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## Personnel Notes

### "How to Hire & Keep the BEST Employees" by Barbara Voss

Currently there are more openings in the truss industry than there are qualified candidates to fill those positions. So, in this highly competitive market for quality employees, companies need to know not only how to hire good new employees, but also how to keep their best employees.

I've been asked if company loyalty exists anymore. The answer is yes. Employees who work for companies that meet their needs stay on the job. The fourteen areas listed below are the keys to hiring quality people and keeping your best employees motivated. Keep in mind the first ten are totally in the company's control.

- **Recognition:** How do you recognize outstanding performance? If it is with money alone, you may want to think again.
- **Responsibility:** Does your employee's level of responsibility match his or her level of ability?
- **Advancement:** Do you really offer a chance to grow or do you just talk about it?
- **Achievement:** Do you offer an opportunity for employees to make a contribution to the company? To the customer? To the community?
- **Supervision:** Does your management style motivate and encourage your employees?
- **Salary:** Are your salaries competitive or do you wait until your employees get other offers before offering raises?
- **Company policy and administration:** Do you communicate your company's goals with your employees and administrate your plan effectively? Or do you keep your company's direction a secret?
- **Work conditions:** What is your facility like? I know of one individual who changed jobs because the ladies' room was always a mess!
- **Job Security:** Are rumors circulating about the company changing ownership? Does a "permanent job" mean forever, or until winter?
- **Benefits:** Employees don't expect free benefits, but an available, affordable plan keeps employees from looking for something better elsewhere.

There are also four areas that a company cannot control. No matter how well you run your plant, these four areas are simply decisions employees make for themselves:

- **Interpersonal Relationships:** If an employee just can't get along with another, whether it is a co-worker or a supervisor, he/she will probably leave.
- **Status:** If your designer really wants to be an Engineering Manager with a large prestigious company, and your company is small, he/she will find a new position elsewhere.
- **The Work Itself:** If your employee would rather build houses than design them, he/she will

- find a different job.
- **Personal Life:** Frequently spouses, children or significant others make decisions for your employee. If relatives need assistance and your employee needs to be there, he/she will find a job in a new location.

You can keep your good employees by making sure you have policies in place addressing the issues outlined in the first ten factors. But keep in mind, there will be situations you cannot control and you will still have company turnover, no matter what happens.

The list of things a company can control is substantial and should be considered very carefully. This column will take some time in the upcoming issues of *WOODWORDS* to look at each of these controllable aspects of human resources management and will flesh out some ideas that can be implemented to insure your best employees stay on the job

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Barbara Voss works for HRIC and will be contributing a monthly article on employment issues.

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