

Vinyl Fence *Tip*

Practical and Proven Ways to Sell More Vinyl Fences

From your friends at National Vinyl Products

How to recruit and retain qualified installers



If you “talk shop” with anyone in the construction industry for long, you are bound to get around to the current labor shortage. You may debate the cause of it — lack of job appeal to millennials, aging Baby Boomers or the lingering effects of the Great Recession — but you will agree that you are struggling with finding and keeping good employees, especially installers.

Is your fencing company looking for new installers? It may be time to rethink and refresh your recruiting methods. Are you having trouble retaining your new installers? You need to work on ways to build your brand and your identity as a great place to work. Let's start with recruiting.

HOW TO HIRE

Here are 10 Ideas for hiring new installers.

1. Referral bonuses. Offer bonuses to employees who refer their qualified friends to your fencing company for job openings.
2. Use social media. Share why your company is a great place to work on your social media accounts. Offer links to your website for specific job information and a downloadable or online job application.
3. Participate in local high school career days and community college job fairs. You also could work with your community college to create an apprenticeship or internship program.
4. Host recruiting seminars at local conference rooms. Take the opportunity to “sell” your company at these events. Offer refreshments and a raffle prize as incentives for attending. Promote the events on social media.
5. Stress flexibility. Young adults value their time and often shy away from punching strict Monday through Friday time clocks. The more scheduling flexibility you can offer 20-somethings, the more attractive your installation jobs sound.
6. Offer paid training. Emphasize that no prior fence installation experience is required and that you will train the right candidates on the job.
7. Appeal to veterans. Reach out to veterans of the United States military through veterans' organizations or by participating in job fairs held specifically for veterans.
8. Advertise. In addition to social media, use billboards, print media and online job sites such as indeed.com and craigslist to advertise for your job openings. Try trade journals and professional associations as well. See if your Chamber of Commerce has ideas for getting the word out.
9. Offer summer jobs. If you offer a good working environment and good wages, satisfied summer employees might return after graduation for full-time work. Connect with local high schools and youth organizations to let students know about your openings.
10. Provide competitive wages and benefits. Keep up with what your competitors are offering in terms of salary and make sure your wage and benefit packages are even better. You will get job seekers' attention with packages that include family leave, paid vacation, wellness programs, 401K benefits and health insurance.

HOW TO RETAIN

Now that you have created more interest in your job openings for fencing installers, how do you retain the employees you hire? Here are 10 tips for better employee retention.

11. Tout your safety record. Promote your commitment to providing a safe work environment for your installers. Offer them the latest training and equipment for staying safe on the job and to and from the job site.
12. Provide opportunities for career growth. Meet with your installers to discuss opportunities for advancement within your company as they gain experience. Help identify any training or additional education they may need to achieve their career goals. You demonstrate your commitment to your employees by promoting from within. (You can use this commitment as a recruitment tool as well.)
13. Offer year-round employment. Train installers on other aspects of your business — such as sales and repairs — so they can work with your company throughout the year rather than just on a seasonal basis.
14. Recognize top employees. Launch an employee of the month or employee of the year program that honors installers who consistently meet and exceed your standards. Reward these employees with a dinner in their honor, a gift card and an announcement in your company newsletter and social media pages.
15. Give employee discounts on fencing products and installation. Employees are customers too, and they will talk up your company to their friends and neighbors.
16. Host fun employee events that build a sense of comradery outside of work. These occasions can include group outings to sporting events, company picnics and holiday parties.
17. Provide company uniforms. When they wear your logo, your installers will reflect a clear company image, and they will enjoy saving on wear and tear on their own clothes.
18. Build a culture of trust. Get to know your installers by name and help them realize their value to your company. Encourage them with the knowledge that they are the face of the company.
19. Offer financial advice. Provide long-time employees with the opportunity to meet with a financial advisor to discuss their long-term financial requirements and their retirement needs.
20. Offer incentives to workers as they reach five-year milestones with your fencing company. The incentives can be range from extra vacation time, to bonuses, to fencing products.



If you are having trouble finding and keeping competent installers, you are not alone. According to the latest Commercial Construction Index published by USG Corporation and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 91 percent of the more than 2,700 construction managers, contractors, trade contractors and builders surveyed last year reported having a difficult time finding skilled workers.

However, it is time to do more than talk about the challenge of hiring and retaining fencing installers. It is time to develop plans to do something about it. By following some of these strategies, you can lay the groundwork for a strong workforce for now and into the future.



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