



RECRUITMENT AND ENGAGEMENT

IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE WORKPLACE

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Recruitment of qualified employees is a function that must not be overlooked; it is important to staff criminal justice agencies with qualified and ethical individuals who have a moral compass that points north. The individuals who are employed in the criminal justice field need to have a passion for wanting to serve his or her community. As everyone knows, there is a lot of red tape in

government. Often, it is hard to get things accomplished; the natural nature of a person is to oppose change.

These are barriers that recruiters and criminal justice agencies need to overcome to find the correct person to hire into a position. This can be done in many ways; this article will discuss various ways to attract and engage potential employees. A variety of factors go

into a decision on whether to apply for a position, such as the position, pay, location of the job, and benefits. These items need to be included in a job position posting.

Recruitment

There are five influences that evaluate the effectiveness of recruitment; they are the quality of the process, the size of the labor pool, and the location of the job, pay

and benefits, job quality, and the organizational image of an agency (Berman et al. 2016). If a process is not fluid, individuals will not apply for a position. Employees need and want efficiency within a department or agency, and if this does not exist at the start of the application process, then it is a sign that the agency or department does not expound efficiency. According to Devine (1969), vacancies are related to wages, and the methods that are used to determine wages are in relation to the structure of the labor markets. The majority of vacancies that exist are generally wage-related; a sustainable wage needs to be paid to retain employees. Many criminal justice agencies act as a training ground for employment. As an example, once a person gains experience as a Law Enforcement Officer, they tend to move on to a bigger department or to a state agency such as the state police.

Many criminal justice programs strive to offer quality education and teach problem-solving skills, critical thinking, and an appreciation for diversity. It is indeed possible that universities are neglecting to instruct students on one of the most basic processes in a criminal justice career, and that is the hiring process (Wood, 2017). Without this basic knowledge being taught, students often do not realize that their past drug history and background will make them not eligible for future employment. According to Wood (2017), a person's criminal history and background have been disqualifiers for a multitude of jobs. The depth of scrutiny that comes with the process of hiring local and federal law enforcement jobs leaves an opportunity for a potential employee to be rejected beyond what other positions may offer. The difference between a job in the private industry and law enforcement is that applicants are given the opportunity to disclose any prior wrong-doings that they have been involved in.

The qualifications that are required for a position affect recruitment greatly. If someone is underqualified, they will be overlooked, and if they are overqualified, they will be overlooked for a position as well. When an employer is vested in an employee with training and resources, they want to ensure that the employee is worth the investment and will be with the agency for a long period of time.

Police recruitment costs are greater for most other classes for both the cities and counties, and these agencies usually recruit continuously. Both types of jurisdictions recruit out of their normal area, and from time to time, cities recruit in distant parts of the country (Devine, 1969). Often, agencies must expand their base of recruitment to fully qualified applicants, so recruitment outside of the normal jurisdiction is necessary. It is good for a candidate to walk away with a good impression of the agency after an interview. According to Berman et al., (2016) there are four ways that a candidate can walk away with a good impression of an agency. The first is using time recruitment steps to minimize anxiety, good candidates expect the process to result in a notification that is timely in fashion with quick prompt follow ups. The second way is providing feedback to optimize scarce job searches. As soon as an agency has narrowed the field of applicants, the agency should notify the candidates that have been eliminated from the process. The third way is to offer information that makes distinctions; applicants prefer to have detailed information about the position in a job posting instead of signalized bullet points. The fourth way is using enthusiastic informative and credible representatives, in the initial recruitment phase applicants respond better to a warm enthusiastic recruiter and a well-planned interview process.

The job description needs to communicate the changing nature of the law enforcement community. Job descriptions should begin by including more language that represents the true nature of the roles and expectations of an employee. An effort should also be made to limit law enforcement language, as such language fails to describe a job focusing on rehabilitation and could also turn off good candidates who usually do not seek a position in the law enforcement (Matthews, 2018).

Issues that are related to law enforcement hiring standards and policies are not new. An article in 1989 was published in a Philadelphia newspaper that discussed controversial hiring issues, and this article is still relevant today. The author of the article noted that the Philadelphia policy had weeded out hard-core drug users in the hiring process, and it also had turned away others who had experimented once or twice with substances at a high school age (Wood, 2017). These types of hiring policies can prevent a good candidate getting an interview. Good citizens have made mistakes in their lives; some of the candidates that could be turned away are former military personnel that have experience in enforcement.

Employee Engagement

Employee engagement and continued training are an important part of employee retention; an agency or department can fail or succeed on the back of employees. It is important to ensure that employees have all the resources that they need to be successful in the workplace. According to Berman et al., (2016), training and development have undergone a lot of changes, and it is almost a paradigm shift. Police departments use some type of rating system to assess the ability and value of each

employee. Departments usually use these personal rating systems to determine the individual's qualifications for his or her present position, or for promotion to other positions, to determine if corrective measures should be used; as an example for transfer or disciplinary action, to determine the need for additional training either for a single employee or the entire force (Mingle, 1945). When the overall agency can be improved, it is best for everyone, including the leaders and down the chain of command.

An important component to successful training and development is motivation in training. It holds that people learn better when they are eager to acquire new knowledge, skills, and abilities, and are encouraged to seek out application opportunities and make these opportunities work and are not discouraged by obstacles and challenges that are part of a learning experience (Berman et al. 2016). According to Schnur (1959), the purpose of training correctional officers and personnel is to assume that the goal of corrections is to prevent recidivism by preparing men and women for release from all supervision as quickly and in the most cost-effective manner, as useful, law-abiding, self-supporting, self-sufficient, independent citizens who will not aid in the commission of a crime. Efficient performance in corrections requires a meaningful experience along with expert knowledge. Pre-service training programs can provide a thousand hours of supervised experience in law enforcement and correction agencies through training, internships, or field service (Schnur, 1959). When someone graduates from an educational program, it is only the beginning of a career path; they will go on to gain experience and training in their desired profession that will eventually make them an expert in the field.

Training and development serve a variety of purposes that support performance, risk management, and human capital purposes. These purposes are helping existing staff to adapt to new tasks; assisting new employees to be up to date on procedures; confirming that employees are kept abreast of new laws; ensuring that personnel in jobs critical to the organization's performance; using T&D as a tool to ensure that desirable employees and managers stay current; ensuring that all employees have the knowledge, skills, and abilities that help the organization (Berman et al. 2016).

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is important to ensure that the right market of individuals is receiving the recruitment efforts that are being put out by an agency. Various online formats should be used to post jobs, such as social media, job websites, and newsletters. Recruitment can be done in person, as well as at job fairs and colleges. The more effort that a criminal justice agency puts into the recruitment process, the better the results they will have. If an agency is constantly posting the same job, it can look bad on the agency and show that there may be reasons why employee retention is not good. This could be because of the pay, work environment, or even benefits that are provided.

Employee engagement and training is also an important function; this will help criminal justice agencies retain employees. Employees need to be up to date on policies and laws that affect them in the workplace. This will ensure their safety and public safety. This will also have a positive effect on morale within an agency; when employees know that leadership is investing in the employees, it helps the agency overall. With the recent effects that have happened in the United States, this is a crucial time

for criminal justice agencies. The public needs to know that agency employees are well-trained to protect and serve the communities in which they live. The officers also need to have the backing of leaders and officials within their agencies. If employees do not feel that they have the backing and support of leaders, then they may not feel confident performing their daily duties in the field. ■

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