



**THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO
TRUCK DRIVER
RECRUITING**





INTRODUCTION

Current ways of recruiting CDL truck drivers just don't work anymore. That's because recruiting isn't a transaction. Drivers aren't leads. They're people. People expect a personalized experience in everything they do. Why shouldn't that include hiring a driver? That's why here at Drive My Way, we're making hiring a CDL driver personal again. We put together this complete eBook to help CDL truck driver recruiters recruit for retention.

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#1

STEP ONE

ATTRACTING CDL DRIVERS

In this section you'll learn tips to attract, hire, and retain drivers, the top traits of the best jobs, how upgrading fleet amenities can attract drivers, and ideas for improving your benefits package.



3 TIPS TO ATTRACT, HIRE, AND RETAIN DRIVERS

It is no surprise that America has been struggling with a truck driver shortage over the past few years. Now more than ever, companies need to reevaluate their recruiting and retention strategies for finding and keeping qualified drivers that meet the needs of their jobs. Some companies have tried offering a large sign-on bonus for drivers only to be faced with turnover once the bonus is collected. Other companies have promised drivers home time and great pay, but often fall short of delivering these perks.

In order to start attracting, hiring, and retaining qualified truck drivers in this competitive market, employers should apply these tips to their driver recruiting strategy to give themselves a competitive advantage.



1. Value drivers by always being honest and respectful.

The last thing a driver wants is a company who over-promises and under-delivers. Before posting a job, companies should take the time to reevaluate the perks of the job and make sure that pay isn't inflated, home time is realistic, and benefits are factual. Truck drivers are looking for a job that meets their qualifications and their lifestyle.

Drive My Way's research shows that more drivers are requesting to travel with a pet or spouse, are looking for more home time, and are placing more value on maintaining their health while driving. Companies who are truthful in their job advertisements will attract drivers who not only meet the qualifications, but are also happy with the lifestyle.

When a company promises a driver these perks but then changes the rules a few months into the job, the driver loses interest in keeping that job and also loses respect for the company. And after a driver loses respect for a company, that driver will let his or her entire network of drivers know exactly what happened, leading to a difficult time filling future jobs.



2. Ask drivers for their feedback before they share it.

Sometimes it takes a company to post a job advertisement on Facebook to find out from their current drivers that their pay is too low, their benefits aren't desirable, and they over-promise and under-deliver. Drivers want their opinions to be heard and are willing to share feedback—the problem is, most companies never ask.

Instead of waiting to receive this feedback on a public social media platform, companies should ask their drivers for feedback directly through an engagement survey, an in-person conversation, or a even a quick poll.

This not only gives the company an accurate pulse on their drivers' satisfaction with their jobs, but it is also a great retention method, proving the company cares.

After collecting the feedback from drivers, companies should have a plan in place to quickly address how they plan to respond to the feedback and make improvements. Nothing is worse than providing feedback to a company and never seeing anything come of it.



3. Offer referral bonuses and performance incentives.

Drivers are looking for more than just a lofty sign-on bonus. Drivers are looking to be involved with a community, to be acknowledged for their accomplishments (no matter the size), and to have the opportunity for growth. When drivers are presented with these opportunities, they are more willing to refer a friend to a job opening at their company and be more engaged.

Instead of constantly investing in replacing drivers, companies should implement referral bonus programs or performance incentives to retain their current, already-qualified drivers. However, don't let your referral bonus or performance incentive program fall into the "large sign-on bonus trap." Focus on incentives that are linked to retention instead of turnover.

When implementing a referral bonus program, make sure money is given out after the referred driver is with the company for a specific time, instead of granting it immediately after a new driver starts. In addition, performance incentives should reward drivers for maintaining good safety measures, fuel efficiency, and time management skills over an extended period of time. These help drivers stay focused on the company's goals.



TOP 5 TRAITS OF THE BEST TRUCKING JOBS

What do truck drivers look for in jobs? What are the most important traits to them? These are the questions that pester recruiters in the back of their minds.

Recruiters know that there is a driver shortage, and that truck drivers are looking for the best jobs they can find. If drivers aren't happy then, they will quickly move on to finding another job with another fleet.

We've written previously about the top factors truck drivers want. Now let's look at some of the top traits of the best trucking jobs as drivers see them.



1. Salary and Compensation

Have no doubt about it—drivers are looking to be compensated well. Truck drivers are in high demand, and they know it. The salary and benefits of different jobs depend of a number of factors which may sometimes be out of your control. That being said, make sure you do everything you can to ensure that drivers are being paid well for the type of job they are taking on. Compensating drivers below the industry average will raise red flags and impact your company's reputation.

In addition to salary, there are many financial incentives you can consider, such as sign-on bonuses and paid time off. Some companies give their drivers a bonus for every year that they stay with the fleet. Make sure that drivers are receiving a simple pay statement that is easy to understand and has the accurate amount. Drivers don't want to waste time following up with the payroll department for company errors.



2. Home Time

This is one of the most important traits of the best trucking jobs. The ideal trucking job doesn't take OTR drivers out on the road for more than a week. If the run is local or regional, even better. While drivers realize that OTR jobs are necessary, they will expect their work schedules to reflect the sacrifice in home time. Ideally, there is considerable home time of several days between jobs.

Don't forget, the average driver works 8 days straight before taking a break. Anything the company can do to shorten that schedule, or to add more home time after that schedule, will be something drivers will appreciate.

Most drivers will have families hoping to see them every week. Even truck drivers currently without families will crave downtime after being on the road for that long.



3. Mileage

The number of miles offered on a given job is one of the traits of the best trucking jobs. Some drivers may feel that the shorter the run, the more desirable the job. But, that isn't always the case. Other drivers enjoy OTR jobs, and would rather have the longer job which pays more. It is completely up to driver preferences.

Most importantly, drivers will be upset if the advertised mileage doesn't match the real mileage.

Similarly, if the other traits of the job are not what they were advertised to be, drivers will not trust your company. Word about company reputation can spread like wildfire.



4. Equipment

Truck drivers are often frustrated when dealing with shoddy equipment. Drivers routinely warn other drivers to stay away from companies just because of the reputation they have over equipment. A big factor in determining what's a good truck driving job is the state of their trucks and equipment. Are the truck models recent and well maintained? Or are they falling apart?

Truck drivers don't want to be held liable for maintenance failures on the company's end. Nor do they want to have to spend time repairing the truck while they should be on the road getting to the next destination.

While your fleet doesn't need to have the latest and greatest truck models, you should make sure they are well-maintained. Invest in quality equipment and truck drivers will consider jobs from your company to be some of the best.



5. Respect and Communication

Perhaps the biggest sign of a good job for truck drivers is how well they are treated by the company. Drivers view themselves as working professionals just like in any other industry. They are looking to be treated with respect by the company and by their peers and supervisors. Having respect for drivers means valuing their time and effort.

Put most simply, drivers just want the company's representatives to treat them the way they would like to be treated. A big component of respect is how well the company communicates with drivers. Having an open line of communication where both parties feel their concerns are heard will go a long way toward earning drivers' trust. Make sure dispatchers and others are not speaking to drivers rudely or taking them for granted.

In addition to compensation, respect and strong communication from the company are what make for a good truck driving job. Keep these traits in mind that drivers look for, and soon your company will be known for offering some of the best trucking jobs.



UPGRADING FLEET AMENITIES: A NEW WAY TO ATTRACT TRUCKERS

A great way for companies to stay competitive in today's hiring market is to offer unique benefits that prove to drivers that they are willing to go above and beyond.

Companies can stand out from the competition by investing in fleet amenity upgrades in order to create a more comfortable, home-like atmosphere in the cab.



Fleet Amenity Upgrade Ideas

- Comfortable seating
- Memory foam mattress
- LED lighting with dimmer switches
- Sound dampening
- APU units and refrigerators
- Cabinets and/or built-in storage space
- Premium audio and/or TV system, could even include a Sirius XM Radio subscription
- Freightliner In-Cab Training (FIT) System

Before investing in these upgrades, companies should be sure to ask their drivers what matters most to them. Drivers want their voices to be heard and will share their feedback when asked. Companies can receive this feedback by sending out a survey asking drivers to rank upgrades that are most important to them. When sending out the survey, companies can explain the reasoning behind these upgrades—to help drivers be more comfortable on the road and increase their job satisfaction.



But what's in it for the company?

Making amenity upgrades to fleets can be a costly venture for organizations; however, the long-term cost savings might be worth the investment. When implementing some of the upgrades, especially better seating, mattresses, and refrigerators, companies see their drivers improve their health and sleep patterns.

By implementing these upgrades, companies can experience some of the following benefits:

- Healthcare savings
- Reduced driver turnover
- Increased driver job satisfaction
- Electric, heating, and cooling cost savings

When it comes time to evaluate and brainstorm how to attract and retain better drivers, consider adding fleet amenity upgrades to the list!

3 IDEAS FOR IMPROVING YOUR DRIVER BENEFITS PACKAGE

As a recruiter for truck drivers, you know that the driver shortage means that finding the best talent can be difficult. With turnover also being high, retaining drivers can be even more challenging. The best companies are offering great truck driver benefits in addition to good salaries and bonuses.

Benefits build a driver-centric company culture where drivers feel valued and respected. Word-of-mouth about benefits will soon spread to attract other drivers. While there are some industry standard benefits that you should definitely offer, you can also supplement them with your own unique additional benefits that reflect your company and brand. With so much on the line, here are three components to improve your benefits.





1. Insurance and retirement plans

Providing health insurance and a 401(k)-match plan is an industry standard practice, so you don't want to skip these for your drivers. Drivers know that the cost of health insurance has skyrocketed, so they'll be looking for employer-based plans as better alternatives to individual plans on the health insurance marketplace. Any package worth its weight should include medical, prescription, vision and dental. Drivers will be concerned about the cost of health insurance for their families, so most of your standard packages should provide coverage for their spouses and dependents. Consider including flexible spending accounts, which give drivers the option to put aside pre-tax income for non-reimbursed expenses.

Most trucking companies will include a 401(k)-matching plan for retirement savings as well. Drivers will first be able to place a percentage of their pay into the plan pre-tax. Some companies boast being able to match 100% on the first 4-5% of salary deferred. The exact specifications of your retirement and insurance options will depend on how strong your company is financially. Just keep in mind that drivers will be mindful about noticing whether the company is investing considerable resources into benefits packages for their employees.



2. Lifestyle benefits

While retirement and insurance are industry standard benefits, you can craft your own additional benefits based on unique resources and needs. Many drivers are attracted to benefits which allow them greater flexibility in their lifestyle, both on and off the road.

For example, more drivers would like to be able to work in larger cabins with more personal space. Fleet amenities such as kitchen appliances and satellite radio/TV allow for comfort, cooking, and entertainment. A pet policy lets drivers with a canine or feline companion bring them along on the road. See if your company can craft a pet policy with small restrictions on a weight limit and a refundable pet deposit. Similarly, some drivers would like to bring their spouse or children along with them on the road and view this as a major benefit. Drivers will view a passenger policy by your company as a great advantage when considering their home life. PTO is another important benefit for work-life balance. Some companies differentiate between vacation time and sick time, while others offer a more general PTO category. These PTO days should increase per every year worked, and ideally roll over to the next year.



3. Additional benefits

In addition to the standard benefits of insurance and retirement plans, many companies are offering other optional perks and benefits for drivers. These optional plans won't be used by every driver, but rather depends on their personal and financial situations. Accident insurance and critical illness insurance plans are for those rare circumstances where things go drastically wrong on the road and you want drivers to know you have their back. In addition to insurance, consider offering a CDL legal defender plan where your team of lawyers can represent a driver and their claims in the rare possibility of a legal scenario. Offering short-term disability means if drivers get injured on the road and must be away from work for a short period of time, they have financial peace of mind.

Some companies have been offering college tuition coverage and scholarships for drivers. The tuition plan is simple—for as long as drivers remain with the fleet, the company will pay for a portion of college tuition and room/board expenses for the dependents of drivers. As you can imagine, this is a very appealing program for drivers and a great retention method.



#2

STEP TWO

GENERATING DEMAND

In this section you'll learn tips for recruiting drivers, the importance of quality over quantity when it comes to leads, common mistakes to avoid when recruiting women, and how to recruit owner operators.



4 TIPS FOR RECRUITING TRUCK DRIVERS

Given the shortage of drivers currently facing the truck industry, there's a constant need to keep recruiting truck drivers. While hiring, training and retaining drivers over the long-term is crucially important, and presents its own challenges, it all begins with recruitment of the right candidates.

If you can't attract talent and recruit them into the organization, you won't be able to even think about retaining them to meet the demands of the market. These four tips will help you improve driver recruiting.



1. Make your marketing driver-centric

Remember that drivers are going to find information about prospective companies and fleets on the regular marketing channels. So, good recruitment actually begins with good marketing presence and carefully curated content. What kinds of content currently exists on the company website and Facebook page? If it is only information about how successful the company is, it won't be of much use to a prospective employee. Ideally, much of your content is also driver-centric—that is, it details what kinds of benefits the drivers can get.

Ultimately, a driver wants to know that the company will treat their drivers with care and provide the benefits they are looking for. Highlight any wellness programs and culture initiatives that differentiate your company from the rest of the competition. Clearly provide information on schedules, work-life balance, fleet amenities and the rest. The best marketing also includes testimonials from current drivers who have been satisfied with the experience so far. When designing the content, remember the drivers will always ask, "what can they do for me?" Making your marketing driver-centric will ensure that you provide an excellent answer to that question and will form a strong impression in their minds.



2. Target the right audience

Before you start moving prospective drivers through the recruiting pipeline, you must make sure you've selected the right pool of candidates for the job. Many driving fleets will have very specific needs and requirements that not all candidates would be ideal for. Targeting the precise segment of candidates can make the process more efficient and effective.

With the aid of databases, you can select drivers based on driver type, years of experience, haul experience, geographical location, or other factors. Focusing on any one of these particular segments ahead of time will save you time and energy as a recruiter, and increase overall effectiveness of converted drivers. Not optimizing this part of the process means you'll spend potentially hours chasing leads which were never well-suited for that particular fleet or job. If you don't have data on prospective drivers, Drive My Way can help you target the specific segment of drivers needed for your particular situation.



3. Use the latest digital recruiting methods

Use the latest and smartest, strategies to attract and recruit the talent you're looking for. Social media is growing as a tool and drivers use these platforms to research companies, read comments, and evaluate employers. When viewers like, follow, share, or comment on your content, it can increase the audience exponentially. Making sure you're advertising job postings on social media isn't enough— post engaging content on your platforms.

In addition, search engine optimization of your content will ensure that your website is receiving as much traffic as possible. Use software such as Google Analytics or Google Keyword Planner to optimize your posts for trending phrases and words. Since drivers are on the road often, they'll use their mobile devices instead of laptops to search for job leads. Making the application process simple and easy will go a long way toward removing recruiting bottlenecks. Make sure that the applications are short and mobile-friendly. Drivers will usually not have enough time to fill out long applications in one sitting, so make a shorter version with only basic information required, allowing them to finish up later.



4. Re-engage old leads

One unique challenge in the trucking industry is the unusually high turnover rate for drivers. This presents a difficulty for recruiters which isn't faced in most other industries or sectors of the economy. By re-engaging old leads and cold leads, recruiters can continually bring people into the pipeline even if they had dropped out before.

Many prospective drivers who were previously unavailable or chose to drive for a different fleet may be available soon. Leads and prospects that have gone cold or did not convert into driver status should not be forgotten, but rather kept in mind for the future. While you don't want to constantly pester them as to their status, you do want to make sure you follow up from time to time. Use drip marketing or engaging content on blogs, social media, or newsletters to stay connected with them and keep them in your radar. This leads to your fleet being fresh in their mind, and on their radar, when they're considering a new employer.



TRUCK DRIVER LEADS: THE IMPORTANCE OF QUALITY OVER QUANTITY

With the driver shortage lurking over recruiters every day, it's easy for them to fall into the trap of wanting to generate as many truck driver leads as possible. However, a "quality over quantity" strategy should apply now more than ever.

The last thing a recruiter needs is to take the wrong driver through their selection process. And, the last thing a driver needs is a company that can't match their professional qualifications or personal lifestyle preferences. When recruiters waste time with the wrong driver, they not only spend empty dollars, but they also potentially miss out on attracting qualified drivers.

So how do recruiters generate more qualified leads?



BANT Strategy

The first step is to make sure that the forms used to collect driver leads are following a strategy called BANT, which stands for Budget, Authority, Need, and Timing.

Form field examples could include:

- Budget: if the driver application costs money, indicate it on the page
- Authority: collect CDL license, endorsements, years of experience, age, or driving record
- Need: consider collecting the driver's salary, benefit, home time, or location
- Timing: consider collecting the driver's potential start date

It's one thing to collect a driver's general information, but it's another to collect information that will instantly qualify or disqualify the driver for the position. The position's requirements should dictate which fields appear on the form, as including all of the options above on every form isn't realistic. When creating a form, consider what is a "must have" and make sure those appear on the form to attract the right drivers.



Targeted Advertising

Instead of producing generic landing pages or advertising, it's important that the marketing clearly depicts the trucking job, haul type, etc. to attract the right driver.

For example, if you are marketing a job directly to women drivers, be sure to use imagery and language that is specific to that audience.

In addition, when marketing the job on social media or through another channel, it's important to target specific audiences that find interest in the trucking job. Suppression lists are also beneficial to make sure the wrong people aren't included in the audience.

Overall, following these tips will help ensure recruiters spend less time sorting through unqualified truck driver leads and more time focused on hiring and retaining drivers.



AVOID THESE 4 MISTAKES TO ATTRACT AND RETAIN WOMEN TRUCK DRIVERS

The amount of organizations across the nation that are striving to attract and retain women truck drivers will only continue to increase.

However, in order to achieve this, employers must make a few changes to how they are approaching recruiting women truckers. Avoid these 4 mistakes to attract and retain women truck drivers.



1. Not offering flexible work options

Employers are able to get their drivers home more often by offering more local opportunities or implementing software that enables smart route scheduling. This is especially attractive to women drivers who are seeking a position that offers more work-life balance.

2. Not showcasing women in recruiting language and imagery

In order to hire more women truck drivers, employers need to communicate this mission. When advertising trucking jobs, it's important to remember to also feature women drivers in imagery. In addition, evolving the voice used for recruiting messaging will allow organizations to appeal to more women as well.



3. Not offering advancement options for women

Companies that have women in leadership roles will oftentimes attract more women truck drivers as they see firsthand that women are welcome and capable of advancing in the organization. In addition, organizations that implement programs that specifically focus on engaging and advancing women will see a better response in driver retention than organizations who do not.

4. Not asking for feedback from women drivers

Like all drivers, women truckers enjoy sharing their opinion about their level of job satisfaction and future outlook on their position. Companies that fall victim to not asking for feedback from their women drivers will miss the opportunity to know what's working well and what needs to be improved.

3 TIPS FOR RECRUITING OWNER OPERATORS

Working with owner operators in the trucking industry is much different than working with company drivers. If you're hiring owner operators, the benefits include not having the responsibility of purchasing and maintaining the rigs. Owner operators are often more experienced drivers and have better safety records. The drawbacks are that it is much more expensive to hire owner operators, with the average salary at \$140,000 per year.

Owner operators have different values and personalities than most company drivers. They are more independent, entrepreneurial-minded, and adventurous than the average company driver. Therefore, recruiting owner operators to your company is a whole other ball game from recruiting company drivers. Here are three tips for recruiting owner operators to your fleet.





1. Reaching Owner Operators

To recruit the best drivers, you have to reach them where they are. This also applies when recruiting owner operators as well. There are important differences between owner operators and company drivers in terms of driving experience and media usage.

Owner operators lean more towards consuming printed magazines while company drivers read email newsletters. Shifting your advertising towards printed media outlets will reach more owner operators. Don't put all your eggs in one basket though, because there are other ways to reach owner operators. It would be unwise to limit advertising to just one source. The study also showed that owner operators heavily use Facebook just as much as company drivers do. Complement print ads with the usual mix of other recruiting channels and platforms such as job boards, e-newsletters, and online forums, including Facebook. According to the survey, owner operators rely heavily on word of mouth, so your job referral program should reflect this insight.



2. Have an open conversation

Once you've found them, the recruitment process for owner operators will be slightly trickier than for company drivers. You'll need to be more patient and wait longer for owner operators to decide whether they'd like to sign on. Being honest during the process is important for all candidates, but especially for owner operators. These entrepreneurs are making a big decision to work with your company and need to be confident about that choice.

Not every driver will be right for your company, and not every company will be right for the owner operator. Take the additional time to make sure it is a good match for both parties before investing in the relationship. If it doesn't work out, make sure you part on good terms so that it doesn't affect company reputation adversely. When trying to match with owner operators, play the long game. While it is usually good to recruit sooner rather than later, you'll want to take your time a bit more with owner operators. Get to know what job factors will be important to them. If there is a sticking point, like amount of home time, or pay and benefits, then let them know that you can work on it and get back to them.



3. Be consistent and predictable

There are few things that will irk owner operations as much as recruiters changing their messaging during the process. There shouldn't be one message from the company during the initial advertising, something different during a recruitment call, and something else entirely during the meeting. In addition to building distrust with the owner operator, it will build a negative reputation which will find its way around to other drivers as well.

Once they are onboarded, predictability will also be valued on the job. Owner operators are more independent minded than the average company driver and will be less adaptable to changing conditions by the company. They want to have the freedom of when to work and being able to choose the loads which they prefer. Too much oversight and supervision will not be looked upon kindly by owner operators. They will be looking for some of the same factors which other drivers consider: pay and benefits, communication with dispatchers and others, home time, consistent freight etc.

#3

STEP THREE

COMMUNICATING WITH DRIVERS

In this section you'll learn reasons to contact truck driver leads faster as well as tips for communicating successfully with truckers.

A hand holding a smartphone in a blurred office setting. The background shows a desk with papers and a computer monitor, all out of focus. The lighting is warm and soft.

4 REASONS TO CONTACT TRUCK DRIVERS FASTER

As a recruiter, you get barraged with job applications. The ratio of job applications for each open position can be overwhelming for recruiters to deal with. Sifting through dozens of applications and remembering each and every candidate can be exhausting, not to mention time-consuming.

Yet, it can be extremely helpful to contact truck drivers faster and speed up the hiring process. It goes without saying that if you don't contact job candidates fast enough, you'll lose them to someone else.

There are also many other reasons to contact truck drivers faster during the hiring process and maintain open lines of communication and dialogue.



1. You won't lose the top candidates

The most important reason to contact truck drivers faster is that this way you're less likely to lose the top candidates to your competitors. In fact, according to data by drivers matched through Drive My Way, the top reason candidates declined job offers is because they just accepted an offer by someone else. Being scooped by rivals is especially risky for your top candidates. One recommended solution is to assign a "decide-by date" for candidates. This way you can focus your immediate time and attention first to the top-tier prospects, then to the second-tier prospects, and so on.

If you aren't categorizing your prospects into tiers, type of jobs, or other characteristics, you risk being drowned by an overwhelming number of candidates whose details you won't remember. It may seem intuitive that a slow hiring process improves the quality of those you hire because you have more time to gather information and feedback before deciding. However, there is a trade-off as well. Slow hiring can also have the opposite effect because the longer you take, the lower the quality of new hires will be.



2. Indicates what communication will be like on the job

A big reason to contact truck drivers faster and often during the hiring process is that it is a strong indicator of workplace communication habits within the company. This is a reason often missed by recruiters because it has more to do with marketing than with HR. This goes to the heart of the dual function recruiters play in organizations.

In addition to facilitating the hiring process from point of contact through placement, recruiters also play a role in persuading top talent to join their fleets. The speed and flexibility of the hiring process can indicate to job candidates that the organization communicates with its employees well and makes decisions quickly. Just like you'd be impressed by a candidate who arrives early and proactively sends thank-you notes, candidates are impressed by companies which contact them soon and offer much information as possible.



3. Give Feedback on Resume or Interview

The traditional method is that a candidate applies, you review their materials, schedule an interview, maybe touch base once or twice, and then the candidate only hears back once you've made a decision. But most candidates want to hear how they did, whether good or bad. In a LinkedIn survey, 94% of respondents said they want to receive feedback on their interview. This one is tricky because it could easily be done the wrong way.

Employers are afraid of upsetting candidates or gaining a bad reputation such that they avoid giving feedback entirely. However, if done right, you can give candidates feedback on both positives and negatives, and still maintain or improve your company's reputation. Let them know that you were impressed by their materials and experiences. Then lead with strengths before weaknesses. Inform them about what you liked or which skill or experience made them particularly strong. You'll be surprised by how many candidates will thank you for the feedback, even if they aren't the best match for the positions. This can boost your company's reputation among truck drivers.



4. Start talking numbers early

One final reason to contact truck drivers faster is to start talking about salary and compensation. Usually recruiters may mention numbers only with an offer and expect candidates to accept or negotiate for a higher salary. If you start mentioning numbers mid-way through the recruiting process it actually has several advantages.

First, it signals to your prospects that you're really interested enough to bring up this topic. This makes it less likely that they'll be scooped up by someone else. Second, the nature of salary and compensation becomes more transparent. Your prospects have very little idea if your offer is in line with their skills, what salary is typical at the company, and other factors that go into deciding the compensation package. While most companies think it is in their interest to keep their prospects in the dark, it may be more beneficial to be transparent. Most candidates aren't just looking for more money, but they want to know that they are being paid fairly. If your package is the best the company can afford to pay them, your prospects will want to know that.



4 TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL COMMUNICATION WITH DRIVERS

Whether you're recruiting a new batch of drivers for your company or interacting with veterans, communication with drivers is important. Successful communication with employees is crucial for any profession but comes with unique challenges in the trucking industry.

The nature of the work is that drivers will be on the road most of the time and communication rarely takes place in-person. To complicate matters, there is often a difference in culture between managers and drivers. Dispatchers need to communicate effectively with current drivers to make sure orders reach their destinations on time. Keep these handy guidelines in mind for strong communication with drivers.



1. Be Curious and Understanding

The most important part of strong communication with drivers is good listening. This means you actually take time and effort to hear drivers' concerns and then address them. Good listening isn't just reactive. Don't just wait for drivers to come to you with their concerns. Be curious enough to politely inquire about their needs and questions. If you're recruiting a new driver, you know which factors they are likely considering, so address them proactively.

If you're getting feedback from veteran drivers, be curious about their preferences about type of haul, type of run, work schedule etc. Good listening doesn't just end with curiosity. Once you've listened, try to understand things from their perspective. You can't walk a mile in their shoes, metaphorically speaking, but you can try to imagine the world from their eyes. Being understanding requires empathy for someone's situation, which may not match your own. Drivers have stressful jobs and lives, and the more you can empathize with and understand their situation, the better you'll listen and communicate with them.



2. Know when to call or video conference...

Sometimes, the medium is the message. Choosing the proper communication method can make the difference between having successful communication or being left frustrated. Some issues are too long or complicated to discuss over text or email. Calling drivers' cell phones is the most popular way to communicate with drivers for a good reason. Most drivers will carry their phones with them 24-7, so if you need to deliver some quick but important and time-sensitive information, this is the way to go.

Speaking of the personal touch, consider requesting video conferences for added face-time. It's tough to get an in-person meeting with drivers or job candidates if they are on the road. Using video-conferencing is the next best thing. It will also preserve important non-verbal cues like eye contact and body language. Video interviews are also becoming a popular alternative to phone interviews. Save this for important and longer conversations that could use the added human touch of face-to-face interaction.



3. ...And know when to text or email instead

Knowing is half the battle. Sometimes, text or email is a better platform for communication. You don't want to send a lengthy message over text. Messages over text won't require much elaboration or the personal touch to smooth things over. Texting is a great way to communicate with drivers about quick updates. It is usually best when it's a follow up to an ongoing conversation rather than springing up something unexpected. Don't text as the first method of contact to job candidates—it's just too impersonal! Your job prospects will want to feel like you're making the effort and that they are worth a phone call.

Reserve email for the most important and lengthy messages. Usually, email is best for sharing critical documents like job applications, contracts, insurance policies etc. Sometimes email can also be better than a phone call if you want to keep record of what was agreed upon. Human memory is fragile, and two people may remember different things from the same phone call. Having the written documentation makes things less ambiguous.



4. Treat drivers with respect and build trust

This one cannot be overstated. None of your communication strategies and methods are going to work if drivers don't feel that you're treating you with respect. It sounds like a no-brainer, yet this is one of the biggest complaints which drivers have.

If you're a recruiter making a first impression, this is even more important. Be careful not to speak too hurriedly, or if you've been stressed or anxious just before the interaction. Friendly and respectful communication is more engaging and will make a better impression. Even if you're interacting with drivers who have been with your fleet for ages, you should always speak to them as if it's that very first time. Drivers want to work for companies where they feel valued, respected, and part of the team. You don't want someone to feel slighted because you implicitly suggested that management is more important than the drivers. Not only is that very far from the truth, but it will have drastic consequences. Building trust is a consequence of all of these strong communication strategies and methods.



#4

STEP FOUR

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

In this section you'll learn about the top challenges facing truck driver recruiters, common mistakes to stop making, and pitfalls to know before using another CDL job board website.



4 CHALLENGES FACING TRUCKING RECRUITERS

Trucking recruiters are invaluable to their carriers. Recruiters find and interview leads, identify top talent, send them job offers, and shepherd drivers through training and orientation.

Without strong recruiters, truck driving jobs would remain unfilled and trucks would be sitting idle. Recruiters are especially important for a tough industry like trucking which faces unique obstacles.

Here are 4 challenges facing trucking recruiters.



1. Driver shortage

Let's get the obvious stuff out of the way: the biggest challenge for anyone in this industry is the driver shortage. The truck driver shortage has increased, and the industry is lacking about 60,000 drivers.

The driver shortage will continue and grow over the next few years, even taking into account a rise in autonomous trucks. While the driver shortage affects the entire industry and economy, it's a major challenge for recruiters.

Finding the best talent for your carriers is extremely difficult when the pool of candidates is narrow. Worse still, these candidates are courted by many carriers simultaneously, so it's difficult to entice them with something the top carriers can't match.



2. Unqualified leads

Even when you find drivers in the midst of the shortage, about 50% of your leads will not be viable. Recruiting is a matching game—you can't just pick any driver for any kind of job.

While sorting through dozens of candidates you'll find that over half are unqualified, uninterested, inexperienced, or otherwise inappropriate for the job.

Meanwhile, you'll have wasted time and precious recruiting budget on pursuing dead leads. Instead of recruiting blindly, what you really need is a stronger matching system.



3. High turnover

As if the driver shortage wasn't enough, trucking recruiters also deal with high turnover. Once a carrier finally lands a top driver, it's not as if they will always stick around for long. In fact, many fleets are losing more drivers than they recruit each year.

Carriers can use incentives like signing bonuses, but those aren't geared toward retention. Strong retention starts with strong recruiting, so it helps if you only hire drivers who are a good match.

Survey your drivers to better meet their needs and match their values will also help reduce the chances they are enticed by job offers from rivals. Still, building a solid company culture which nurtures driver loyalty can be a long-term investment that is easier said than done.



4. Budget allocation

You only have so much money you can spend on recruiting. What and where to spend that money on are challenging questions facing all trucking recruiters. Today there are many more recruiting channels than ever before and carriers want to spread a wide net, reaching as many drivers as possible.

At the same time, you may be wasting money if you allocate it toward recruiting methods that just aren't effective. Measuring your recruiting effectiveness is an essential task that can help you allocate your budget efficiently, reach more drivers, and save money.

Nevertheless, spending that kind of research is time-consuming in itself. What recruiters really need are strong tools which help them recruit very efficiently through different channels suited for location and job type.



3 MISTAKES TO STOP MAKING WHEN RECRUITING TRUCKERS

In an industry like trucking, a few bad mistakes when recruiting truck drivers can set a company back significantly, leaving your trucks unoccupied shortly after you fill them.

Here are 3 mistakes to avoid when recruiting truck drivers for your CDL jobs.



1. Stop Having a Long Response Time

In this highly-competitive market, it's critical that recruiters reduce their response time to drivers as much as possible. When a driver inquires about a job, it's essential that the recruiter contacts that driver within minutes of receiving the expressed interest.

The reasoning is drivers are contacted constantly by countless companies about a variety of jobs. Waiting too long to respond to their inquiry will increase the probability that the driver won't remember your job standing out in the mix of everything else they expressed interest in. According to industry research, recruiters who contact drivers within 5 minutes of receiving their inquiry drastically increase the probability of speaking to the driver.

The longer you take to contact your prospects, the more likely it is they will be driving for a different fleet. As we've mentioned in our [Top 7 Reasons Truck Drivers Decline Your CDL Jobs eBook](#), the number one reason drivers decline is because they got another job faster.



2. Stop Sorting Through Unqualified Leads

Recruiters don't have time to waste. Their task lists are typically never-ending and every minute of their work day is allocated to a specific task. However, many recruiters tell us they get sucked in to sorting through unqualified leads, wasting countless hours each week. That's because most truck driver recruiting platforms are focused on delivering as many leads as possible instead of only delivering qualified drivers that actually match with the job.

It's frustrating for a recruiter to sort through hundreds of leads each day, only to have nothing to show for it at the end of the week. Recruiters that focus on finding the right candidate for their position will not only improve their hiring process, but will also start recruiting for retention. However, it's important to note that attracting qualified candidates for a job requires a company to clearly specify what they are looking for. The job description and advertisement must explicitly state compensation, home time, benefits, etc. in order to match with a driver that is truly looking for that job.



3. Stop Ignoring Driver Feedback

Companies who are dedicated to having and maintaining a great reputation constantly listen to drivers, make adjustments to their strategy, and revise their recruiting methods accordingly.

Too often we hear about drivers who share their feedback with a company only to never see it implemented. Now, we fully recognize that not all driver feedback is applicable. But, when a recruiter receives a gold nugget from a driver, using it to improve should be the action.

In addition, companies often receive feedback from drivers in regards to pay, home time, etc. on a variety of advertisements they deploy for their jobs. These are a great way to see inside of a driver's mind and objectively assess how the company stacks up in the market. Take this real-time feedback seriously, engage with the drivers, and make changes when applicable.



4 PITFALLS TO KNOW BEFORE USING A CDL JOB BOARD

There's a multitude of choices out there for CDL drivers when it comes to searching for a new truck driving job. Jobs are being advertised every day in truck stops and magazines. Add to that the barrage of emails, text messages, and phone calls drivers get daily, the messaging can become overwhelming. And confusing.

An employer's goal should be to get their job posting in front of drivers in a marketplace once the driver is ready to receive it, and where the driver is comfortable giving out their personal information to connect. Truck drivers should trust that the job board will help find the best matches for the specific type of job they want. But that doesn't always happen. Here are 4 pitfalls to know.



1. Quantity Over Quality

Many job boards pride themselves on the premise of “quantity over quality”. It’s all about the volume of leads. Carriers want to find pools of available drivers to fill their open jobs. But does more always mean better?

Some job boards claim to have thousands, hundreds of thousands, or even a million+ drivers. But if all of those “leads” don’t have anything to do with the types of jobs you’re seeking to fill, what difference does it make?

You’re going to still need to do a lot of work to sift through that pile of names to try and find someone who fits your needs. Focusing on quality over quantity has many benefits. Although the approach requires having a more methodical recruitment system, it can end up saving you time, money, and energy in the long-run.



2. Driver Privacy / Information Security

Hiring managers want more than just a name and phone number to start a conversation with a prospective driver. A completed DOT application is probably your ideal place to start. However, for drivers to feel comfortable providing more than some basic personal data, those drivers need to trust that their information is safe and secure and not going to be sent out or sold without their knowledge.

Job boards are notorious for sharing collected information with third-parties. You should make sure you're listing your jobs with reputable services so that drivers are willing to share more information with you prior to connecting with them. This helps ensure your search for a candidate starts off on the right foot.



3. Driver-Focused

Truck driver job boards often don't have the drivers' needs first. If the focus isn't about what's in it for the driver, the job postings on those boards might not get much traction if they don't grab the driver's attention and keep it.

Driver-centric recruiting techniques result in the most fruitful leads. When searching for job boards, be sure that they fit the drivers needs with the way they work and the way that they interact with them. Being mobile friendly, easy to use, and most importantly, speaking to drivers in a way they want to be spoken to, are things that make drivers feel like a particular truck driver job board is a good for them.



4. Qualified Matches

Truck drivers only decide to go looking for a new job when they no longer feel that their current job is meeting their needs. Those needs might be financial, driving preferences, work / life balance considerations, time away from home, or benefits related. No matter what the reason, any good truck driver job board should know what the driver is looking for, as well as what the carrier needs are in order to produce a good match. A match that is qualified on each side's preferences. If you take a little bit more time up-front to be clear on what you're looking for and what type of company the job is for, you can find yourself further down the hiring path faster, with the perfect candidate for your next hire.

If you've already spent too much time searching for truck driver job boards that you hope will find you great candidates to hire, we invite you to try something different and register with Drive My Way. We pride ourselves in standing out in the market, focusing on matching you with the right driver for your job instead of providing you with a giant list of "leads" that waste your time. Let us know when you're ready to recruit for retention,

#5

STEP 5

MEASURING SUCCESS

In this section you'll learn about how to measure your success as a recruiter as well as how to reduce your cost per hire.



DRIVER RECRUITING: 5 WAYS TO MEASURE SUCCESS

Truck driver recruiting success depends on finding the best candidates for the job, but also filling the position as quickly as possible. Recruiters have a limited budget and time with which to acquire top talent for their carriers, so recruiting efficiency is essential. In this data driven age, the importance of tracking measures of recruiting success cannot be overstated.

Recruiting metrics are the key to evaluating the effectiveness of your recruiting process, and correcting course when needed. Measuring your success will not only help you hire the best candidates, but also direct where to allocate your time and money. Here are five ways to measure success in truck driver recruiting.



1. Time to contact or hire

How long does it take to reach key recruiting milestones? Quickly moving your candidates through the recruiting pipeline is one of the biggest contributors to success. Measuring time to contact or fill the position can tell you if you're taking too long compared to industry standards or to your competitors. Comparing the time to X metrics across different positions will also lead to insights about driver supply for different types of driving jobs.

The time to fill metric adds up the total number of days an open job goes unfilled, and average time to fill looks at all unfilled positions over a set time period. Time to contact should be measured in hours, not days. If it takes you over 24 hours to contact a lead, chances are they're already in your competitors' recruiting pipeline. Even the first point of contact and phone screening can help push things along while you evaluate the candidate. Comparing the different times to reach a process step can help you determine which part of your recruiting pipeline is acting as a bottleneck. Perhaps you're quick to contact but slow to interview, in which case you can afford to schedule interviews sooner.



2. Cost per hire

Cost per hire is an essential metric to measure the economic value of your recruitment resources and demonstrates the strength of your recruiting methods. It can also help you optimize your limited truck driver recruiting budget so that you get the most out of it. Cost per hire adds up all the expenses that go towards hiring new employees and divides that over the total number of hires for a given period of time. You aren't necessarily looking to reduce this number to zero. There will always be hiring costs, whether they are recruiter fees, or costs of advertising, social media accounts, and job fairs.

You can look at cost per hire for a particular job type to further delve into which jobs are more expensive to fill. Looking at cost per hire by location will give you a sense of geographical effectiveness of your recruitment. Looking at the cost per hire of different recruiting channels can help determine channel effectiveness as well. There are a dozen ways to play with cost per hire, but all of them can help you eliminate unnecessary costs or reallocate recruiting resources in more efficient ways.



3. Source of hire or channel effectiveness

Truck driver recruiting today uses more sources and channels than ever before. Gone are the days of just magazine, radio, and billboard ads. Digital is king now, with more and more leads coming in from Google searches, Facebook postings, and online job boards. Identifying where applicants are coming in from can be incredibly helpful. Recruiters can allocate costs and resources more effectively when they have a keen sense of where leads are coming from. Understanding channel effectiveness can be done by measuring the number of successful conversions by channel.

You can also break down channels by job type or geographical region. Don't assume that the same channels or sources are equally effective across jobs or locations. Maybe your OTR job leads come in mostly through referrals, while company drivers come in through Facebook. The lead sources that have the lowest cost per hire over the last few months should get the priority of your recruiting budget. Then allocate your recruiting budget to those sources and watch your leads grow, while still having surplus in your recruiting budget.



4. Quality of hire / first year quality

Some of the above measures take into account truck driver recruiting efforts before the job starts, but there are other important metrics which measure post-hiring. Connecting job performance with truck driver recruiting can help improve your recruiting efforts and allow for trends in quality of hires to be benchmarked and compared. We already know you'll measure retention, but that doesn't paint the whole picture. Measuring quality of hire after the first year on the job will give a sense of whether the hire was successful or not.

Quality of hire is a simplified performance rating. Any time an employee's performance is measured, there is a certain amount of subjectivity. Nevertheless, speaking to the hiring manager or supervisor and other colleagues will start to paint a picture of the performance of your hires. This can take into account everything from productivity to cultural fit with the fleet and the carrier. A simpler method is to measure the percentage of candidates submitted by recruiters who are accepted for employment plus the percentage of these that do not leave, divided by two.



5. Job satisfaction

We've recommended this before and haven't changed our minds- measuring employee satisfaction is one of the secrets to maximizing retention and combating the driver shortage. Drivers and fleets are both looking for a strong match. If drivers aren't happy with their carrier, it's only a matter of time before they'll start looking for a job elsewhere that appeals to them more. Given the driver shortage, your fleets can't afford to lose a driver after already spending resources on hiring and onboarding.

Do whatever it takes to keep drivers longer, and that starts with measuring their job satisfaction. You can measure this on a number of different dimensions, such as satisfaction with hours/home time, dispatchers, company culture, pet policy, etc. Having open-ended driver feedback is best, so that you learn about drivers' likes, dislikes, wishes, and frustrations in more detail. After drivers have given feedback, it's the carrier's responsibility to address their concerns, or risk losing them to rival carriers.



3 WAYS TO LOWER YOUR COST PER HIRE FOR CDL DRIVERS

The truck driver shortage is a real problem for recruiters. It impacts HR efficiency and creates additional expenses for employers. Increased driver turnover rates are also adding to the problem.

These and other hiring challenges can contribute a great deal of expense to any company's bottom line.

But what impact do your actual recruitment efforts cost each year?



Do you know your cost per hire? Do you know if it's been going up or down over time?

Calculating cost per hire (CPH) is pretty simple math. Add up your total cost for recruiting new drivers, and then divide by the number of drivers ultimately hired. This gives you the cost per hire for ALL your recruiting efforts.

(Note that this factors in actual hires, not just leads.)

You should keep this number handy, and have yearly goals set to manage it as needed or as budgets change. Once you have determined your cost per hire, you can then make more informed decisions on where to spend your recruiting dollars. Here are 3 ways to lower your cost per hire for CDL drivers.



1. Leverage Past Leads

Every time you need to hire for a new opening, doesn't mean you need to have a fresh list of candidates to contact. Check in on your existing pool of names and filter or scan for matches to your current job openings.

The dollars spent to generate and capture these leads are already spent, and no additional budget is needed to go back to those lists.

You know that they've already been partially vetted if they matched up with prior openings, they might just need to be checked-in for these new opportunities. If you put a little bit of effort into keeping these older leads engaged between new/available job postings, you might have the perfect person sitting in your database already.



2. Reallocate Ineffective Spending

Once you have your total cost per hire calculated, you can further distill that across the different methods you're using to hire. Online, print, radio, social or agency help all have a cost associated with them.

Take the total of all your recruiting efforts, and then allocate per tactic your company uses. Once you have those smaller totals, divide by the hires made from each tactic. You should be able to rank order these individual costs per hire from highest to lowest. From there, you can make decisions to reallocate funds from higher CPH channels to lower CPH to increase efficiency. This should result in faster hires, at a lower cost. Which is a very good thing.



3. Try Something New

Have you only been relying on one or two channels to find new drivers? Are you spending an inordinate amount of time on manual processes? Maybe it's time to try something new! If you're recruiting using the same methods you always have, that might be the reason you're getting the same results you've always gotten.

If you're struggling to attract and retain the best drivers, that's probably a good indication to switch things up. Keep your eyes and ears open for new recruiting ideas, and as your budget allows, give something new a try. You might find something that brings in new drivers faster and saves on your cost per hire over time.

Knowing you've got a finite budget for recruiting new drivers to your open jobs, it's important that you've got a handle on what you're spending to hire each new driver. And of that spend, what tactic(s) are producing actual hires most efficiently. Effectively managing cost per hire, and other key recruitment metrics, will lead to the ultimate success of your hiring process.