

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.