

Overview

Small and startup businesses face a special challenge in recruiting, selecting, onboard, upskilling or reskilling and retaining their workers.

Most business leaders today are keenly aware of The Great Resignation, Quiet Quitting and similar trends with the workforce that complicate the job of employers in finding, attracting, engaging and keeping workers with the right attitude and with the right ability.

Here are some selected facts and figures that dramatize the HR challenges that small and startup businesses face today (see <https://www.zippia.com/advice/human-resources-statistics/>):

- The average job opening attracts 250 resumes.
- 77% of jobseekers go directly to a company's website to look for jobs.
- 53% of HR professionals agree that employee engagement increases dramatically when onboarding is improved.
- 47% of HR teams report that employee retention and turnover is their biggest challenge.
- While 72% of hiring managers claim to write clear and informative job descriptions, only 36% of job candidates agree with this assessment.
- 70% of the global workforce are passive job seekers (who already have good jobs at the time they are recruited), while 30% are actively seeking new job opportunities.
- 48% of businesses claim that their best hires come from employee referrals.
- According to 86% of recruiters, we're currently in a candidate-driven market.

This workshop series, offered online in 5 convenient 90-minute sessions, will address the special challenges faced by small and startup businesses with attracting, selecting, onboard, engaging and retaining workers today.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon completing this 5-session program, participants will be able to:

- Review key workforce issues affecting employers today
- Describe creative ways to recruit good workers
- Summarize ways to select good workers
- Delineate ways to onboard good workers—and explain why onboarding is so important
- Review effective on-the-job training for new hires—and explain why it is so important
- Discuss ways to address HR in organizations too small to hire full-time HR professionals
- Engage workers today and list the reasons why engagement is more than a fad
- Discuss practical approaches to drive down turnover and retain the best workers

COURSE OUTLINE

Session 1 (90 minutes online): Today's Human Resource Challenges for Small and Startup Businesses

The first session focuses on:

- Providing an overview of the employment landscape facing small and startup employers today
- Managing HR challenges without an HR department
- Conducting an HR audit (when the organization has no full-time HR people) to discover HR strengths and weaknesses and identify a long-term HR strategy
- Discussing the final project for the program

Session 2 (90 minutes online): Recruiting and Selecting Workers

The second session focuses on:

- Planning for the future workforce of the organization
- Creating an employee handbook by establishing and implementing consistent HR policies and procedures
- Building an employment brand and leveraging it to advantage
- Devising effective talent acquisition and recruiting strategies
- Creating effective job applications (rather than rely on one-size-fits-all forms)
- Interviewing effectively using behavioral and performance interviews
- Using the “hurdle approach” in selecting workers
- Maintaining effective documentation of employment actions

Session 3 (90 minutes online): Onboarding and Training Workers

The third session focuses on:

- Planning for effective onboarding
- Reviewing the relationship between onboarding and absenteeism/turnover
- Understanding the difference between onboarding for worker productivity and onboarding to build social relationships
- Summarizing key issues in upskilling and reskilling workers

Session 4 (90 minutes online): Engaging Workers and Using Effective Corrective Action

The fourth session focuses on:

- Defining worker engagement
- Clarifying why worker engagement is critical to attracting and retaining talented workers
- Reviewing ways to measure and increase worker engagement
- Examining effective ways to address corrective action

Session 5 (90 minutes online): Driving Down Turnover and Improving Employee Retention

The fifth session focuses on:

- Defining turnover
- Reviewing what research has indicated about turnover and how to improve worker retention
- Clarifying why worker engagement is critical to slashing avoidable turnover
- Examining why not all turnover is bad—and why some turnover hurts more than others
- Reviewing effective exit interviews
- Conducting “stay” interviews
- Final project discussions

Takeaways

Participants will receive:

- A draft employee handbook that can be tailored to your organization
- A worksheet for use in creating an interview guide
- A sample employment application for use in creating one for your organization
- A checklist for employee onboarding
- A sample checklist for guiding on-the-job training (OJT)
- Surveys to use for assessing employee engagement levels
- A survey to identify ways to drive down turnover (100 research-based ways to improve employee retention)

Training Approach

Participants will be asked to do work before each session and after each session.

Before each session, participants will be asked to meet with their immediate supervisors to discuss what they should seek to get out of the training session. If the participants are business owners, they will be asked to identify and meet with some mentors—such as peers who are also business owners—to identify what information they should seek to get out of the training session.

After each session, participants will be asked to develop a “deliverable” (an example of a work product that they should have learned how to produce during the session they attended). Participants will also be asked to meet with their mentors or immediate supervisors to close the loop to discuss whether they gained the knowledge or skills they set out to gain before the training session.

Biosketch of William J. Rothwell

William J. Rothwell, PhD, DBA, SPHR, SHRM-SCP, CPTD Fellow, RODC, FLMI is President of Rothwell & Associates, Inc. and President of Rothwell & Associates, LLC. He has worked full-time in human resources, training and Organization Development in both government (the Illinois Office of the Auditor General) and in a multinational company (American Brands, #48 on the Fortune 500 list) from 1979 until 1993. He has been a consultant for over 50 multinational companies. Among his many clients are Motorola University China, Ford Motor Company, General Motors, Siemens, Sony, GM Shanghai, Phillips, Erickson, HP, the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), the American Red Cross, Care, the U.S. Department of Labor, the U.S. Postal Service, and many more. Not only is he President of two consulting firms but is also, with his wife, a business owner of The Rothwell Partnership, which controls 10 homes for short-term rent. From 1997 until 2022 he and his wife owned and operated a personal care home (Greenhills Village and Assisted Living Residence in State College, PA) for the elderly licensed by the State of Pennsylvania for 54 residents and employed 27 full-time and part-time employees. In late 2022 he and his wife also became the owners of an 18-unit motel in State College, PA.

Dr. Rothwell is a prolific author, coauthor, editor or coeditor. Since 1987 he has published 130 books, edited 24 books in various book series, authored 6 training packages, authored 2 training packages written under contract, prepared 20 guides and technical reports, published 6 instruments and instrument administration guides, written 185 book chapters, and authored 74 scholarly and research articles. Some of his books have been translated into Korean, Chinese, Polish, Japanese, Spanish, Arabic and Russian. His recent books **since 2020** include *Succession Planning for Small Business and Family Business*, *Rethinking Diversity, Equity and Inclusion*, *High-Performance Coaching for Managers*, *Organization Development (OD) Interventions: Executing Effective Organizational Change*, *Virtual Coaching to Improve Group Relationships: Process Consultation Reimagined*, *Adult Learning Basics 2nd ed.*, *Increasing Learning and Development's Impact Through Accreditation*, *The Essential HR Guide for Small Businesses and Startups*, and *Workforce Development: Guidelines for Community College Professionals*, 2nd ed. He delivered 1,526 onsite and online presentations in 15 nations over a 30-year period and visited China 83 times.