PART 1

Resource, Recruit and Retain

How your school can lead the way in talent acquisition
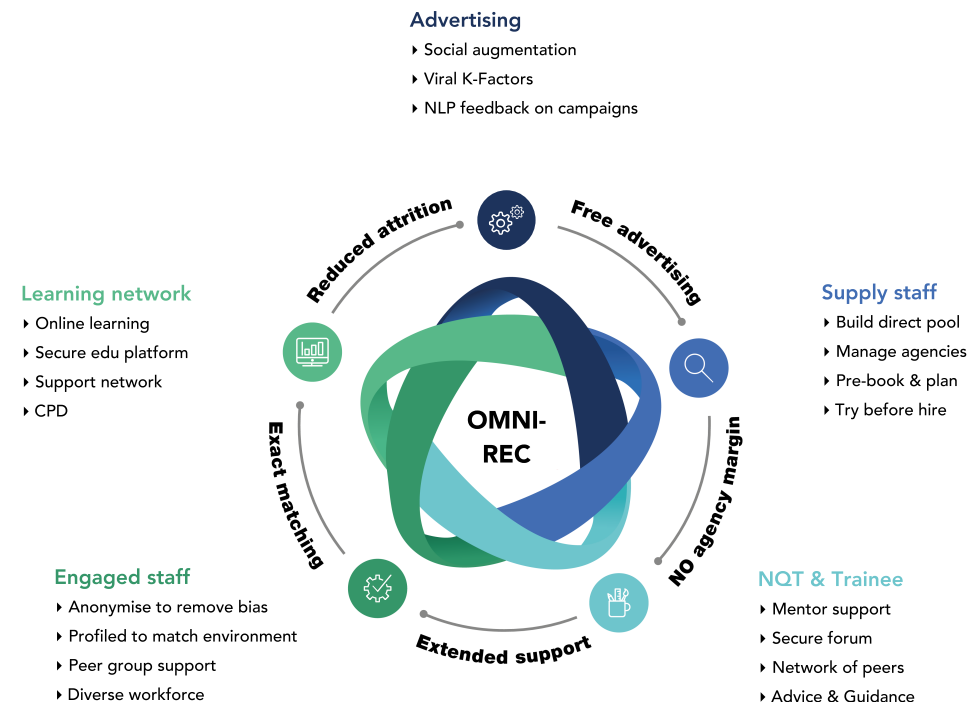
realise me

Contents

realise me

01 About Realise Me

RealiseMe provides the only solution to fully support multi-academy trusts(MATs) and school groups to take full control of all resourcing processes through their own recruitment agency. The structure requires negligible upfront investment, has full implementation and onboarding support, with continued guidance and advice from high level professionals in the sector.

With the formation of a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV), RealiseMe will train and support the school's talent acquisition (TA) team or if required insource a TA for the trust. Where the SPV agency makes profit on the service, this can be redistributed back to the trust as a dividend or used to provide CPD or additional support services to the schools.

The RealiseMe platform supports the TA team to create and curate direct supply pools without agency margin, to manage multiple third party supply agencies as a back-up framework and provides accurate real time data to central services.

A job board addition helps MATs to reduce advertising costs and provides an anonymised application process, with degenderized advertising. RealiseMe is the only platform to be endorsed by Fig Tree International and the MAT Race charter.

Advertising
- Social augmentation
- Viral K-Factors
- NLP feedback on campaigns

Learning network
- Online learning
- Secure edu platform
- Support network
- CPD

Supply staff
- Build direct pool
- Manage agencies
- Pre-book & plan
- Try before hire

Engaged staff
- Anonymise to remove bias
- Profiled to match environment
- Peer group support
- Diverse workforce

NQT & Trainee
- Mentor support
- Secure forum
- Network of peers
- Advice & Guidance

Reduced attrition · Free advertising · NO agency margin · Extended support · Exact matching

OMNI-REC

Additions such as AI job matching, a supply teacher app with gprs tracking and environment mapping tools to find the right profiles, running a recruitment agency has never been so easy!

Secure the future of your schools with amazing staff, excellent efficiency and outstanding outcomes.

Contact us for a free consultation and to learn more info@realiseme.com

realise me

Introduction

At RealiseMe, we understand the pressures schools face when it comes to recruitment and retention. With tight budgets and increasing workloads, it's becoming harder to not only attract, but also to retain great teachers, support staff and central service members.

Schools have no assets, only the human capital they employ to teach, support teaching and manage the school for their pupils. When an organisation is so people-centric, the talent acquisition process is key to the commitment of continuous improvement.

Yet for many years schools have seen recruitment as a noncore function, devolving the responsibility to a single individual or to a HR department as a secondary role. Recruitment in schools becomes a 'multichannel' Service that absorbs immense amount of time and effort, while recruiters in the private Sector all work with the far more efficient 'omni-channel.'

Services. A school is only as good as its teachers; therefore, an effective recruitment strategy is the essential foundation for a successful school.

If a school wants to attract and retain the best talent, they must deliver the best candidate journey possible, magnetise their brand and turn outbound resourcing to inbound applications.

So what how does a group of schools create and deliver a recruitment strategy that will balance the books, improve talent attraction and lower attrition rates?

realise me

03

Employer Brand

Why do you need a good brand as an employer?

LinkedIn reported that 72% of recruitment leaders worldwide agreed that employer brand has a significant impact on hiring with more than half of candidates seeking out the company's website and social media before applying.[1]

Employer brand perception matters immensely, particularly for schools amidst a time of teacher shortages. It's important to sell your school in the same way that candidates need to sell their qualities to you.

What does it mean to have a good employer brand?

Having a strong brand that carries a warm sentiment, a viral capacity for positive referrals and a strong reputation reduces recruitment costs by 50% and reduces turnover by 28%.[2] Building your 'brand' as an employer attracts candidates in a way that a simple job description can't. Your brand must be a magnet for talent, ensuring multiplicity within your network. So what does a good employer brand look like?

- Is your message consistent?

- Do your school values actually mean something or do they just look good in a brochure?

- Do your values really translate in the work your school does?

- Can you say accurately and succinctly in one paragraph, what you do, and how and why you do it?

realise me

03

Employer Brand

How do you develop a good employer brand?

An employer's brand is built from the inside, ensuring perception is reality. Make sure that your leadership team are bought in to your EVP (employer value proposition) and that everyone knows what the school stands for as an employer.

Start thinking like a prospective teacher looking for a great school to work in. Build brand advocacy by encouraging staff to post and network on social channels, spreading the word and showing confidence as an employer. Each of the steps in this guide will help add to and consolidate your brand as a great employer.
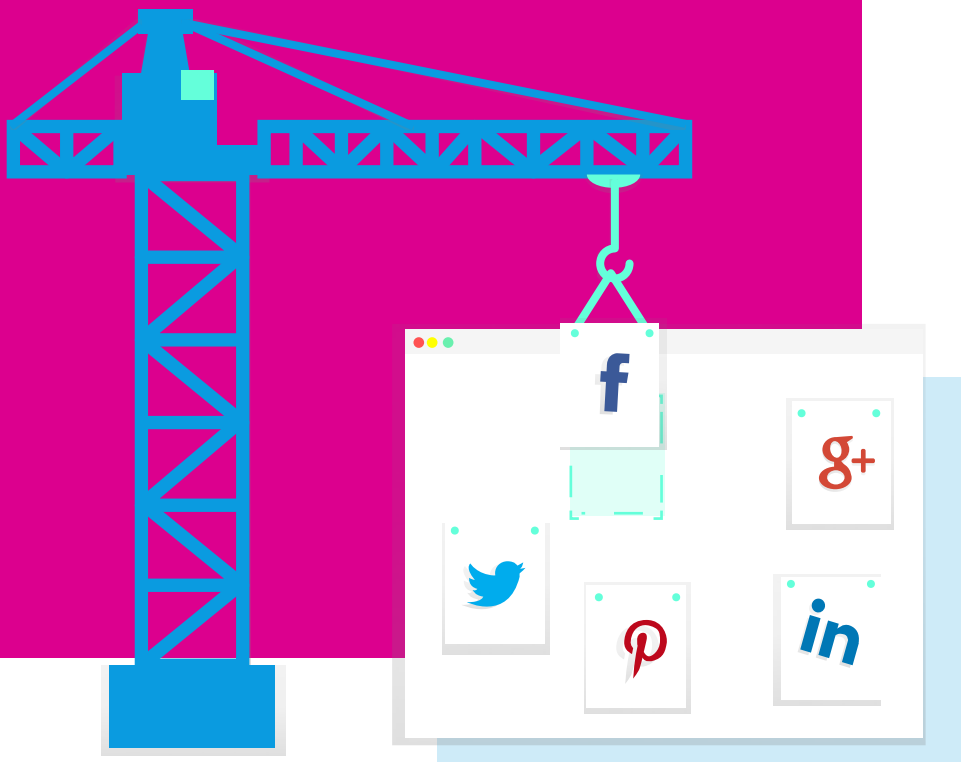
Top Tip

If you want people to remark to others about your school, then you must be remarkable!

realise me

Social Media

One great way to build your school's 'brand' is by utilising social media. In recent years, employers across all sectors have embraced social media as a powerful tool for brand attraction and customer engagement and schools can learn a lot from this. Don't underestimate the power of social media when it comes to your branding and reputation as an employer.

You can use social media to promote vacancies but more than that, you can also use social media to attract candidates by showing off why your school is such a great place to work. Many schools do this well by using eye-catching images, promoting staff and parent testimonials or posting pictures of school events and achievements. A picture of your staff teambuilding event or a thank you card from a student, or new employee, could be the perfect way to endorse your school to candidates and parents alike.

realise me

Top Tip

Be sure to monitor comments, direct messages and spam to keep up a good online presence.

Social Media

04

What you post on social media must be consistent with your values and continually deliver the tone and message you desire. Importantly, it is often best to be measured with the frequency of your school's social media posts; sometimes less is more-quality not quantity!

Be sure to take internal feed back on how your colleagues feel about the tonality and presentation of the posts. Do they feel it is a true reflection of the school, the teachers and the children? If you can access a growth hacker or digital marketer, they can measure the demographic and reach of your posts and advise on best practice.

At RealiseMe, we help you to utilise social media when recruiting by offering the option of social media augmentation when posting jobs in order to boost your candidate reach online.

realise me

Candidate Experience

In the recruitment process, candidate experience is far more important than you might give it credit for.

In today's environment of instant messaging, immediate news and curated AI, we are used to finding things out quickly. A recent survey carried out by the world's largest recruiter found that, if a job applicant hadn't heard back within 2 weeks of their application, they assumed that they had been unsuccessful and would move on.

Unfortunately, many schools work a slow recruitment process with getting to the point of interviews taking up to 3 weeks! As a responsive and proactive employer, you must have a consistent and standardised approach to the candidate experience.

▸ Treat applicants as customers, they must enjoy the experience. Just because you haven't hired them this time, doesn't mean you might not in the future!

▸ Ensure every candidate receives prompt acknowledgement of their application.

▸ Ensure every candidate receives a final response within a set time period.

▸ When a candidate has been unsuccessful, make sure they receive a prompt, polite and positive response with feedback if appropriate.

▸ Be sure to include positive messages about your school in candidate communications, such as details of open events and awards (building your brand).

Did you know? People who enjoy the candidate experience are 38% more likely to accept a job offer.[3]

realise me

Recruitment Automation

Many schools and MATs already use an ATS (Applicant Tracking System), which tracks CVs from submission and sends out applicant reminders. However, this is no longer enough to stay on top of current recruitment trends- simple ATS systems were dropped by recruitment agencies almost 20 years ago!

Applicant tracking systems are entirely reactive systems, so you will only deal with the candidates that apply for roles and the data will only be from the journey after application, essentially only telling you what you probably already know. It won't help to actively source candidates in the way that a CRM (Customer Relationship Management) or Omni-channel platform (like RealiseMe) would.

So, how do applicant tracking systems   compare with CRM systems and omni-channel platforms?

	ATS	CRM	Omni-channel platform (RealiseMe)
Applicant tracking	✓	✓	✓
Proactive candidate targeting	✗	✓	✓
Candidate relationship management	✗	✓	✓
HR analytics	✗	✓	✓
Integration with 'social sourcing' (Facebook, LinkedIn, etc)	✗	✓	✓
Talent pools	✗	✗	✓
Pre-screening interviews and video interviews	✗	✗	✓
Integrated AI and behaviour/ environment matching	✗	✗	✓

The results are clear: an omni-channel system helps to bring all aspects of the recruitment process together, including advertising, applications, compliance, payroll and reporting. Omni-channel systems are the way forward in terms of improving both your internal and external recruitment process, helping to create a more efficient, accurate process and delivering usable analytics. You can read more about how RealiseMe's omni-channel platform works in the 'About RealiseMe' chapter towards the end of this guide.

realise me

Here's how you can effectively streamline your interview process:

1 First decide how you want to evaluate candidates (competencies, experience, situational) and plan your interviews accordingly.

2 Outline the process so that everyone involved in the hiring process knows what to do.

3 Set the interview questions so that comparisons between candidates are simple. You may also want to set 2-3 pre-screening questions which candidates answer pre-interview, helping you make the decision of who to select for interview.

4 Power of 3: Compare notes fairly between candidates before passing on to another to review decisions, then on to a final decision maker to compare and decide. This method has been shown to be consistently effective across the recruitment sector.

Top Tip

A great interview process also helps to remove natural bias when hiring as well as saving you the cost of an open vacancy, which can be equivalent to a whole year's salary!

The Interview
07

Schools have moved forward significantly with improving interview structures in the last 10 years in a move to make the hiring process fairer. In order to improve, there must be consistency in the interview process so that strong, fair comparisons can be made between candidates.

Don't be afraid to put an unstructured section in to the interview process, by which I mean open questions that allow candidates to talk in depth about situations. This allows interviewers to probe deeper in to a candidate's experiences. Open questions produce more qualitative information which can be difficult to compare between candidates; counter this by scoring each candidate's answers to open questions which can then be easily compared between candidates.

realise me

Talent Pools
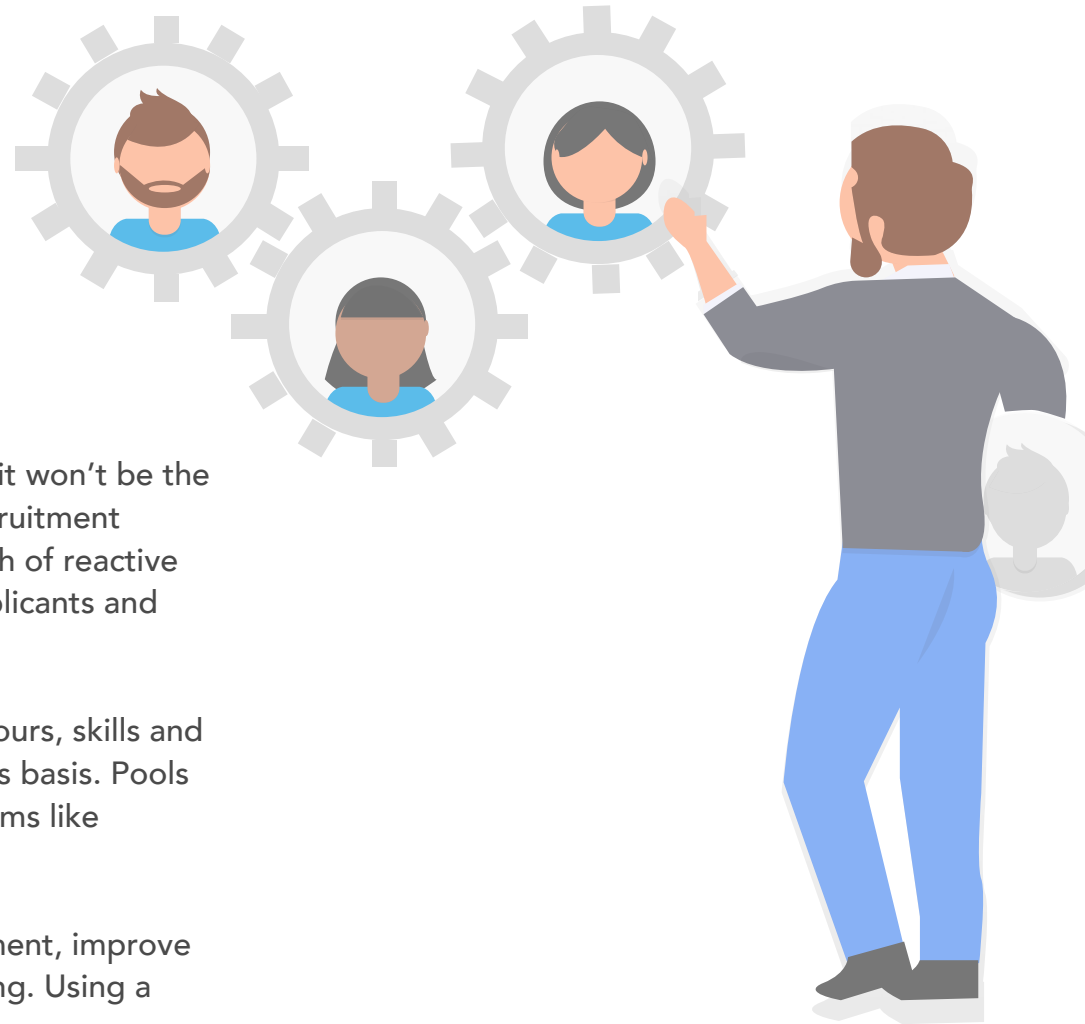
You may have filled your vacancies for this term but remember that it won't be the last vacancy you fill! Creating candidate pools helps to make the recruitment process more proactive, rather than resorting to the last-minute dash of reactive recruitment that can damage the way schools interact with both applicants and agencies.

Work with a consultant, an agency or specialist to define the behaviours, skills and environments a teacher or TA would require, then build pools on this basis. Pools can be created through portals, forums or with omni-channel platforms like RealiseMe.

Actively building your candidate pools can futureproof your recruitment, improve quality and accuracy of hires, while also reducing the cost of acquiring. Using a managed workforce system to pool candidates also helps to improve your employer brand through fostering a positive reputation as a proactive employer.

💡 Top Tip

Investing time in to proactive recruitment methods now saves money for forever!

realise me

Employee Referrals

Employee referrals help you hire faster, lower your cost per hire and increases retention.[4]

With the internet's power for ratings and referrals at its highest point ever, combined with social media and online teacher forums, the UK's education sector is actually highly connected. Your employees and candidate pools are linked with an entire network of professionals that could prove very useful in your recruitment strategy if you know how to leverage it.

There's nothing more powerful than having the confidence to recommend the place where you work to someone you know well. A positive referral is a powerful tool that could attract a candidate you would not have otherwise reached. So why not reach out to employees and candidates when trying to fill those difficult vacancies?

Many employers offer financial incentives, prizes or additional holiday for good referrals, which are certainly worth trying. However, genuine appreciation and accrediting for the action of a good referral, can be stronger than a financial prize or bonus.

realise me

Data Driven Recruitment and Analytics

We are still yet to meet a school or MAT that has real data on their recruitment process. Schools measure so much from performance to attendance, yet with payroll being 75% of their budget, many do not devote the same importance to measuring their recruitment and retention process.

Recruitment and talent acquisition are key to a school's performance; therefore, it needs to be assessed and properly measured in order to improve. Every school should know what it costs to acquire (CoA) an individual, not just advert cost or agency fee, but the full cost of the entire process. (An example of CoA - It costs Uber £36 every time you download their app!)

realise me

10

Data Driven Recruitment and Analytics

How can I gather data?

1. Carry out a full time-cost audit of your recruitment process starting from notification of a vacancy and arranging the advertising of the role, HR management costs, interviews, through to hiring and induction.

2. Then factor in the cost of repeating the process in the event that you don't find a hire the first time round plus the cost of increased disruption and supply cover.

3. Measure the time to hire and cost of opportunity- what else could you be doing and how many candidates might you lose through a slow process?

4. Aim to give yourself a full 360 overview of your recruitment process.

How do I use this data to improve?

The data you have gathered should give you a broad overview of your recruitment process and a deeper understanding of your strengths and weaknesses. It will enable you to see your efficiencies and where there is room for improvement. Use this data to inform your future decision making and begin to plan an informed recruitment strategy.

Remeber: if it moves, we can measure it; if you can measure it, you can master it!

realise me

Building a Diverse Workforce

Why is a diverse workforce important for retention?

The government's Behavioural Insights Team (BIT) have conducted studies and surveys which have demonstrated clearly that diverse work environments are more productive, deliver better outcomes and improve social mobility. A strong diversity and equality policy facilitates employee satisfaction and stability, encouraging retention.

Building and nurturing a diverse, forward-thinking staff environment starts with recruitment. Unfortunately, recruitment and talent acquisition are open to incredible bias, whether conscious or unconscious. It's easy for hiring decisions to be made based on the unconscious personal biases of the interviewer.

How can I build a diverse, engaged workforce?

Here are a few practical examples a school can try in order to promote diversity and foster a more engaged workforce which will ultimately help you to retain great teachers and teaching assistants.

- Anonymise your recruitment process. RealiseMe does this by allowing schools to anonymise candidate profiles, removing info such as name and gender which ensures your selection process is completely unbiased.

- Appoint a diversity manager who is responsible for ensuring fairness in the recruitment process, making sure that there is no gender bias or gender pay gap for example.

- Encourage salary negotiation by advertising vacancies with a salary range.

- Unconscious bias and diversity training.

realise me

11

Building a Diverse Workforce

Top Tip

A strong recruitment process will always attract a diverse workforce. Diverse, engaged workforces start with recruitment.

realise me

Feedback Loops

We've all been asked what's known as 'Question 2.0' by companies in which they ask for feedback in order to improve their NPS (Net Promoter Score). It's a great way for companies to consolidate a strong reputation as well as learn how they can improve.

However, schools often shy away from asking their staff the same questions, in case the feedback isn't what they want to hear. But remember that being criticised is just the price of admission when you want to improve! It's a simple fact that the best way to retain staff is by listening to their feedback and acting on it.

How can I gather feedback?

360 feedback

You can ask staff for feedback by using anonymised 360 feedback forms. This is where you gather feedback from your colleagues, staff and even parents along with carrying out a self-assessment. This allows you to gain a comprehensive set of feedback from all angles, enabling you to compare and improve.

Ask the head

Another good method of gaining feedback is through an anonymised 'Ask the Head' secure forum or page within your recruitment platform or school intranet which allows tough questions to be asked, almost like an online suggestion box.

Head teacher for a day

Alternatively, you could try a 'Head Teacher for a Day' initiative in which staff get the opportunity to act as the head for a day and can suggest ways in which they would improve the school if they were head. It encourages staff to come up with their own ideas and solutions and also shows your staff that you value their input.

realise me

Top Tip

If you really want to know what your school is like for staff, ask your supply teachers for anonymised feedback. They've seen all the schools in your area and really know how you compare!

Feedback Loops

12

How does feedback help to improve retention?

Allowing feedback for constructive purposes helps with employer transparency but is also a cathartic activity that provides good information for informed decision making. Acting on feedback helps to nurture a good work environment which employees will value far more than a salary jump!

realise me
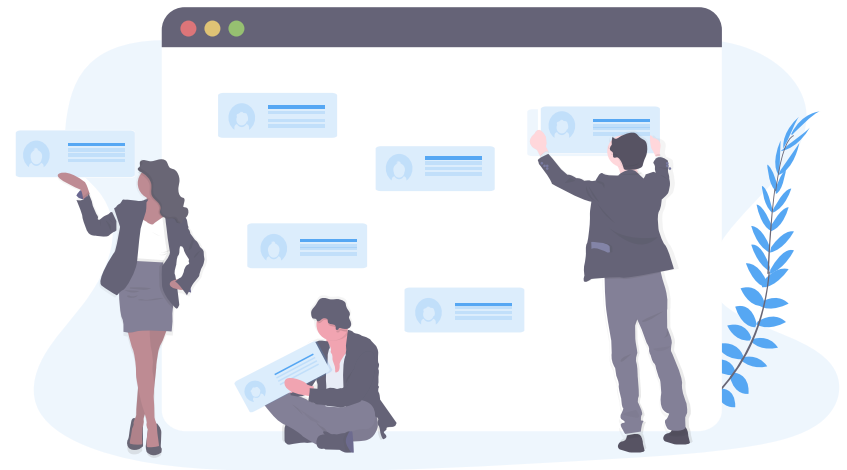
Improving Your Work Environmnet

Glassdoor reported that it takes an average 40% in salary increase to turn a passive employee in to a semi-passive one. That's a significantly large jump in salary to persuade a content employee to consider an alternative offer. Therefore, it's worth supporting your employees and improving the workplace environment so that they are far less likely to accept another job offer in future.

The feedback you received from your staff should have given you a good idea of how satisfied your workforce are as well as suggestions for ways that the work environment could be improved. Here are a few suggestions that could help you to support your staff and build a more productive and engaged workforce.

1   Flexible

2   Professional development

3   Positivity

4   Don't brainstorm, why-storm!

realise me

13

Improving Your Work Environmnet

Flexible

Flexible working options makes your workplace more attractive to candidates. Work flexibility is especially important to those with other commitments outside of work such as mothers returning from maternity leave.

With a regimented school regime, home-working and flexible hours may not be possible options. However, you can improve workplace flexibility in your school by encouraging job sharing options, more part-time opportunities and even phased retirement, for example.

Professional development

One of the main reasons NQTs leave the profession is because of poor support. To hold on to great teaching staff, you need to offer them the support they need to thrive. This can include:
• Staff mentoring
• A buddy system
• Staff sponsorship
• Extensive CPD opportunities
• Lesson shadowing

Positivity

Cultivate a positive work environment and one that is open to constructive criticism. Make time to acknowledge and publicly appreciate the efforts of your colleagues. This positive atmosphere and culture of appreciation will permeate throughout the workforce.

Don't brainstorm, why-storm!

When coming up with new ideas in team meetings, brain storming can be highly pressurised for some and often the loudest or most senior voice is the only one to prevail. When 'why-storming', focus on why you are doing things in order to work out how to improve. Why are we doing what we do and why are we doing it the way we do?

realise me

Networking and Collaboration

At RealiseMe, we offer supportive forums to encourage collaboration in the education profession. This allows teachers and other education professionals to to share advice, cooperate and exchange resources.

How can networking improve retention?

It's worth encouraging your staff to join peer forums online, to open up their thoughts outside of the school walls. This helps to avoid insularity that can negatively impact schools and businesses alike. New ideas, shared resources and relief of pressure all feeds back in to your school, the classroom and staff room.

Also, when stuck in a difficult position as a school leader, it can help to gain advice from others outside of your workforce. Asking a question inside the school may receive a biased, subjective answer. But asking the same question to different groups of people outside of school can offer a lot more in the way of comparisons, new ideas, affirmation and solutions.

Networks also offer a great opportunity to go viral with a strong employer brand. With your employees spreading the word online about how great their workplace is, it can help attract wider candidates that you may not have otherwise reached. Many prospective candidates will look your school up online before applying so fostering a positive online reputation is very important.

Many leaders worry that staff may see a better workplace or opportunity if they communicate with external peers on online forums. But this is rarely the case- instead of seeing better work environments elsewhere, they will often come across people struggling with the same issues they are. By encouraging communication, they can work together with those they network with online to come up with new solutions which all feed back in to your school.

Networking encourages communication, fosters creative solutions and prevents insularity.

realise me

Supporting Your Supply Staff

Supply teachers are the unsung heroes of a school but they are often the most poorly treated and least respected part of the school workforce. But there is no reason for this. Many supply teachers choose to work on supply for greater flexibility, to be free of bureaucracy or because of poor past experiences of permanent work. Whatever the reason, we have seen many amazing supply teachers carrying out what is a very tough role.

How can supporting supply staff improve retention?

Don't overlook your supply staff if you want to improve recruitment and retention at your school. We found that when supply staff are treated equally, they turn in above average performances. Furthermore, many supply teachers will use supply roles early in their career to gain experience and to find a good school before finding a permanent role. So if you treat your supply teachers well and give them support, they could become loyal teaching staff in the future.

What's more, supply teachers can be an amazing source of feedback due to the fact that they work in many different schools in your area and so can form comparisons to aid improvement. If you really want to know how your school compares to local schools, ask a supply teacher!

Supply teachers are also well connected with other local supply teachers who can provide recommendations (or criticisms) of the best and worst schools to work at- so make sure they have only good things to say about your school!

Top Tip

Every child matters, but so does every teacher. Supply today, perm tomorrow!

realise me

Conclusion

Summary

- Promote diversity for a more engaged, productive workforce

- Listen to your staff with 360 feedback

- Support your staff and improve the workplace environment

- Encourage networking and collaboration

- Treat your supply staff with the same respect you give to your permanent team

Recruitment and retention are an obvious key to any school's success, but sometimes this can be hard to control with so many mediums, suppliers, and processes to manage. Therefore, creating your own professional agency that services your schools directly and allows for other trust or schools to partner within the SPV, will ensure you always get quality candidates, matched correctly, and delivered with the consistency and continuity you deserve.

Embracing candidate feedback to improve staff support, onboarding and training now creates a virtuous cycle within your school network to continually improve the total service.

The future for MATs and school groups is to have their own agency, the solution to the problem is RealiseMe.

realise me

About the Author

Dean Kelly is the founder of RealiseMe, the Chair of the largest network of recruitment CEOs in the world and a talent acquisition professional with over 25 years' experience in delivering bespoke human capital solutions.

He designed and delivered resource solutions within the IT, finance, telecoms and e-commerce sectors, before moving into education and schools.

Over the last two decades Dean has worked with schools in the UK and across the globe, delivering full managed solutions for 12 LEA school groups and GEMS the worlds largest independent educator.

Dean has also built and run several successful education agencies, including a PLC, so has always been acutely aware of how much money schools waste on poor recruitment, the antiquated way in which the sector resources staff and how best to solve this problem to deliver better outcomes for the children.

The solution is RealiseMe and the MATRec SPV.

* Youngest PLC CEO to win 'International Business Leader of the Year' for PLC turnaround

* Delivered the only successful managed recruitment solutions for schools across 12 LEA groups and GEMS

* Provided talent solutions for Slough LEA bringing 2 schools from 'failing' to 'good'

* Originator of campaign advertising and forward supply purchasing for schools

* Worked at all levels within UK education, including schools, MATS, federations, diocese and the DfE

* Co-founder of Europe's largest network of recruitment CEOs

* Voluntary Chair of Opera Global Youth Foundation charity

realise me

1 **LinkedIn Talent Solutions**, *'The Ultimate List of Employer Brand Statistics for Hiring Managers, HR Professionals, and Recruiters'*, https://business.linkedin.com/content/dam/business/talent-solutions/global/en_us/c/pdfs/ultimate-list-of-employer-brand-stats.pdf

2 **LinkedIn Talent Solutions**, *'The Ultimate List of Employer Brand Statistics for Hiring Managers, HR Professionals, and Recruiters'*, https://business.linkedin.com/content/dam/business/talent-solutions/global/en_us/c/pdfs/ultimate-list-of-employer-brand-stats.pdf

3.**IBM**, *'The Far-Reaching Impact of Candidate Experience'*, 2017, https://www-01.ibm.com/common/ssi/cgi-bin/ssialias?htmlfid=LOW14341USEN

4 **LinkedIn Talent Solutions**, *'5 Reasons Why Employee Referrals Matter to Small to Mid-sized Businesses'*, https://business.linkedin.com/content/dam/me/business/en-us/talent-solutions/resources/pdfs/new_employee_referral_programs_FINAL.pdf

5 **McKinsey & Company**, *'How the World's Best-Performing School Systems Come Out on Top'*, https://www.mckinsey.com/~/media/mckinsey/industries/social%20sector/our%20insights/how%20the%20worlds%20best%20performing%20school%20systems%20come%20out%20on%20top/how_the_world_s_best-performing_school_systems_come_out_on_top.ashx

realise me

Read Part 2 of our guide to effective school recruitment and retention!

click to download

realise me