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HAMILTON BRADSHAW
Investing in people with passion

Talent attraction the key to keeping vital skills in your start-up

**Ask
James**



James Caan

Dear James

I have recently launched an online start-up.

I'm proud of the fact that I've been hiring people and able to give them real experiences that help them to develop professionally.

The problem I'm having is that once my employees learn the basic skills necessary to do well in this industry, they leave my company for a larger or more-established start-up. I'm afraid this cycle of hiring new people, training them

and seeing them go isn't sustainable for the business.

How can I retain talent?

Thad

Retention works better if the person seeks your company out – it's not called talent attraction for nothing.

You should constantly think of ways to draw people to your company and make it easy for them to find you.

Start by looking at your careers page and see if it would attract you. What are the benefits of working for a start-up? What sets yours apart – include this in there.

Additionally, don't stop building a team. Your talent-attraction strategy should always be on – that way when

you need someone for a role you know who to call.

A good idea is to have a group of people on reserve that you assign to projects on an ad-hoc basis. This way they're learning the skills they need at your company and when required can jump into the role more easily.

Look around your office. Is each employee a good brand ambassador? How is morale? Are you providing meaning to the work each team member is doing?

Examine whether you're providing

feedback and opportunity for growth as well as freedoms (I've written about the perils of micro-managing).

Gauge your existing team. An entrepreneur cannot sit back and expect HR to do the team building – it has to be done every day.

■ For more tips and advice, download James Caan's free Business Secrets app on iTunes and Android.