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Truck Driver Shortage: Who Is Going to Deliver the Package You Ordered from Amazon?

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BY JIM GILBOY

Co-authored by Jim Gilboy and Garrett LaBrosse

There is no doubt that the trucking industry is a crucial component of the U.S. economy. Almost 70% of the nation's freight is moved by truck drivers. Think about how we purchase items now over the internet and have those items shipped to our homes. So, it is understandable that now since there is an increased demand for shipping products, we are in a time of economic growth and there is low overall unemployment, we would see a shortage of truck drivers. Trucking company owners have struggled the past few years with recruiting and retaining qualified drivers. The American Trucking Association reports that there is currently a shortage of around 40,000 truck drivers, causing great concern in not only the trucking industry, but also for those who rely on timely and quality shipments. Even more frightening is the fact that the American Trucking Association estimates that in the next decade, the trucking industry will be short by 175,000 drivers.

To help meet this growing demand and combat the loss of well-qualified drivers who have hit retirement age, trucking companies need to take progressive efforts to improve the quality of life for their most valued assets: their drivers. Recruitment and retention are at the forefront of the movement, and owners have implemented new policies and procedures to help increase both. Trucking companies need to be creative and think outside the box.

RETENTION: EXCELLING WITHIN THE TRUCKING INDUSTRY

Retention is probably the single most important factor when it comes to excelling within the industry. Companies that have had long-tenured employees experience more productivity and more safety. In fact, over 55% of all collisions are from drivers who have been on board for less than a year. Some retention suggestions include providing higher pay and better benefits and making the work environment more family-oriented. Another important characteristic that helps retain drivers is providing good equipment and having an effective maintenance program. Also limiting the time away from home and long work days will help professional drivers to create the work/life balance that they desire. Finally, a good working relationship among senior leaders, dispatchers and drivers will help to improve retention. The senior leadership needs to deliver on promises and the dispatchers must balance meeting the customers' needs with the work/life balance needs of the drivers.

RECRUITMENT: ATTRACTING TOP TRUCKING TALENT

Recruitment of new drivers is another important aspect of handling the professional truck driver shortage. Items like company branding are extremely important when it comes to getting the qualified people in the door. Owners should make it known that they are looking for drivers. Fleets should have logos affixed to the exterior so that people can see the company name and brand. Owners should consider participating in trucking industry events and promote the industry to people considering a career as a driver. Trucking firms can consider attending job fairs where veterans are looking for employment. Many of these individuals have the skills necessary to be successful drivers after they are done serving our country. Trucking companies can implement an employee referral program. Also companies should offer online applications to speed up and simplify the recruitment process. Finally, trucking companies might consider partnering with local truck-driving schools or even starting their own truck-driving school to train the next generation of drivers.

If trucking companies can master recruitment and retention, high-quality drivers will take notice, and your company will come out on top.

Contact us with questions about trucking recruitment and retention and visit our [Transportation and Logistics Industry](#) page to learn more about services that we offer the industry.

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