

## Young Workers are a Valuable (and Often Overlooked) Asset



[Image via Pixabay](#)

If you want the best workers, you have to start looking early and may need to look beyond a [well-written resume](#). Grabbing the attention of emerging talent begins by offering opportunities at the high-school level and promoting reentry after college. Here are a few ways to attract tech-savvy new hires that will help your company float seamlessly into the digital age.

### Invest in internships

There are two primary types of [internship](#), paid and unpaid. Unpaid internships are often compensated in college credit and cost your business pennies on the dollar of a regular full-time employee. Paid internships offer college students the opportunity to receive on-the-job training while earning a small salary for the duration of the contract. Both options are an excellent way for SMBs to test drive new talent and take advantage of low-cost labor. Perhaps more importantly, internships create a sense of loyalty between employee and employer and lead to nearly [40% higher retention rates](#) when compared to non-intern workers. Internships.com notes that paid internships are especially beneficial in helping companies find skilled workers among [economically disadvantaged](#) students – a depressingly underutilized demographic.

## **Advance entry-level apprentices**

You built your business from the ground up and you should do the same to your payroll. Offer entry-level employees the chance to advance to positions of responsibility. Pay attention to strengths and weaknesses of young workers and provide [lateral move](#) opportunities for those that display proficiencies in areas other than where they are assigned. For example, a receptionist who lacks customer service skills may excel as a data entry clerk. This places the employee in a better position to transition into a tech management role later on.

## **Hello high school**

Juniors and seniors are at an age where they must begin thinking about how to fend for themselves in the future. However, according to NBC News, most teenagers [don't actually know](#) what they want to do after high school graduation. Consider establishing a vocational training partnership with local high schools. This gives you the ability to showcase diverse career opportunities while providing on-the-job training and credit-earning opportunities, similar to a college internship. These student workers are prime candidates for [tuition assistance](#) programs that require college graduates to work for a business for a set time period upon completion of a relevant degree. It's a win/win for everyone. You invest in your future employees and in turn receive highly educated workers who are already familiar with your business. HomeAdvisor notes that [new hires](#) must be assimilated into your company culture; previous employees, such as those introduced to your business in high school, will have less trouble acclimating, even after four years away.

## **Better benefits (that don't break the bank)**

Attracting young employees requires more than simply offering a competitive salary. Millennials, which surpassed Gen Xers in 2015 and now comprise the bulk of today's workforce (as outlined in a recent [Pew Research study](#)), want to earn a comfortable living and still have time to pursue personal interests. More than three-quarters of millennial workers claim that [flexible work schedules](#) would lead to more productivity both at home and at work and provide the balance they so seek. Unique benefits, such as company-provided Netflix account and Amazon Kindle book stipends, are equally attractive and relatively inexpensive. Young workers tend to gravitate toward [nontraditional benefits](#) that enhance their quality of life.

As a business owner, it is your responsibility to ensure the continued growth of your empire. Finding workers at a young age and mentoring them through the ups and downs and ins and outs of your industry is one of the best ways to mold a faithful and proficient workforce...one that will navigate your company toward success.