



Hire for Culture to Keep Your Company on Track

Employees love culture, not companies. To keep your company on track, hire for culture and not just for skills/experience.

It all starts with the hiring process – you must ensure you are hiring people who fit your company culture or you'll find your company is getting off track quickly.

When you don't hire for culture, all the industry knowledge doesn't matter. At Highland, we'd rather take longer to fill a position with the person who's right for our culture, than to try to fill it quickly and risk making a bad decision.

While many things can be used to define one's culture, the culture starts at the top with ownership and senior

management. The best culture for us includes the following elements:

- Strong team environment
- Friendly and fun-loving
- Employee dedication
- Customer loyalty/satisfaction
- Work/life balance – we work to live and not live to work. While we all have busy days, family must remain a priority

We find that having a culture based on these tenets helps to ensure longevity among employees. People want feel they are a part of the company's story.

When employees have a sense of purpose and can see how their work directly impacts the customer, then they know they're an integral part in customer satisfaction.

When people feel they are important to the company

and their ideas and suggestions are valued, then they will automatically do what's best for the customer and therefore, the company. That's foundational.

Employees also need to have a sense of belonging to a team and working with people they truly like and are in some cases friends with outside of work. They need to know their manager and company owners care about them and their family by providing flexibility and support as needed if they are going through a difficult time.

Listen to your employees and get their feedback – none of us are perfect, and we all make mistakes but if we listen to employees, then we can learn from those mistakes and make positive adjustments.

Also, employees grow and evolve over time, and their needs change. At Highland, we do our best to accommodate people's strengths and goals and as the company grows, it means there's more opportunity. There are no jobs in boxes – everyone helps when and where they can.

Project Manager Chase Williamson who is celebrating 10 years with Highland has held both estimating and project management roles over the years. Tyler Hamilton started as a service technician and is now serving in our estimating department. Scott Hudson who has been with the company for 11 of its 15 years, used to manage the company's service department and now serves as a senior Account Manager. I saw a need to step up and manage the company's IT services in addition to my human resources responsibilities and asked for the additional responsibility.

While we do our best to offer a competitive compensation package, it's our culture that keeps people from looking or leaving. Employees can always find a company that

might pay a little more or offer a new benefit, but one's day-to-day happiness with their job and co-workers is what's most important. Work has to be enjoyable on a daily basis. Everyone has heard the saying, "people don't leave companies, they leave managers." In some cases we've seen employees return to us when they realized the grass wasn't greener.

In summary, owners need to drive the company's culture to as many employees as they can touch and focus on who they hire – will they fit into the culture – do they have the same values and vision. That's what's most important.

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Shari Leon has worked at Highland Roofing for 4.5 years as the Human Resources Director. She is responsible for all aspects of HR including recruitment, employee relations, and benefits. Shari has over 20 years of experience in the HR field including 15 years within the construction industry.

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