

HOOKS & INCENTIVES

Today's workforce is much different than that of previous generations. Studies have shown that employees today are more often attracted to jobs that offer more than simply good pay (or pay alone)—additional perks, or “fringe benefits,” are other important considerations for employees. In the case of the millennial employee between the ages of 18 and 29, this could not be more true.

Millennials tend to be confident and sometimes even demanding workers, often having a “what’s in it for me” attitude when job searching. This has forced many employers into a competitive scramble to see who can offer prospective employees more non-work related hooks and incentives.

This too holds true in the after-school field. A traditionally low-paying field consisting of demanding work, after-school programs have struggled to recruit competent and qualified college-aged workers. A few value-added incentives are listed below to consider offering to prospective employees.

1. “Welcome Aboard” Program

The art of recruiting viable staff has become as complex and challenging as recruiting older students into an after-school program. A “Welcome Aboard” program can include sign-on bonuses, perks such as small gifts or gift certificates for accepting the job, a welcome package sent to their home, a welcoming potluck or lunch outing, or a recognition activity in which the whole staff participates. You can get as creative as you want. Remember, a little recognition goes a long way!

2. Job Perks

Several private and public agencies have been able to tap into their local community and create partnerships that provide exclusive (and interesting) opportunities for hires. This concept is very much like the office employee who receives a discount at the local gym because they are employed at a particular company. Partnerships can be developed with restaurants, cell phone companies, fitness centers, and other entities that might attract potential new employees. Know who your desired employee is and develop a list of perks that they would find attractive.

Everyone appreciates something “free” these days! Think about companies in which you purchase services for your after-school program and ask for gift cards, advertising specialties or prizes for drawings. These can be awarded to staff at meetings and events. You can build these items into a system by which you award staff for hard work and goal achievement—offering you a recruitment and retention tool.

3. Training

Your after-school leaders value opportunities to learn, grow, and develop skills for their future. Providing training throughout their employment with you is a win-win endeavor—they become better professionals and you gain a stronger workforce. Professional development training offers excellent growth opportunities that may not be available elsewhere. Identifying the type and amount of training your after-school team receives is a value-added benefit to include in your recruitment messages.

