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## Is there a Secret to Successful Hiring?

To gain a better understanding of the staffing challenges facing our industry, **Steve Nail**, Human Resource/Business professional and Dean of the College of Business at Anderson University, toured an HMA member facility in South Carolina. That first-hand experience resulted in, "**Working Solutions – Little Things Make a Big Difference**," his presentation at HMA's 2018 National Conference and Expo.

To the man on the street, Nail said, the hardwood industry is far from glamorous. The connotation is that it's dusty, dirty, subject to the elements, somewhat limited in career growth, and often dangerous. Nonetheless, it can and does provide very fulfilling employment.

So what's the secret to attracting key personnel? Nail said it begins with changing public perception of our industry (and your company).

### **Employer Branding is crucial**

"It's all about capturing the authenticity of the company culture," Nail said. If you feel that your company is a great place to work – family owned, rewarding, friendly, fresh air/outdoors, respectful, teams, secure, good benefits, advancement – you need to market that great company culture - via websites, videos, bill boards, ads, recruiting fairs, tech schools, social media - to reach potential employees. (And don't discount the disable, ex-offenders, or older workers.)

Leadership – The Key Ingredient to a Great Place to Work!

"People leave managers, not companies," Nail said. So put into place and cultivate good leaders; managers who communicate simply, clearly and often; are truthful, supportive, caring, flexible, interested in mentoring and resilient. All employees want to be respected and feel valued.

Not all employees will want to be managers. "But they do want to be considered as skilled professionals," Nail said." He encouraged cross-training and continuous improvement for greater employee retention. And emphasized the importance of employee recognition efforts, public and private, stating that 79 percent of employee turnover is the result of lack of recognition.

### **Onboarding Critical to Retention**

"The largest percentage of employees leave in less than a year," Nail added. Keeping new hires engaged is crucial. Assign a mentor. Conduct simple and brief 30/60/90 day interviews to let the employee know you are interested in his/her success. Conduct surveys to know what is important to the employees. Communicate! Follow-up! And engage the workforce at every opportunity.

### **Pay/Money is Important, but...**

Nail shared information from a recent survey that asked 200,000 employees to list the most important aspects of their work. Compensation ranked 8<sup>th</sup>! What was more important?

- Appreciation for your work
- Good relationships with colleagues
- Good work-life balance
- Good relationships with superiors
- Company's financial stability
- Learning and career development
- Job security
- **Attractive fixed salary**
- Interesting job content
- Company values

Steve Nail, currently the Dean, College of Business at Anderson University, is responsible for the strategic direction of the business programs, including undergraduate and graduate studies, internship programs, corporate relations and Enactus activities. The PowerPoint and audio portion of his presentation are available in the **Members Only** section of [www.HMAmembers.org](http://www.HMAmembers.org).