



How to Recruit Moving Truck Drivers



The Ultimate Guide

A comprehensive guide to creatively hiring drivers in a changing industry.



A publication of **updater.**



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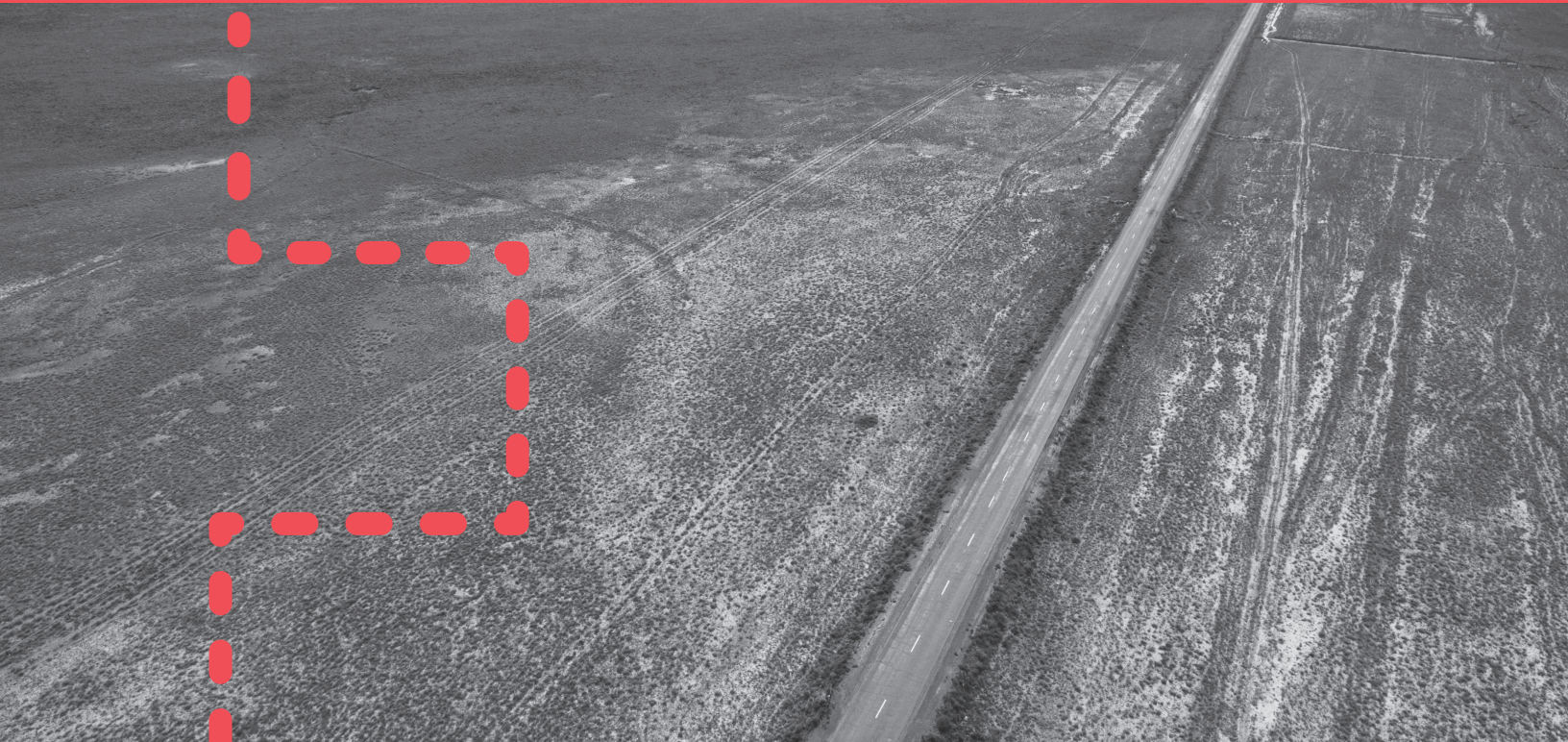
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THE SHORTAGE



As incredible as it sounds, America is suffering from a lack of truck drivers. Taking a trip down the average interstate, you'd never imagine that was the case as you're jostled by big rigs, tanker trucks, delivery trucks and the like.

Still, it's true. The Wall Street Journal states, "In 2015, American Trucking Associations estimated that for-hire trucking companies had nearly 50,000 fewer drivers than they needed. The shortage was less severe in 2016, but the trade group expects it to worsen in coming years."

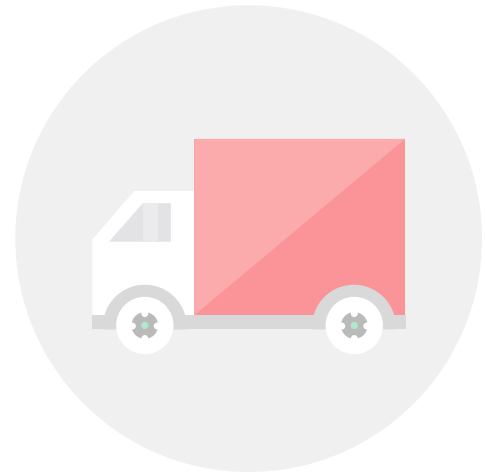
An article from Forbes paints just as bleak a picture. "In the US, the shortfall is estimated at around 50,000 drivers, and age distribution of the 850,000 currently on the road suggests it will get significantly



worse in the next five to ten years.” The situation is even more serious when you narrow the focus to the moving industry.

HOW'D WE GET HERE?

In a nation that prides itself on getting things done, and getting them done quickly, truck drivers are pretty much essential. When it comes to moving companies, they're essentially your life blood. So, how'd we find ourselves in this position?



Really, it's a complex situation. Realize that age has a lot to do with it. The average moving truck driver is 49 – retirement is looming, and for many, that time is now. Combine that with the fact that moving truck drivers have to do a lot more in the way of physical labor than drivers in other industries do, and you start to realize that age has a great deal to do with it. In many ways, it's a younger (or fitter) person's game.

Most drivers quit within the very first year of signing on. Salary competition from similar industries, including driving for companies like FedEx and UPS, is a prime factor, and many of these jobs have better hours, are very local, and don't require the physical exertion that moving furniture does.

There's also the fact that delivery-oriented drivers don't have much to do in the way of customer service. Moving drivers, on the other hand, have to be the face of the company. They have to interact with customers, who are often on edge, exhausted, and frazzled. Drivers often take heat for things that are completely outside their control.



While drivers working for local moving companies might be home every night, that doesn't apply to those doing longer hauls, and time spent away from their families is a significant reason to consider working in another field.



Now, add in other factors. These include government regulations that force drivers to take a 30-minute break for every eight hours spent on the road with no more than 14 hours spent driving, and the need for more and more accurate record keeping due to increasing environmental rules and regulations.

Of course, there's also the fact that the moving industry suffers from considerable seasonality – summer is moving time, but what's a truck driver supposed to do about earning a paycheck come winter? Drivers need stable pay throughout the year.

Finally, there's the fact that 88% of the applicants screened don't even qualify for the job.

Really, it's more than a little surprising that moving companies have managed to keep any drivers at all.

Thankfully, there are things that can be done, that YOU can do, to change the situation for your moving company.





HOW THE INDUSTRY SHOULD RESPOND



Given the looming crisis in the trucking segment, it is important to understand how the industry as a whole should respond. While some responses are “common sense,” others might come as something of a surprise. Whatever the case, trucking companies can’t afford to sit on their duffs.

NECESSARY INDUSTRY RESPONSES

One of the most important responses for the industry as a whole is to make these jobs more appealing to a younger demographic. If the median age for a truck driver is 49, it stands to reason that simple attrition due to retirement is a major factor in the driver shortage. By making driving jobs more appealing to



younger individuals, the industry could offset those losses by a significant amount.

Another consideration is to make driving jobs pay better. Really, who's going to stick with a profession where they can't earn a decent living? No one. That's why so many drivers are making the leap from sitting behind the wheel of a moving truck or big rig, to working for a company like FedEx, UPS, or the other delivery companies.

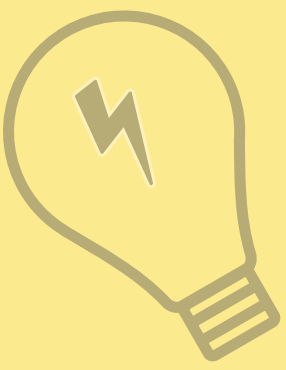


Of course, some in the industry might take the stance that the upcoming self-driving vehicle revolution will spare them the need to change their ways. At Updater, we do believe that we'll see self-driving vehicles operating throughout the country in just a few years. They're already in use in limited areas, and it is really just a matter of time before they're used to haul household goods.

That makes it seem like the shortage isn't such a big deal. We beg to differ. Even if autonomous vehicles really make a big splash, will they really have what it takes to navigate tortuous city streets? Interstate driving, sure, but downtown areas? Probably not.

However, from that discussion, the industry as a whole needs to take a few cues. No longer will truckers be mere wheelmen. They'll be tech-savvy, supply chain professionals and deserving of higher salaries.

Of course, none of this really solves the issue the industry faces right now—we're critically short of drivers.



HOW YOU SHOULD RESPOND



While the industry's responses to the driver shortage are definite steps in the right direction, it's important to remember that over the road truck driving positions can be very different from a job as a moving truck driver.

Moving truck drivers have significantly different job requirements, and while the position is similar, it's far from being the same. So, how should your moving company react? Well, quickly, for one, but there's more you'll need to do.

MAKING YOUR COMPANY MORE APPEALING

Here's the thing – in order to attract more truck drivers to your moving company, you need to make employment with your firm



more attractive than with the competition. And, make no mistake, you're in direct competition with any company that hires truck drivers, whether that's a fuel-hauling operation, a donut delivery service, or a long-haul trucking operation.

What goes into creating a more attractive company? Well, more money is one option, of course, but there's more to it.



What about benefits? What about paid leave or vacation? What about figuring out a way to ensure that your key drivers are able to enjoy a steady paycheck throughout the entire year, rather than going through endless cycles of feast or famine with the seasonality of the moving industry?

Back to the topic of better pay, consider that low-paid drivers are far more likely to be unhappy with their jobs. That unhappiness can carry over into the customer service delivered, resulting in a negative experience. Each negative experience slams your reputation (customers LOVE to complain about bad experiences, and you can bet that every single one who's had a less than ideal run-in with a driver in a bad mood has gone out of his or her way to spread the word).

Consider the fact that most truck drivers quit within their first year – that's a failure not necessarily on the driver's part, but on your onboarding process. That massive churn wreaks havoc not just on your ability to serve your clients, but on your profitability.

We recently conducted a study on our own in-house situation and discovered that if an employee remains with us for just a year and



then quits, it equates to losing \$250,000 per employee. That's right – per employee. Hopefully that gets your attention.

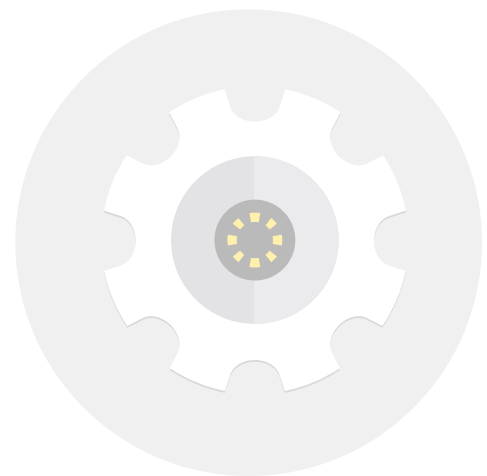
Now, apply that to your moving company. If 90% of the drivers you hire quit within a mere 12 months, how much do you think you're losing? Really, hemorrhaging is probably a more accurate term.

Finally, the notion that drivers are *just* drivers needs to be done away with. Just as with the wider industry, moving companies need to come to the realization (and soon) that drivers are tech-enabled supply chain professionals. That realization, coupled with better treatment, could be a major key to changing the paradigm of poor recruitment results.

How do you improve retention? Well, you need to start thinking like a recruiting machine. You need to start thinking and planning like we do here at Updater. Our own internal hiring plan for this year is to onboard between 50 and 115 people.

How can we do that? Simply put, we think like a machine. Our goal is to be a lean, agile recruitment and onboarding machine. Every single step of the process needs to be handled cleanly and correctly, with zero exceptions.

If you want to beat the driver shortage that's crippling the industry while simultaneously ensuring stability and an outstanding customer experience, you need to do that, too. Of course, you're not a recruiting professional, so how do you achieve that? We'll explain all of that in the next chapter.





RECRUITING PLAYBOOK



We understand that you're not a recruiter. While hiring might be part of your job, running a successful business is what you do best. To that end, we're going to get straight to the point and deliver some of the most crucial ideas and strategies you need to incorporate in order to improve your recruiting ROI and stability.

ESSENTIAL RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES AND IDEAS

In this section, we're going to bullet point some of the more promising ideas and strategies that you can employ to 1) attract the right candidates, and 2) retain them for longer periods.



- **Paid CDL Programs:** Want complete control over who you hire? Why not consider paying for CDL training programs for would-be drivers. You might even consider using a contract that stipulates in return for receiving paid CDL training, the driver must remain with your company for X years.

- **Help Your Drivers Live Healthier Lives:** Your drivers are pretty darn sedentary for hours per day, with a few periods of physical activity. Help them live healthier, happier lives by offering wellness programs like gym memberships, weight loss competitions or something else.



- **Know Your Audience:** There are drivers, and then there are drivers. You need to make sure you're targeting the right audience. Creating hiring personas allows you to tailor your recruitment message to different demographics within the driver community, ensuring it reaches the right ears.



- **Improved Benefits:** We've mentioned benefits (or the lack thereof) a couple of times. Turn your attention to some of the less tangible ones you offer. How often are your drivers actually at home? What sort of schedule flexibility do you offer? These can be make or break differences that set your moving company apart for applicants.



- **Celebrate Dedication:** An aging workforce doesn't have to be a negative. In fact, if you have drivers that have been with your company for a decade or more, that shows dedication on their part, and the fact that your company is doing something right. Celebrate that and point it out in your recruiting efforts.



- **Plan for the Future:** When it comes to employee benefits, a lot of drivers would appreciate some help planning for the future, in the form of 401(k) accounts, contribution matching, and other retirement plans.
- **Incentives for Safe Drivers:** Want to attract the right candidates, while encouraging your current fleet drivers to perform better on the road? Offer safe driver incentives. For example, if a driver is able to go a full year without getting a ticket or citation, they might receive a \$10,000 bonus.



- **Retention Benefits:** Want to help ensure that when you hire the right folks, they actually stick around? Consider a retention bonus. If a driver stays with your moving company for two years, they might receive additional training for career development, or management training to help them move up the ladder.



- **Market the Right Way:** Chances are that marketing isn't really your strong suit. If it's not, hire a marketing firm to highlight your company's culture, as well as to highlight just how crucial the role of drivers in American life is.
- **Cut Out What's Not Working:** Not seeing results recruiting through a particular medium or platform? Give it the axe. That's money wasted that could be spent better with recruitment options that truly give you some traction. For instance, social media marketing could be the thing you're missing.
- **Use Traditional Advertising:** Let's face it – your target audience when hiring probably isn't spending hours and hours per day scrolling through the Internet. They're on the road. You need to reach them with the right medium. Radio spots can work wonders for recruitment.
- **Invest in a Better Onboarding Experience:** At Updater, we've learned the importance of delivering a positive onboarding experience, and you can take the same tack.



- **Host a Driver Appreciation Event:** Let your drivers know just how important they are to the success of the company with an appreciation event. It can be large or small, indoors or out, but these events can bolster morale and cement loyalty. We also recommend that you invite driver candidates (it's what we do ourselves).

Ultimately, employees are your greatest asset – they are brand ambassadors. Treat them well, thrill them, give them a transformative experience that’s better than what they’ll receive from any other company, and they’ll recruit for you. Referrals are golden. How you treat your current drivers will have a significant impact on your ability to recruit and retain new drivers.

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LEARN A BIT MORE ABOUT UPDATER

Think of us like a “Turbo Tax for moving.” Updater is a web app that helps your customers save time on dreaded moving-related tasks. Customers seamlessly transfer utilities, update accounts and records, forward mail, send digital moving announcements, and much more. We build a version of our app that’s completely branded for your company, reminding your customers that you’re there through every step of their move. One of the fastest growing technology companies in the moving industry, Updater is a Supplier Member to the American Moving and Storage Association, and we welcome both van line agents and independents.