

**Question:** What did SDAN Members Teach Each Other about Staff Recruitment and Retention on June 6?

**Answer:** Quite a lot! See what happens when we all put our heads together!

**Thank You Patti Saylor for your effective moderation**

## **Interactive Discussion on Staff Recruitment and Retention**

### **WHO IS THIS ABOUT?**

1. Nothing About Me Without Me. Remember who this is for and about—the participant. Every word and action should reflect that truth.. Participant needs and preferences, whether expressed or tacit, should guide the process.
2. Remember. Working with our participants is a privilege. This is GREAT Job! We don't need to beg people to work with participants—employees need to show they are desirable candidates. Our recruiting process should reflect this important truth.
3. Participants are not usually looking for “caregivers.” They are hiring people who can provide the supports they need to pursue their goals.
4. Participant requirements may vary significantly from parental preferences. Respect this—or at least discover a balance. Some parents may be turned off by piercings and tatoos—while some participants may “require” them.
5. Hiring the right staff member can lead to lifelong relationships-- which are satisfying to both employer and employee.

### **WHAT ABOUT EMPLOYEE POLICIES**

6. Employee policies or the employee manual should precede the recruitment process. The writing process will help participants identify what they are looking for, and clearly stating expectations and policies at the start of a relationship prevents serious future misunderstandings.
7. Employee policies should reflect the views and the voice of the real employer—the participant.
8. Every set of policies should be unique to the employer.
9. Remember that participants themselves may be their own best staff recruiters . They are beautiful people who naturally draw others towards them. Keep an eye out for those opportunities.
10. Participants can now access the \$500 staff recruitment allowance. Thank you to NaToya Mitchell, DDA's Statewide SDS Coordinator for providing this document in time for our meeting.
11. Word of Mouth—including an informal post on Facebook —can be a great way to locate great staff.

### **WHERE TO LOOK**

12. Advertisements should be composed with the permission of the participant, reflect the voice of the participant, and emphasize participant strengths .
13. Career Centers at colleges and universities won't post ads for “household employees” online but will often allow paper postings on their bulletin boards.
14. Post ads at venues that draw the kind of people the participant is seeking. If the participant likes to work out, post an ad at fitness clubs.
15. Concise bulleted ads are usually best.

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16. Consider where you are posting before providing too much detail.
17. When posting at colleges, don't expend energy seeking out the right departments. Look for high-traffic areas instead.

#### INTERVIEWING

18. Participants should ALWAYS be involved in the interview process.
19. It is often best to have the first interview in a neutral environment such as the library or a restaurant.
20. Consider having a trusted current or past employee participate in the interview. She has a valuable point of view.
21. Research a candidate before starting the actual new hire process with the FMS to validate oral or written claims: Md. Judiciary search is free.  
<http://casesearch.courts.state.md.us/casesearch/>
22. Examine references carefully. Keep in mind that former employers are sometimes hesitant to say anything negative.
23. Consider requesting college transcripts, either official or unofficial, to verify verbal or written claims.

We barely touched our last two topics but recommend articles on the Resource List we provided.

There was time for just a few observations in the following areas:

#### STAFF RETENTION

24. Some participants have been able to contribute to employee health insurance as a benefit. If this is something your employee needs consider pursuing this.
25. PTO or Paid Time Off or "sick and safe leave" is a permissible benefit and a great retention tool—especially because the old Staff Retainer Fee is no longer an option when a participant is hospitalized. Only Montgomery county actually requires household employers to provide sick and safe leave for their employees. But our state recently passed the *Time to Care Act* which does require all Maryland businesses with over 15 employees to provide Sick and Safe Leave for their employees. The following handbook describing those regulations is actually a useful tool for designing your own PTO policy  
. <https://www.employmentlawhandbook.com/leave-laws/state-leave-laws/maryland/sick-leave/>

#### STAFF EVALUATION

26. Be aware of legal requirements before installing a Nanny Cam  
<https://gtm.com/household/nanny-cam/>  
or a location tracker.  
<https://blog.hubstaff.com/employee-tracking-policy/>

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## AFTERTHOUGHTS

1. Don't put anything in writing that you aren't prepared to stand by.
2. Maryland is an "at will" state. That means that Maryland employers have broad rights in dismissing employees. For more detail see this short summary from the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation.  
<https://www.dllr.state.md.us/labor/wagepay/wpatwill.shtml>
3. Be aware of Maryland law on employment discrimination. This law is directed at businesses with 15 or more employees but every Maryland employer should read this brief summary of requirements from the Md. Commission on Civil Rights  
<https://mccr.maryland.gov/Pages/Employment-Discrimination.aspx>

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