The Homebase Guide to Hiring Hourly Employees
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The Homebase Guide to Hiring Hourly Employees

joinhomebase.com
You're in a war for talent. Hourly employees of restaurants, bars, stores, and other local businesses switch jobs frequently. The average hourly worker stays at a job for less than 300 days, even in higher-paid service roles. This turnover means that you, the manager, are in a constant state of hiring.

An open role can be an opportunity to find a great new team member. But all too often, it results in a lot more headaches and wasted time for the manager. In a recent survey, we found that employers of hourly service workers expect to hire one new employee a month. At an average of 20 hours spent on one successful hire, a typical location will spend 240 hours a year just keeping their business fully staffed. That’s the equivalent of 6 full work weeks of a manager’s time!

In this guide, you’ll learn from industry experts the strategies to hire the best employees in a fraction of the time. We’ll show you how to write an effective job post to attract more candidates, and we’ll give you time-saving tips on identifying the most qualified applicants. You’ll also learn how to ask effective interview questions while avoiding legal pitfalls.

Finally, we’ll teach you how to properly onboard your employees during their first few days to keep them happier for longer in their new jobs. According to Forbes, Chick-fil-A has achieved a turnover for hourly employees as low as 60% compared to the industry average of 107%. Your business can use the tips and tricks in this guide to hire the employees you need, reduce turnover, and save a lot of time.
A Novice Recruiter May Review 100 Resumes to Find 1 Hourly Employee

100 RESUMES SUBMITTED
40 MEET REQUIREMENTS
20 CONTACTED
10 INVITED FOR INTERVIEW
4 SHOW UP
1 Hired

The Homebase Guide to Hiring Hourly Employees
joinhomebase.com
Whenever you’re hiring, you’re in a rush to find someone for an open role. We bet that you’ve given an offer to a candidate, only to realize you probably could have found someone better. All too often, when an employee quits, managers rush to fill the position, interviewing any applicant who responds to a hastily-written job post. Instead, invest 10 minutes to write an effective job description. This takes up time that you probably don’t have, but the 10 minutes of work you do upfront will increase the number of qualified applicants you receive.

“Oh no, he just quit. I’ve got to find someone to fill his shift tomorrow.”
That hastily written job description isn’t helping. We’ve seen inadequate job postings result in too many under-qualified applicants. And qualified applicants are overlooked because they did not highlight their more relevant work experiences on their application.

Instead, write a job description that contains your minimum requirements for the role. This will REDUCE the number of applicants you DON’T want (resumes submitted from applicants who don’t meet your needs) and BOOST the ones you DO want (resumes from applicants who have work experience relevant to your job posting). This saves hours of time wasted combing through resumes, phone screening and interviewing only to discover the applicant doesn’t have the skill set that is required for the position.

You don’t need to be a great writer to quickly create an effective job description. Just make a simple grid like the one we’ve shown here. In one column, list the top five most critical job duties (like greeting customers or solving customers’ problems). Next to that, assign the behaviors required to perform each job duty effectively. Finally, think through any minimum requirements an applicant must have before they can even walk through the door for an interview.

### Sample Job Description Grid for Front of House Host

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Duties</th>
<th>Behaviors</th>
<th>Minimum Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Greet customers</td>
<td>Friendly</td>
<td>English required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solve customers problems</td>
<td>Responsible</td>
<td>Either GED or 1 year of work experience in any field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assist customers with sales and orders</td>
<td>Proactive</td>
<td>6 months in a customer facing position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure customers are satisfied with their experience</td>
<td>Outgoing</td>
<td>Smiles and speaks positively about past work experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Represent the company brand to customers</td>
<td>Professional appearance</td>
<td>Shows judgement in interview attire</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this guide, we have included sample job descriptions for some of the most common jobs. Feel free to copy them or change them to fit your business.
#01
PRO TIP:

Don’t let language barriers get in the way

Because there are fewer job possibilities for non-English speaking employees due to the language barrier, the ability to tap into this market can result in lower turnover rates and more loyal employees. Don’t let language barriers stop you from casting your net in Spanish and other languages popular in your area. Carlos Metzer, manager of Siphon Coffee, says that communicating with non-English speakers is much easier than you might think. With tools like Google Translate and the help of a couple bilingual employees, communicating with non-English speaking employees is a breeze.

Target a Wage Range

**Average Tenure Increases with Job Wage Rate**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Days</th>
<th>$7.75 - $11</th>
<th>$11 - $14</th>
<th>$14+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>260</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>240</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>220</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200</td>
<td>195</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>180</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When targeting a wage range, keep in mind that higher pay reduces employee turnover. A study of over 280,000 jobs scheduled on Homebase revealed that when employees make close to minimum wage ($7.75 to $11 per hour on average), their average stay in a job is less than 200 days. When the wage goes up to between $11 and $14 per hour, an employee stays approximately a month longer. Above $14 per hour and the employee stays an additional few weeks on average. Increasing your wage by just 50 cents per hour ($1,000 a year more per full-time hourly employee) will actually save you money since you won’t have to spend it on recruiting and training a replacement.

Occasionally, managers will avoid posting the wage rate for an open position. They want to see if they can get the best employee for as little pay as possible. Keeping negotiating options open may seem smart, but, unfortunately, not being transparent about the wage rate can backfire. Other businesses are posting the wage rate, and applicants are more likely to apply to those places. By posting the wage range, you automatically screen for applicants who are comfortable with this critical detail of your role. We recommend posting the wage range and asking candidates during the phone screen if they are willing to work within the range you’ve posted.
### #02 PRO TIP:

**Avoid introductory wage rates**

**DO NOT** advertise a discounted “introductory” wage rate. You will recruit from a discounted pool of candidates.

**DO** hire the best candidate you can find and pay accordingly. The old adage is right: you get what you pay for. Always communicate the highest amount you’re willing to pay, and you’ll attract the best candidates.

---

**Highlight the Perks of Working for your Company**

**No perk is too small to brag about.**

Companies known for great employee perks, like Chick-fil-A and Starbucks, rarely have to hunt for employees or post a position online. Applicants line up for the chance to work for these companies. The good news is that it doesn’t require much to stand out. According to Nyk Montano, a hiring specialist at Homebase and former retail manager, it’s as simple as including in your job posting the upside of working for you.

No perk is too small to brag about. Show that your business values its employees. Do you ever host team building events? Are there meals provided when an employee is on shift? Are schedules flexible enough to accommodate students or mothers? Do you provide opportunities to train for other positions? If so, let your prospective applicants know! A business that tells hourly employees they care sets that business apart from hundreds of other potential employers.

---

**Always Be Hiring**

**Don’t just wait until you have to.**

We know there are a million other things you have to do and would rather be doing. Managers are stretched thin and most of your time is spent on actions that immediately impact operations. Even so, you should make time every week to focus on finding quality employees. Your investment will pay off in the long term. Identify positions that turnover frequently, or have been difficult to fill in the past. Spend time updating online postings, reviewing resumes and conducting interviews. Your business will run more efficiently and you’ll save yourself a lot of time and headaches in the long run when you make recruitment a weekly priority.
Sample Job Descriptions

Barista

We’re looking for a friendly and outgoing Barista who has a passion for coffee and meeting new people. The ideal candidate has an interest in coffee and exhibits consistently exceptional customer service.

Main Responsibilities include:

- Prepare hot and cold drinks in accordance with customers’ needs
- Maintain a clean and tidy work area
- Follow health and safety guidelines
- Make our customers feel at home

Qualifications include:

- Proven work experience as a Barista
- High integrity with a great attendance record
- Strong attention to detail
- Ability to listen and communicate effectively
We’re looking for an eager and detail oriented cook to prepare food and set up stations for further food preparation. The ideal candidate is reliable and able to follow detailed directions.

Main Responsibilities include:

- Setup and breakdown workstations
- Cook dishes to business standards
- Follow health and safety guidelines
- Prepare ingredients for use during shift

Qualifications include:

- Proven work experience as a Cook
- Familiarity with kitchen equipment and utensils
- Strong attention to detail
- Ability to listen and communicate effectively
Retail Salesperson

We’re looking for a friendly and outgoing Retail Salesperson who likes talking with our customers and making them feel comfortable. The ideal candidate exhibits consistently exceptional customer service and is able to think on their feet when our customers need additional help.

Main Responsibilities include:

- Welcomes customers by greeting them and offering them assistance
- Directs customers by escorting them to racks and counters and suggesting items
- Advises customers by providing information on products
- Processes payments by totaling purchases and processing checks, cash, and store or other credit cards
- Contributes as needed to wider team efforts to achieve store goals
- Uses judgment to solve customer problems
- Maintains scheduling commitments

Qualifications include:

- Friendly and outgoing personality
- Excellent verbal skills
- Able to problem solve as issues arise
Remember that you are competing against a huge number of job openings for hourly employees. In the city of Houston, on Craigslist, there are around 650 job postings created each day for hourly employees. In Los Angeles, there are over 800. How do you stand out from the crowd? Our top suggestion: make it easy for candidates to apply.

Driven by the high turnover in hourly positions, many managers decide that they only want employees who are interested in their specific business. Without realizing it, these businesses actually make it really hard for great candidates to apply for job openings. These employers ask for cover letters, expect applicants to respond to emails, or ask applicants to participate in a recruitment process that takes several weeks.
Your employees don’t write cover letters, they use text not email, and they need a job ASAP.

That’s just not how it works for these positions. Your employees don’t write cover letters, they use text instead of emails, and they need a job ASAP.

The time and effort a candidate puts into an hourly job application does not predict future job performance or turnover. Approach recruiting as if it is your job to convince the best applicants to work for you in the least amount of time.

The most common frustration from managers is how hard it is to find quality employees. Finding an applicant who is available, is within the desired wage range, lives within close proximity to the location, speaks English, and has relevant experience can feel like an exercise in futility. If you have accumulated 100 resumes for an hourly position and still have not found an appropriate candidate, it’s time to rethink your expectations.

Consider the applicants you’re getting and adjust your expectations of minimum requirements before you finish your search for an employee. For example, are you getting too few applicants with experience as a front-of-house manager? Maybe that shouldn’t be a minimum requirement. Smart hiring managers move quickly to raise or lower standards as needed. When standards can’t be lowered, increase the wage rate or adjust expectations on scheduling, distance or other requirements.

Set Realistic Expectations

Each post on Craigslist, if it includes requirements discussed previously, will generate on average 25 applicants per posting for an hourly position. To generate 100 resumes, you may need to repost 4 times to get 1 hire.

#03 PRO TIP:
Post your job a lot more often

Consider the applicants you’re getting and adjust your expectations.
Do you think you should avoid hiring people who’ve hopped jobs in the past? Think again. An extensive study by Evolv looked at 1,000 employee’s tenure with their current employer and their previous job-hopping past. Past job hopping did not predict the likelihood of future turnover. Candidates whose resumes demonstrated previous job loyalty (with few positions held for less than 6 months) left their next jobs just as often as the job hoppers (those who held more short-duration jobs). You may be limiting your talent pool based on a false assumption that a record of steady job employment is predictive of a future loyal employee.

#04
PRO TIP:
Review in bulk

Hold off on reviewing resumes until you’ve collected enough to get a true sense of who out there is interested in your position. Don’t just check the first resumes that come in and jump to a quick conclusion. To stop yourself from frequently checking to see who has applied, set yourself a goal like 10 resumes. Once you have that many, take a peek!

Loyal Candidates

Job Hoppers

Both candidates are likely to stay at their job for the same duration

Past job hopping did not predict the likelihood of future turnover.
I had a client who was a restaurant manager. He stuck to his minimum requirement of only interviewing candidates who lived within walking distance of the restaurant. The manager found that turnover was lower for those who lived nearby. He’d rather hire and train an inexperienced hire who lived closeby than hire an experienced candidate who lived further away. He believed anyone could learn the skillsets to perform well at the job. It wasn’t easy for him to stick to this minimum requirement when he received great resumes from candidates in affordable wage ranges that lived far away. But after many years and many employees, he had learned better. He protected himself from his own tendencies to reconsider a sharp candidate by sticking to his minimum requirement.
No part of the hiring process is more tedious than interviewing. Reviewing resumes is not typically time-consuming. However, phone screens and in-person interviews can take up several hours just to hire one employee. Who has time for that?
Stop Thinking the Old Way

By using smart recruiting techniques, you can reduce your time to hire to 4-5 hours.

1 Resume Review

Low cost technology now allows even small business owners to reduce the time it takes to review resumes from 2 hours to less than 30 minutes. You can filter resumes that don’t meet the qualifications, and you have the ability to see the most important information at a glance.

2 Replace the Phone Screen

Do you call applicants before meeting them in person? Don’t. Roughly 50% of the applicants you call will not answer the phone, and roughly 50% of those that you schedule an interview with will not show up. Save time and increase the number of applicants who remain interested in your position by texting applicants who meet minimum qualifications with an in-person interview request. Set aside a few hours of time to conduct all interviews and share that window with your applicants. Should candidates overlap, they generally do not mind waiting until it is their turn to interview.

3 Cast a Wide Net

Because you have sped up the time to interview, you will have retained the attention of more applicants before they move on to the next job. You will be able to cast a wider net with more candidates that arrive to interview, and that will lead to a hire in half the time.

#06 PRO TIP: Skip the phone screen

Text each applicant with a request to schedule a 15 minute interview. Let them know when and where you’ll be conducting interviews.
Conducting a Great Interview

Before the interview, make sure you are prepared. Review the top five job duties, minimum requirements and behaviors that you listed. This will ensure you ask the right questions.

Interviews follow a basic structure. You’ll want to start the interview by telling them who you are and about the business, so that the applicant feels comfortable. Then, you can ask them any questions you have (we have provided some good ones on page 19-20). You want to make sure to leave time at the end for their questions. At the end of the interview, let them know when they can expect to hear back about the job.

If you have found an applicant that you are particularly interested in, take a few minutes to conduct a Reference Check. Reference Checks are an overlooked yet effective tool for hiring top performers. A quick five minute reference check can help you avoid hiring an employee who had serious performance issues in their last position. If you are unable to obtain a few positive references, it is a red flag.

#07 PRO TIP: Get them excited

DO NOT take lots of notes. You can write a bit, but keep any notes brief. Instead, try to maintain eye contact. Applicants tend to get nervous when the interviewer scribbles long notes.

DO sell your job to them. They have lots of other jobs they are likely applying to, so remind them of the benefits of working for you. Communicate the highest amount you’re willing to pay and you’ll attract the best candidates.

"Reference Checks are an overlooked yet effective tool for hiring top performers."
# Interview Guide

## Icebreaker Questions
- Tell me about yourself.
- How would others describe you?
- What are your strengths/weaknesses?

## General Interview Questions
- Why did you leave your last job?
- Tell me about any other jobs you’ve held. What were some of the duties/responsibilities?
- What did you like the most/least about your last job?
- What past work experience has best prepared you for this job?

## Customer Service
- Tell me about a time you handled an angry customer.
- Tell me about a time you went above and beyond to help a customer.
- What does customer service mean to you? Why is it important?

## Attention to Detail
- Tell me about a time when you caught an error that others had missed.
- Tell me about a time when you did not pay as close attention to something as you should have.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
<th>Honesty</th>
<th>Problem Solving</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Tell me about a personal or professional obstacle you have overcome.</td>
<td>• Have you ever had trouble getting to work on time?</td>
<td>• Is everything on your application/resume accurate?</td>
<td>• Tell me about a time when you had to work under pressure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Tell me about an achievement you are proud of.</td>
<td>• Have you ever had trouble meeting your work schedule requirements?</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Give me an example of a time you effectively used your people skills to solve a customer problem.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## What You Can and Cannot Ask in an Interview

Did you know that there are certain questions you cannot ask in an interview because federal and state laws prohibit it? Using this chart, you will be able to gather information and get to know your candidate, as well as protect yourself and the company from potential legal issues.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Unacceptable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Have you ever worked for</td>
<td>NAME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>this company under another name?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No acceptable questions.</td>
<td>BIRTHPLACE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Are you over eighteen years of age?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOR DRIVERS: Are you over twenty-one years of age?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>There are no acceptable questions concerning an applicant’s religion.</td>
<td>RELIGION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Can you meet the attendance requirements of the position being applied for?</td>
<td>WORK SCHEDULE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Follow-up inquiries to application only.</td>
<td>CRIMINAL BACKGROUND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Languages that applicant can read, write, or speak.</td>
<td>RACE &amp; NATIONAL ORIGIN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The only acceptable question is whether, if the applicant is offered the job, he or she will be able to prove they are employable.</td>
<td>CITIZENSHIP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Acceptable Questions

- Have you ever worked for this company under another name?
- No acceptable questions.
- Are you over eighteen years of age?
- Any questions about a person’s religion or about what days they may need off for religious holidays.
- Can you meet the attendance requirements of the position being applied for?
- Follow-up inquiries to application only.
- Languages that applicant can read, write, or speak.
- The only acceptable question is whether, if the applicant is offered the job, he or she will be able to prove they are employable.

### Unacceptable Questions

- Have you had any other names? What is your maiden name?
- Where were you born? Where were your parents born?
- How old are you? Any questions attempting to determine the age of the applicant are unacceptable.
- Any questions about health conditions or responsibilities for child care that would lead to absences from work.
- Have you ever been arrested/convicted of a crime?
- Any questions asking or seeking to elicit what nationality the applicant is.
- Any questions seeking to elicit what race the applicant is or other questions indicating race or color.
# What You Can and Cannot Ask in an Interview (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Unacceptable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applicant's educational background.</td>
<td><strong>EDUCATION</strong></td>
<td>When did you graduate high school? When did you receive your degree?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your work experience? Do you have experience with the U.S. Armed Forces? Why did you leave your last job?</td>
<td><strong>EXPERIENCE</strong></td>
<td>What type of discharge did you receive from the military?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of any relatives who are employed by the company.</td>
<td><strong>RELATIVES</strong></td>
<td>Are you married? What relatives live with you? With whom do you reside?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can you perform the essential functions of the position for which you are interviewing?</td>
<td><strong>PHYSICAL CONDITION</strong></td>
<td>Are you disabled? Are you healthy? Any questions concerning Workers' Compensation claims.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No acceptable questions.</td>
<td><strong>MARITAL STATUS, CHILDREN, CHILD CARE</strong></td>
<td>Do you have children? How many children do you have? Who is responsible for driving the children to school?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inquiries made only if a business necessity can be shown.</td>
<td><strong>MILITARY SERVICE DISCHARGE</strong></td>
<td>Inquiries made into the nature of an honorable discharge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No acceptable questions.</td>
<td><strong>ECONOMIC STATUS</strong></td>
<td>Inquiries regarding financial status—bankruptcy, car or home ownership, garnishments—may be illegal because of disparate impact on minorities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inquiries into job related organizations.</td>
<td><strong>ORGANIZATIONS</strong></td>
<td>Are you a member of a union? The names of organizations the applicant belongs that would indicate race, religion or ancestry.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Asking About Criminal History

Understandably, for many employers, a candidate’s criminal record is a matter of both interest and potential concern in the hiring process. While sometimes valuable in making a hiring decision, considering a candidate’s criminal record is fraught with legal risk.

Luckily, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has provided guidance that can help small businesses steer clear of any appearance of discrimination. Below is a list of the top pitfalls to avoid when asking about criminal history in the hiring process and suggestions to get the information you need while remaining compliant with the law.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Don’t</th>
<th>Why</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ask about criminal history on the application.</td>
<td>Questions about criminal history on an application may appear that applicants are eliminated before the company has the full picture. Some states have even banned requesting criminal history on the application. Even when it is not illegal, the EEOC advises the evaluation of criminal history as only one factor of an applicant’s fit for the position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Run a background check prior to making an offer.</td>
<td>Running a background check prior to the offer can be interpreted as discrimination based on an applicant’s race, ethnicity, or other protected class. It can be very difficult for a company to prove otherwise in a discrimination lawsuit. Create a written company policy that outlines conditions for running a background check and define when it occurs during the hiring process. This approach will help you avoid the appearance of discrimination while staying true to your hiring standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set a predetermined hard and fast policy that eliminates candidates with adverse criminal history.</td>
<td>Although the process may appear fair and objective, the EEOC advises against a hard and fast policy as it may eliminate candidates for reasons that have no relation to their ability to perform the job. The EEOC advises that employers should instead consider the circumstances and context of the crime in the likelihood that criminal history may be an indicator of the applicant’s ability to add value to the team and the position.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do</th>
<th>Why</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If important to the position, you can ask if an applicant has ever been convicted of a crime during the interview.</td>
<td>If important to the position, you can ask if an applicant has ever been convicted of a crime during the interview.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Run a background check only after making an offer and according to a written company policy.</td>
<td>Run a background check only after making an offer and according to a written company policy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reference Check

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference Name:</th>
<th>Candidate Name:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Introduction:**

Hi, I'm [Name] and I work for [Company]. [Candidate] listed you as a reference.
Do you have 5 minutes to answer a few quick questions?

**Reference Questions:**

1. Where did you work with [Candidate]?

2. What were the dates of employment for [Candidate]?

3. What was [Candidate's] primary responsibilities and did they perform those responsibilities skillfully?

4. Were there any attendance issues or trouble getting to work on time?

5. What do you consider to be [Candidate's] strengths?

6. What would you coach [Candidate] on if you were able to?

7. Is there anything else you think I should know about [Candidate]?

**Conclusion:**

Thank you so much for your time. Have a great day.
You’ve found the perfect candidate. So they should start right away, right? Try to slow down before allowing the candidate to start immediately after the interview. You might want them to start the next day or in a few days, and that’s ok. But in that short window of time it’s important you do your work, too. Confirm with the employee—in writing—the pay, the estimated hours per week, and the estimated schedule.

If you need to run a background check, you might not be able to get someone into the job as quickly as you’d like. The Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) mandates a careful process with regard to when and how background checks are run. Be sure to wait until after the candidate has accepted the offer in writing to run background checks.

Your company’s first impression of a new hire is critical. Research from the Council of Hotels and Restaurant Trainers showed that 27% of hourly employees in the hospitality industry will leave their job within the first 90 days. And 66% of all hourly employee terminations were within the first year of employment. When you’ve got a good employee, you’ve got to make sure you do everything you can to hold on to them! An effective onboarding program includes four central components, (1) training and orientation, (2) instilling pride in work, (3) get to know yous, and (4) feedback.
1. Provide the Necessary Training and Orientation

Spend 5 minutes reviewing and updating your training checklist before your new hire starts. List out what your employees need to be able to know and to do by the end of the first day, week and month. How will the new employee learn everything they need to know? Assign one of your veteran employees to mentor and train the new hire. That way, the new employee will learn the ropes quickly and correctly. Pick wisely. The veteran employee will likely teach the new employee more than just the basics of the job, but will also imprint cultural and other less tangible values on them.

2. Instill Pride In a Job Well Done

Managers who can communicate the value each and every one of their employees brings to the business get the most out of their employees. When an employee is reminded how the work they do helps the business succeed, they’ll be more motivated to do the job well. Over time, without reminders of the contribution the employee has on the businesses’ success, employees lose pride in their work and performance slips. It is so simple that we often neglect to say it out loud. For example, communicate to cashiers, servers or sales staff the impact customer service has on overall success. Remind back of the house employees that quality and efficiency helps the company run efficiently. This concept is why businesses continue with programs like “Employee of the Month.”

3. Get to Know Your Employees as People

Have a conversation to get to know your employees on a personal level. This doesn’t have to be a formal process, just a casual conversation so they know you care about them as people, not just as employees. What challenges do they face? What celebrations are upcoming? What are their families like? Your employees will feel a deeper connection to the company and to you. In turn, they will treat the customers with the same level of care that you treat your employees. Set the tone of how you want your employees to treat customers by how you treat your employees at hire. Beloved companies like Starbucks, Chick-fil-A, and Nordstrom are leaders in formal employee morale programs but, more importantly, they focus on respecting their employees and treating them with dignity. This is perhaps the most important job perk, and it’s completely free.

4. Feedback

Check in frequently with your new hire to uncover any confusion or anxiety the employee may be having. More than likely, you can alleviate any concerns through better training or clearer communication. Communicate their progress towards their training goals. Did they master the things you expected them to know and do by the end of the first day, week, and month? Why not? This initial feedback will help clearly communicate by example any job expectations that they may not have understood.
CAROL WOOD, HR EXPERT AND CONSULTANT:

"I learned the importance of an effective onboarding process from one of my first jobs. During a summer off from college, I was hired as a server at a neighborhood restaurant. My manager, Fred, assigned a more senior server to teach me the ropes. Fred never had another individual conversation with me after that and I’m pretty sure that he did not even remember my name. My initial excitement quickly faded. Turns out, this is a common phenomenon. According to The Council of Hotels and Restaurant Trainers, 27% of hourly employees in the Hospitality industry turnover within the first 90 days. 66% of all hourly employee terminations are within the first year of employment."
New Hire Checklist

1. The Offer

- Signed Offer Letter
  - Rate of pay, start date, title, any paid time off, and who the position reports to
- Background Checks (if required)
- Training List
  - Job Description can be used to create a training list
  - Timeline for tasks to be mastered by the end of the first day, week, and month

2. First Day

- New Hire Paperwork
  - W-4
  - I-9
  - Payroll authorization
  - Check state and local requirements
  - Company specific policies or procedures
- Office Protocols
  - Employee introductions
  - Worksite orientation—bathrooms, keys, hours of operation, breaks, rest periods
  - Scheduling
  - Vacation, holidays and time-off rules
- Get-to-know-yous
  - Hobbies or interests
  - Family, pets or important people in their life
- Training Kick-off
  - Job duties and training plan review
  - Expectations of job skills and knowledge by the end of the first day, week and month
- End-of-day Check-In
  - How the first day went
  - Any concern or confusion they have that can be addressed

3. End of First Week

- Review Training and Progress
  - What employee has mastered
  - What employee must work on
- End-of-week Check-in
  - How the first week went
  - Any concern or confusion they have that can be addressed
About homebase

Homebase is for hourly employees and managers who are tired of dealing with paperwork and other day-to-day challenges that compete for their limited time. More than 60,000 businesses rely on Homebase’s scheduling, time tracking, and team communication platform to help simplify their daily work, giving them hours back every week. The team brings local business expertise from Intuit, Square, OpenTable, Yelp, and First Data and are all former hourly employees and managers themselves. Based in San Francisco and Houston, Homebase is backed by leading venture investors Baseline Ventures, Cowboy Ventures, and Khosla Ventures.

For more information, please visit www.joinhomebase.com.
The Leading Employee Management Platform

$1.5B+
In Payroll Managed

$90M+
Labor Costs Saved

25M+
Shifts Tracked

Build a Better Schedule in Minutes

Drag & drop scheduling that forecasts labor costs as you go. Send to your team by text, app, and email.

Save Time and Money on Payroll

Track hours, breaks, and overtime with our free time clock app.

Run Your Business From Anywhere

Manage shift trades, time-off requests, schedule changes and more from your phone. Employees get a free app, too.