

How the Operations' and Office Staff Affect Retention of Drivers and Safety Performance

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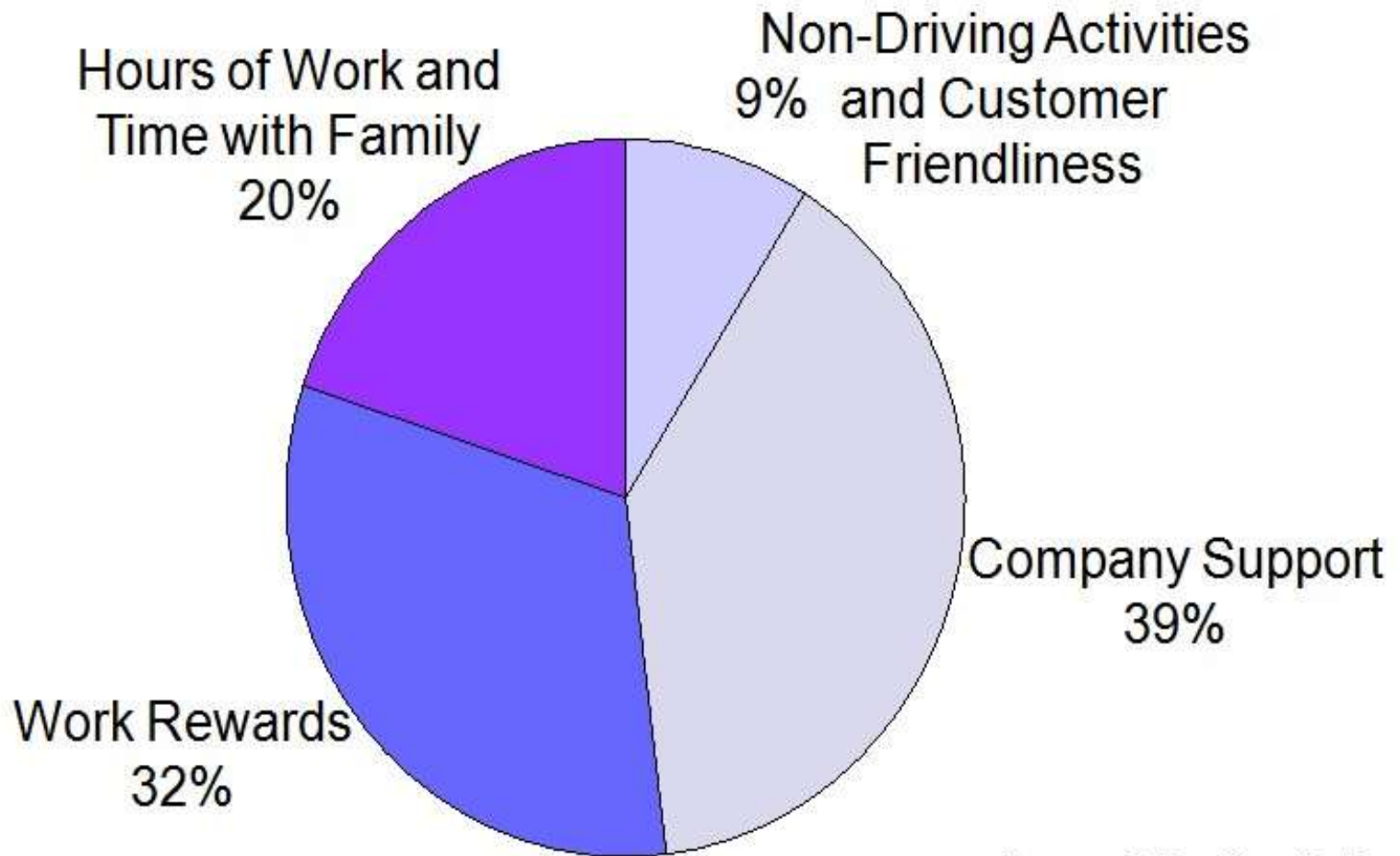
Finding Drivers/Keeping “Good” Drivers

- We cannot find “good” drivers!
- Where are other fleets finding drivers?
- Are all fleets having problems finding drivers?

Something to think about – “What are you doing to keep the “good” drivers in your fleet so you they do not leave?”

DO NOT TAKE “GOOD” DRIVERS FOR GRANTED!

Why Driver's Leave a Company

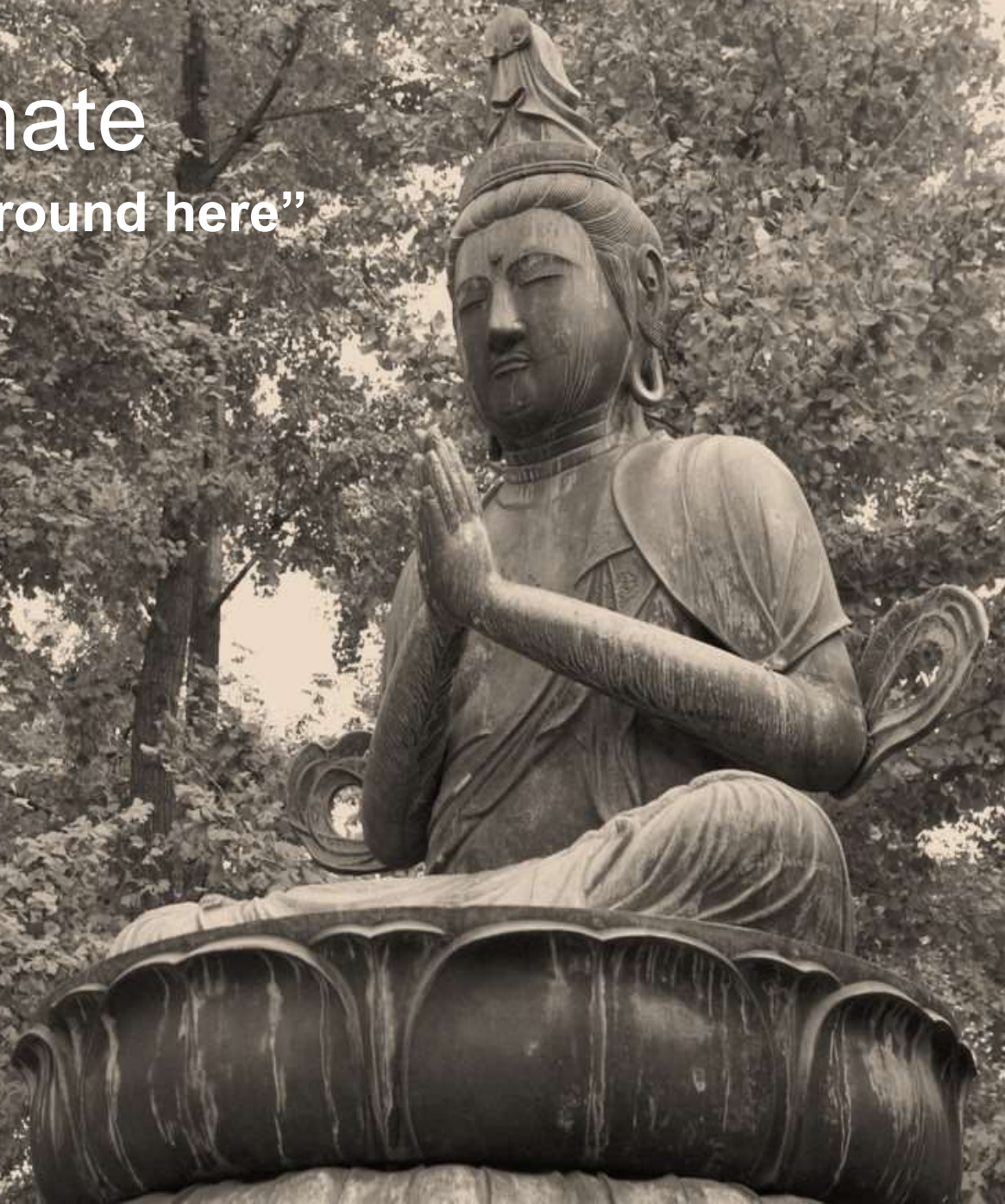


Source: Gallup Organization



Culture/Climate

“How we do things around here”



Management Commitment

Pledge to a specific course of action

Actions speak louder than words

Category	Stage 1 Uncertainty	Stage 2 Awakening	Stage 3 Enlightenment	Stage 4 Wisdom	Stage 5 Certainty
Management Vision Values and Commitment	Accidents will happen no matter what we do. It's just a cost of doing business so why worry about them?	Maybe safety can help us if it doesn't cost too much. My lips say I'm committed, but my heart and actions don't quite show it.	Other companies in our industry have good safety records. If they can do it, so can we.	Why did we wait all these years to improve safety? Look at the successes we've had so far. Let's do more in the future to improve our already good safety record.	We've rewritten the book on safety commitment. We've got an outstanding reputation to maintain in the industry and among our people.
Organization for Safety	Why do we need any more than one person responsible for safety? Isn't that what the safety director is for? You can't do much about safety anyway.	Maybe we should start a safety committee around here. Tell some of the employees to start one, but just let us (management) know what they're doing.	We think the safety committees would be more effective if someone from management was directly involved. That might show we're committed to safety.	Boy, what a difference it makes when the top person heads a safety committee! Notice how everyone becomes interested then? Line management really has to direct the implementation of a safety program.	Getting all of top management involved in safety was a great idea! The more we can involve the better. Our safety department can now concentrate fully on giving us support and advice.
Operations Accountability and Responsibility	Why should we (operations) be responsible for safety? Isn't that what we hired the safety person for? We wouldn't have so many accidents if employees would just do their jobs safely.	Maybe the safety person doesn't have total responsibility for safety. After all, operations is closer to the employees. We can't always blame the employees considering some of the things we ask them to do.	It's starting to make sense that operations needs to be held responsible and accountable to reduce losses. Doesn't management design, control, and change the systems employees work within?	What a different it's made since we started holding the management accountable! They're using positive motivation now and really getting to know about safety and their people's safety concerns.	We've given operations the tools and authority to make changes. They've gladly accepted their safety responsibilities. Everyone feels part of the same team now.
Safety Review and Improvement Process	We know what our safety problems are - PEOPLE! You can't change people so why should we spend time looking for other problem causes? Give us those quick fixes for our safety problems.	Are we really certain that people are always the cause of accidents? Could there be other causes? Let's start looking to see if we can come up with some new solutions to problems.	We're finding that the more you dig, the more safety issues you uncover. Let's start looking for problems before they happen.	We didn't know that root cause analysis could be so enlightening about so many areas of our company. We're starting to see big pay-backs on our problem-solving and improvement efforts.	We didn't know that so many employees could become so good at problem-identification, analysis, solution-generation and implementation.

Category	Stage 1 Uncertainty	Stage 2 Awakening	Stage 3 Enlightenment	Stage 4 Wisdom	Stage 5 Certainty
Safe Work Practices and Procedures	We don't need a lot of rules around here. We pay people to do a job and expect that they know how to do it correctly and safely. We always say, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it."	Maybe some of those accidents could have been prevented if we had a few more rules about safety, and maintenance. Let's start putting some safety rules together and tell employees to follow them.	We know that most jobs would benefit from written safety rules and procedures. We need standardization. Let's make sure employees know and follow safety procedures.	We've done JSAs. Let's start reviewing what we've got to make sure it stays current and anyone who works here knows and uses them. Auditing for safety rule compliance can help us.	We know that our safety system is in control because everyone follows our safety standards. We are continually improving those standards. Our accident rates clearly show that people have adopted the standards.
Safety Communication	Why should we have to "talk" about safety? Can't everyone "see" that we're all for safety? If you talk about safety too much, people will start thinking we have big safety problems around here.	What do you mean, "We don't walk the talk" when it comes to safety? Maybe we need to start looking at "what," "how often," and "by what methods" we communicate safety to employees.	Our non-verbal actions should match our written and verbal safety communications. Let's make sure they do!	Everyone in the company is now getting the same safety communications and has the same level of understanding. We know that for a fact because we receive regular feedback.	Everyone feels a part of the team with the emphasis we place on communications. No one is afraid to share their thoughts and ideas.
Safety Training	Why waste a lot of time and money on safety training? It's never done much good. People should know how to do a job safely anyway. It's their body that will suffer if they don't.	Maybe our safety record could be improved if we gave people some basic safety training. Let's have the best operator training other employees. Oh yeah - don't take too much time for this training stuff.	Do we always automatically assume that training is the answer? Maybe that's why we've been disappointed in the past. Let's give training only when it's needed and then let's do it very well.	There is a lot more to developing and giving training than we thought. We finally learned the lessons and it's showing in our employees' job performance!	We spend a lot of time and money on training, but it's money well spent. We're developing the most important asset we have - PEOPLE! Why do other companies keep asking for our training programs?

What departments can negatively impact safety performance?



Departments

Top Management

Operations

Recruiting

Shop

Payroll

Safety

Top Management Role in Retention and Safety

- Pledge to a specific course of action
- Actions speak louder than words
- Public image
- Don't play favorites
- Support safety department (Give safety equal billing)
- Provide necessary resources
- Ensure performance accountability at all levels
- Productivity at the expense of safety

Professionalism in Operations

- Be a great (not good) communicator
- Be supportive of safety and not a barrier
- Follow company safety programs/policies and adhere to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations
- Show fairness and not favoritism
- Don't ask the impossible
- Avoid being abrupt/grouch/vulgar language (you never know who is listening and increases driver turnover)
- Give praise when it is due and don't focus on the negatives

Accountability for Operations' Personnel

- Crashes
- Injuries
- Hours-of-Service Violations
- Moving Violations
- Turnover
- Motorist Complaints
- On-road driver behavior (speed; hard braking; etc.)

Why?

- Has Operations contributed to a driver's unsafe behavior?

Effective Communication and Conflict Resolution

Source of Communication Between Company and Drivers

Operations/Driver Relationship

DO'S and DON'TS

DO'S

- Establish rapport with your drivers
- Avoid being distracted
- Show fairness
- Concentrate on what needs to be said
- Listen with the intent of understanding
- Repeat what you've heard
- Pause and think before you respond
- Avoid being abrupt
- Give praise when it is due

DO'S and DON'TS

DON'TS

- Let annoyance or anger show in your voice (grouch)
- Be a fault finder
- Interrupt
- Take things personally
- Let little problems grow into big ones
- Be a barrier builder
- Show favoritism
- Use the “ostrich” approach
- Threaten a driver

How To Manage Conflict

Handling driver complaints and frustration

- Remain calm as you listen to the problem
- Summarize the problem to confirm your understanding
- Tell the driver what action you will take to help
- Follow through with your promised action
- Follow-up with the driver to provide update on the situation
- Get help when necessary

Defusing Driver Anger

- Before the driver arrives at the customer or makes an imprudent decision
- Resolve the driver's issues in a mutually acceptable manner as quickly as possible

Exit Interviews and Retention Surveys

What was the major reason you ended your employment at the fleet?

- Doesn't pay enough
- Can't meet safety/licensing/insurance requirements
- Loneliness/away from home too much
- Work schedule too unpredictable
- Working conditions
- Poor health
- Poor treatment
- Poor supervision
- No advancement possible
- Other: (Specify)

What should have changed to keep you from leaving the fleet?

Exit Interviews and Retention Surveys

When you first started with *the fleet*, how were the following items *DIFFERENT* than expected? *Circle your answer.*

Amount of time away from home	Expected More	Same as Expected	Expected Less	Don't Know
Amount of time spent doing work other than driving	Expected More	Same as Expected	Expected Less	Don't Know
Amount of time spent driving	Expected More	Same as Expected	Expected Less	Don't Know
Amount of paperwork required	Expected More	Same as Expected	Expected Less	Don't Know
Amount of time spent waiting	Expected More	Same as Expected	Expected Less	Don't Know
Actual pay	Expected More	Same as Expected	Expected Less	Don't Know
Benefits	Expected More	Same as Expected	Expected Less	Don't Know
Equipment	Expected More	Same as Expected	Expected Less	Don't Know
Difficulty of training	Expected More	Same as Expected	Expected Less	Don't Know
Quality of training	Expected More	Same as Expected	Expected Less	Don't Know
Amount of safety regulations that must be followed	Expected More	Same as Expected	Expected Less	Don't Know
Amount of loading/unloading by hand required	Expected More	Same as Expected	Expected Less	Don't Know
Stress involved with job	Expected More	Same as Expected	Expected Less	Don't Know
Relationship with supervisor	Expected More	Same as Expected	Expected Less	Don't Know
Relationship with customers' employees	Expected More	Same as Expected	Expected Less	Don't Know
Overall amount of work	Expected More	Same as Expected	Expected Less	Don't Know

Lifestyle

Comments

Exit Interviews and Retention Surveys

Please describe your former supervisor. Circle your answer. Answers are strictly confidential.

Did he/she ask for drivers' opinions?	Almost	Always	Somewhat	Slightly	Never
Did you like to work with your supervisor?	Almost	Always	Somewhat	Slightly	Never
He/she treated you with respect and dignity.	Almost	Always	Somewhat	Slightly	Never
He/she demanded instead of asking things from you.	Almost	Always	Somewhat	Slightly	Never
He/she was familiar with your job.	Almost	Always	Somewhat	Slightly	Never
He/she followed up on problems.	Almost	Always	Somewhat	Slightly	Never
He/she communicated on-going problems to upper management.	Almost	Always	Somewhat	Slightly	Never
He/she was fair to all drivers.	Almost	Always	Somewhat	Slightly	Never
His/her expectations were clear to you.	Almost	Always	Somewhat	Slightly	Never
He/she was trustworthy.	Almost	Always	Somewhat	Slightly	Never
He/she was supportive of you and your work.	Almost	Always	Somewhat	Slightly	Never
He/she took time to listen to you.	Almost	Always	Somewhat	Slightly	Never
Would your supervisor give you credit or thank you for doing a good job?	Almost	Always	Somewhat	Slightly	Never
He/she was competent.	Almost	Always	Somewhat	Slightly	Never
Comments:					

Exit Interviews and Retention Surveys

How would you evaluate *the fleet's concern for your needs?* *Circle your answer.*

Home time	Very Concerned	Somewhat Concerned	Slightly Concerned	Not Concerned
Income	Very Concerned	Somewhat Concerned	Slightly Concerned	Not Concerned
Safety	Very Concerned	Somewhat Concerned	Slightly Concerned	Not Concerned
Quality/maintenance of equipment	Very Concerned	Somewhat Concerned	Slightly Concerned	Not Concerned
Well-being of family members	Very Concerned	Somewhat Concerned	Slightly Concerned	Not Concerned
Career advancement	Very Concerned	Somewhat Concerned	Slightly Concerned	Not Concerned
Use of my time	Very Concerned	Somewhat Concerned	Slightly Concerned	Not Concerned
Accurate paycheck	Very Concerned	Somewhat Concerned	Slightly Concerned	Not Concerned
General welfare	Very Concerned	Somewhat Concerned	Slightly Concerned	Not Concerned
Working conditions	Very Concerned	Somewhat Concerned	Slightly Concerned	Not Concerned
Proper rest and fatigue	Very Concerned	Somewhat Concerned	Slightly Concerned	Not Concerned
Health	Very Concerned	Somewhat Concerned	Slightly Concerned	Not Concerned
Continued training	Very Concerned	Somewhat Concerned	Slightly Concerned	Not Concerned
Job security	Very Concerned	Somewhat Concerned	Slightly Concerned	Not Concerned

Comments:

Is there anything else you would like to tell us about what you did or did not like about the driver's job at the fleet? *If so, please use this space for that purpose.*

Also, any comments you wish to make that you think may help us in future efforts to understand the job of the professional driver will be appreciated, either here or in a separate letter.

What Can the Fleet Do?

- Review the fleet's pay and benefits package.
- Review the incentive program for drivers.
- Listen to your drivers regarding equipment, concerns with managers, customers, general comments/concerns, etc.
- Provide driver managers/dispatchers with additional training on effective communication/conflict resolution, hours-of-service, time management, etc.

Questions?

