



## 5 Post-Pandemic Perks That Could Make Your Employees Never Want to Leave

### Description

It's no secret: Canada has long been struggling to retain top talent within its borders. Silicon Valley, just a stone's throw over the border, has been our brain drain for decades, and new work-from-home procedures have opened the door for a flood of great employees to leave the Canadian market without ever leaving Canada.

And if corporations are struggling to retain employees, how could small businesses ever think to compete? Simple: offer a slew of employee benefits that make your employees never want to leave. Along with competitive wages and a healthy emphasis on employee engagement, here are five post-COVID perks your small business can't do without.

### 1. Work-from-home

After nearly 20 months since the start of the pandemic, more than four million Canadians still work from home, so says [Statistics Canada](#).

Of course, once the pandemic officially subsides, many of these Canadians will likely return to offices to work onsite. For some (the office "puppy dogs") that will be a sigh of relief. For many others, that's going to be a day of reckoning, when those used to working from their sofas will find out if they can stand the commute to office buildings.

When near-universal work-from-home policies end, you can stand out by creating a permanent work-from-home environment. That doesn't mean every employee has to work from home (or work from home every day of the week). But it does mean that, of those that can work from home, they have the option to do so.

### 2. Flextime

If your employees can't work from home, as in, your line of work requires people to be onsite, an alternative perk you could offer is flextime.

With flextime, your employees choose when they start work and when they finish. They have a set number of hours they must work (say, eight), and as long as they work those hours within the day, it doesn't matter when time they work them.

For many, flextime is just as attractive, if not more so, than remote work. The reason is that people like to schedule intraday activities around their work, such as childcare, appointments, and adult care. Giving employees the freedom to set their own hours can relieve an immense amount of stress, especially for parents who can't afford nannies or daycares.

### 3. Retirement benefits

Your employees are probably struggling to save for retirement. And that could be costing you money. According to [The Canadian Payroll Association](#), financial stress costs employers \$16 billion annually, with retirement topping the list of concerns.

A great perk, then, would be to offer your employees retirement benefits.

That could mean offering a match on a group RRSP. Or you could sponsor your own pension plan that pays employees when they retire. At the very least, you could look into implementing a financial wellness program aimed at improving financial literacy.

### 4. Recognize your employee's efforts

Okay, this one isn't so much a perk as a form of employee engagement. But it's important to highlight nonetheless. Without a sincere "thank you" from leadership and peers, employees will feel less and less emotionally connected to the workplace — at least not connected in a *positive* way.

If you haven't created a culture of appreciation, here are a few things to help you get the ball rolling.

- **Make shout-outs a regular practice.** Start every stand-up or team meeting by recognizing a single person's efforts. Then, open the floor for other employees to give their shout-outs.
- **Be specific.** When you do give shout-outs, avoid platitudes and vague language. By calling out specific achievements ("Jalen increased customer satisfaction rates by 135 percent!") not only do you sound more genuine, but you also help your employees realize *exactly* what they're contributing to the company's success.
- **Create a weekly "nailed it!" award.** This goes really well with a carefully prepared speech (and cash or a gift card).

The great thing about employee recognition? It's infectious — in a non-COVID kind of way. When you recognize employees, you set an example: the employees you recognize will recognize others, those employees recognize other employees, until you've created a workplace of constant appreciation.

## 5. Make employee health a priority

Finally, another perk that could help you stick out is health, both mental and physical. This could be as simple as a gym subsidy. Or you could offer telemedicine services and virtual mental health coach sessions, both of which can help employees connect to experts without leaving home. I

No matter what perks you offer, the point is to show employees you care. And if you can't afford to subsidize employee benefits, at the very least you could offer the perk of being a good leader. Putting aside all the shiny benefits, sometimes all it takes is an attentive ear to make employees feel more emotionally connected to the workplace.

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