

Employees' top 10 concerns – insider tips!



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Discrepancies in salaries – market rates versus award rates

Not a great surprise. Although still mentioned, pharmacy award rates have been well and truly thrown out the window when it comes to remunerating staff. This is something pharmacy owners recognise as commonly recognised with support staff, such as pharmacy and dispensary assistants. After completing training and attaining qualifications, pharmacy retail staff are shocked to find out they can earn a higher hourly rate as a cashier at the supermarket, which is why many of them leave their pharmacy and the industry altogether!

It is very common for new employees to be paid at higher rates in comparison to long-standing employees who haven't had a raise in years simply because they were employed at the award rates. This creates emotional distress, tension in the workplace and staff feeling demoralised and unappreciated, hence causing them to consider

opportunities with other pharmacies. Employees feel they should be compensated based on their contribution, merit and efforts – not just because they have a Certificate in Community Pharmacy. Receiving the same rate of pay as others who have less experience, product knowledge and loyalty than themselves can be demoralising to the point where your most committed and loyal employees will start to say "What's in it for me?"

Employees should know what behaviours and contributions merit additional compensation and how their performance needs to change to merit a pay increase.

Non-monetary benefits

Although salaries are a common concern with pharmacy staff, non-monetary benefits are equally important. With Generation Y making up a huge part of your workforce, motivation is the key and an attractive salary isn't always enough. Small tokens of gratitude like paid time off, gift vouchers, social events and certificates of appreciation go a

long way. Successful pharmacies use creative approaches like offering all staff a day off on their birthday or on the anniversary of their first day of work with your pharmacy – a small cost to your business yet a huge return on investment that pays off 10-fold. Non-monetary benefits can also be offered to reward staff for meeting sales targets, either set individually or as a team. Incentives will motivate staff to go the extra mile when providing excellent customer service, upselling and cross-selling – every owner wants to boost sales. Motivating staff with incentive schemes is a great way to start.

Micro-management

Many pharmacy candidates feel they are over managed to the point where managers make almost every significant task and decision. In some cases, dictate duties to employees rather than empower them to take ownership of their own work. In the long run, this is damaging to employees as it hinders their ability and creativity to perform and consequently

increases staff turnover. A boss manager that empowers staff rather than dictates will definitely see fewer complaints and a declining turnover of staff.

Lack of training and career progression

With pharmacists and pharmacy retail staff reaching the height of their career very quickly, what measures do you have in place to make sure they're continually motivated and challenged? Does your pharmacy offer realistic career path opportunities, ongoing training, possibility of promotion and increased job satisfaction?

Many employees have been given the opportunity to help out in various aspects of the pharmacy yet their boss is unable to offer formal training and/or career progression which is why they leave for a pharmacy that can.

Favouritism

Many employees quit their jobs and come to Horizon looking for another role because they have not been treated equally to other staff. Whether it is due to differing pay rates or preferential treatment,

Responsiveness to employees

Within a small business, human resources (HR) are often overlooked. Unless you are part

of a pharmacy/buying group there rarely is a HR department which employees can turn to with questions, feedback or complaints unresolved to the point of staff leaving the business. Employees often complain about the lack of HR support they receive, whether it is from the HR manager or the sole proprietor. Another consistent concern is the lack of response or follow up they receive in regards to their questions and concerns.

Communication and availability

Let's face it, employees want to face-to-face communication with their supervisor and/or boss to help them feel recognised and appreciated. If this isn't followed up with formal training and/or valuable career path, employees will lose a sense of focus for their role and potentially feel demotivated when vacancies are filled by other employees.

"Discovering what your employees most serious complaints are is the first and most crucial step."

Each pharmacy should help employees cope with their workloads through ensuring you have adequate staff in defined roles with clear responsibilities and targets. In busy periods, such as Christmas, it is extra important to ensure your staff are

approach with their concerns? Are you physically available at the pharmacy or have you made sure you can appoint someone who is available to deal with concerns there and then? Although many managers and proprietors are time-poor, the most important role of a manager is to support

employees unhappy 6 half the battle when it comes to employee satisfaction and retention. If they feel they can approach and trust management, they will say what's on their minds. This is the key to building and maintaining a positive culture within your pharmacy rather than losing fantastic staff to the betterment of your competitors. **R**

the success of all their reporting employees, therefore creating their own success.

Ethical standards and reputation

Pharmacies are often understaffed, causing employees to feel like their line is spread too thin. For example, rather than train up or employ a dispensary assistant, pharmacy owners will often ask a pharmacy assistant to assist in the pharmacy without the appropriate training or qualifications. If this isn't followed up with formal training and/or valuable career path, employees will lose a sense of focus for their role and potentially feel demotivated when vacancies are filled by other employees.

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