



Show Notes | S2 Ep2 How to Avoid Holiday Hiring Hell

Special Guests: **Jackie Culp & Lou Chestman**

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to **Retail Done Right**. These Show Notes accompany our Season 2, Episode 2 podcast, “How to Avoid Holiday Hiring Hell.”

We’re in a new age of retail - the era of the Customer Channel – where Shoppers’ rule. This requires retailers to be empathetic and supportive of their customers, in every way.

Our energy level skyrocketed when we invited Lou Chestman and Jackie Culp on our podcast in Season 1. It’s a no-brainer to invite them back to help us understand the radical changes occurring in the labor market. Just in time for the Holiday shopping season...

If there’s one thing that can impact your stores it’s having the right people on the front line. But many retailers everywhere seem to be struggling to find and retain staff. What needs to happen to attract and retain the right talent today?

OUR GUESTS

As principles with the consulting firm **Next Performance Horizon**, [Lou Chestman](#) and [Jackie Culp](#) are helping retailers win. And there’s no better retail operations executives that we know who can help us navigate through this topic.

HOW TO AVOID HIRING HELL

The labor force shrank in September. There’s 5 million fewer people working than before the pandemic. And according to the NY Times, there’s 3 million fewer people looking for work. Will you be able to find help in stores – and restaurants – this holiday season? How can a retailer find and retain the right talent?

Lou explained that retail has always had high turnover. But what’s going on today is across the board. Pandemic era relief checks, rent moratoriums, and even student-loan forgiveness have empowered many to take risks not possible before.

Jackie weighed in as well explaining that all this is compounded by many of today’s realities – a high number of the retail workforce are women and childcare, health concerns and opportunities to work from home are also some of the issues.

What do retailers need to do today to attract staff? Are they looking for love in all the wrong places? According to Jackie, start with your existing teams. Do they feel valued & appreciated? Do they enjoy the people they work with, the boss they work for? Start with them, who do they know? Who would they recommend joining the team?



Lou built on this. If they aren't looking within, then yes, all the wrong places. The best source for new hires is right under your nose. Offering your employees bonuses for successful hires doesn't just help you find qualified candidates; it also raises morale.

However, retailers now must focus on their reputation! There's a war for talent and to win you must stand out from your competition. If you made a commitment to hiring a diverse and inclusive workforce, or if you've taken steps to reduce your carbon footprint, let applicants know about it.

We shared practical ideas to find and retain staff. We ended with Lou and Jackie's ideas for retailers to focus on now.

Many of the articles and reports referenced during our discussion are listed below.

RESEARCH AND LINKS

- The Economic Rebound Is Still Waiting for Workers (paywall)
 - <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/19/business/economy/us-economy.html?referringSource=articleShare>
- 4.3 Million Workers Are Missing. Where Did They Go? (paywall)
 - <https://apple.news/Ap7UNX1rES-W8EyDq8DVklQ>
- Americans Quit Their Jobs at a Record Rate in August
 - https://www.morningbrew.com/daily/stories/2021/10/12/americans-quit-their-jobs-at-a-record-rate-in-august?utm_source=morning_brew&utm_medium=newsletter&utm_campaign=rtb
- Cutoff of Jobless Benefits Is Found to Get Few Back to Work
 - <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/20/business/economy/unemployment-benefits-economy-states.html?referringSource=articleShare>
- Workers are leaving the retail industry in droves
 - <https://fortune.com/2021/06/23/retail-workers-quitting-women/?tpcc=nlbroadsheet>
- 'Great Attrition' or 'Great Attraction'? The choice is yours
 - <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/great-attrition-or-great-attraction-the-choice-is-yours>
- How to Make an Unloved Job More Attractive? Restaurants Tinker With Wages.
 - https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/20/dining/restaurant-wages.html?campaign_id=4&emc=edit_dk_20210921&instance_id=40919&nl=dealbook®i_id=71823306&segment_id=69481&te=1&user_id=f058385abc0a81f5ba25805ecd26bcd9
- Why everybody's hiring but nobody's getting hired
 - <https://www.vox.com/recode/22673353/unemployment-job-search-linkedin-indeed-algorithm>
- REI to close stores, DCs, HQ on Black Friday for seventh consecutive year
 - <https://chainstoreage.com/rei-close-stores-dcs-hq-black-friday-seventh-consecutive-year>



- Target will pay employees an extra \$2 an hour for peak days of holiday season
 - <https://www.cnn.com/2021/10/05/target-offers-employees-extra-2-an-hour-for-peak-days-of-holiday-season.html>
- How major retailers are staffing up for the 2021 holiday season
 - <https://www.retaildive.com/news/how-major-retailers-are-staffing-up-for-the-2021-holiday-season-hiring-for-the-holidays/607329/>
- Four-day week 'an overwhelming success' in Iceland
 - <https://www.bbc.com.cdn.ampproject.org/c/s/www.bbc.com/news/business-57724779.amp>
- The employee influencer program checklist: 3 expert tips
 - https://www.morningbrew.com/retail/stories/2021/06/16/employee-influencer-program-checklist-3-expert-tips?utm_source=morning_brew
- Brandy Melville: Behind the scenes at the 'evil' fast-fashion empire (paywall)
 - <https://apple.news/Ao0V3LXKpR066Ow4YW4b5dQ>
- As diversity comes into focus, a snapshot of the retail workforce
 - <https://www.morningbrew.com/retail/stories/2021/06/17/diversity-comes-focus-snapshot-retail-workforce?email=jefffisherca@gmail.com>

CONCLUSION

There's a war on talent. Past approaches and business practices aren't relevant in today's reality. Jackie concluded, "The pandemic threw us all quickly into a virtual world. I believe that leaders need to get back into the stores, spending time with the frontline associates. They are the face of the company to the customer. It's important to influence what that impression will be.

Lou concluded, "Love your people and in return they will love your customers!"

Jeff Fisher & Cristene Gonzalez-Wertz

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