
JESSICA VAN DEN PLAS

HR MANAGER

A LITTLE ABOUT ME...

Background in Organizational Development and Social Work. Took a round about way into HR starting as a Talent Specialist. About 90% of my HR career has been spent in the Manufacturing world dealing with everything from entry level to skilled labor.

Currently I am the HR Manager at Salm Partners, a company that is going through enormous growth. Previous position was as the Employee Experience Leader at FyterTech Nonwovens, a company that double local headcount within a span of 3 years.

WHY LISTEN TO THIS PRESENTATION...

- This is economy, employees are the hot commodity, sometime more so than the product you are making.
- Turn over is expensive! It hurts companies to see their time, effort and talent walk out the door.
- Competition for employees is astronomical. I feel like it is more like “Lets Make Deal” as apposed to here is my offer, take it or leave it.
- Here’s a secret....Recruiting and Retention isn’t just HR’s responsibility. If they are the only ones in your company who are doing the recruiting and the only ones buying into a retention programs; the company will lose.
- I successfully brought a company through not only growing faster than the job market would allow but also launched a retention program that make sure we didn’t just have people on the bus, but the right people in the right seats.

WHAT DID I DO....

- In January of 2019, FyterTech's (Previously NPS Corp) spill control division was 4 production facilities in the US: Largest facility was West Green Bay had 75 employees, other small facilities in Chicago IL, Port Arthur TX and Kent WA.
- In Late 2019, another production facility was opened in De Pere WI. Why- We had plans to close the smaller remote facilities to create a mega center for production
- Over the next two years...
 - Rebranded as FyterTech
 - Closed down all Non-Wisconsin location to bring all that work to Wisconsin...we were not getting smaller!
 - OHYeah... In March of 2020 we became essential as we can produce the middle layer of the PPE Mask. This brought us to installing (and staffing) another production line locally.
 - Increased local production employee headcount from 75 to 185
- In March of 2022, FyterTech was 85% staffed with a turnover rate that we didn't track.
- Implemented a new retention program in January 2023.
 - By July 2023 FyterTech was staffed at an average of 93% and turnover tracking was trending down.
 - In September-December 2023- out of 180ish employees I was losing less than 10 a month to turnover.

BUT HOW???

HOW CAN YOU BETTER SERVICE YOUR CUSTOMERS??

AND BY CUSTOMERS, I MEAN EMPLOYEES

- Paid PTO on Day #1. No longer waiting months for time off. The Catch...
- Paid Holiday's upon hire. Why??
- Corporate Gym Members (We didn't pay a dime our employees got a discount)
- Cell Phone Discount Plans with the company used for all of our cell phones. (We didn't pay a dime)
- Other "Free Benefits" we tapped into and told our employees about
 - Smoking Cessation Program & Weight Loss Program
 - Financial Education
- We learned about community resources to help our employees outside of work.
 - We were not the expert, but we got the emails!
- Company Housing Program.
 - We subleased to our employees- WHY?
 - We had Rules- WHY?
 - We kept the cost down-HOW??
 - We had 2 rent programs.
- Corporate Uber
- Translating Ear Buds

HOW DID WE FIND THEM?

- Turned our employees into passive recruiters.
 - Share a job posting, get a shirt program.
 - Stressed our employee referral program-by sending it to their homes.
 - We gave current employees company swag.
- We left no question unanswered in our job postings.
 - Wage,
 - Benefits
 - Schedule
- We looked at community organizations that help people find jobs.
 - Non-college bound Seniors
 - Return to work programs
 - FSET Programs

We were honest
with candidates!

NOW THAT WE HAD THEM.... NOW WHAT??

- Pre-offer stage
 - Phone Screen and Onsite Interview (With Supervisors)
- Day 1
 - Who's Who Flyer and Lunch with the Plant Manager
 - Every vital department has a part of orientation
- Day 2
 - They started an hour later (but we paid them the full shift).
 - They spend the day just shadowing their position with a buddy.
- Day 3
 - One on One time with Line Lead-Shadow for the deal (glimpse into the future)
- Day 5
 - Check in from Safety
- Day 7
 - Check in from Senior Leadership (Cheat Sheet for leader)
- Day 14
 - Check in from Senior Leadership- Not Operations!
- Day 21
 - Check in with HR (who recruited them)

There was more past this....

QUESTIONS...

Thank You!!