

Attract, Retain, and Develop: Shaping a Skilled Workforce for the Future

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Fast Company Press

(288pp)

978-1-63908-121-9

Inventive and engaging, the leadership guide Attract, Retain & Develop is about meeting changing workforce needs with creativity and vision.

Chef and apprenticeship director Nicholas Wyman's absorbing business guide *Attract, Retain & Develop* is about cultivating a skilled workforce via hiring, considering employee retention, developing workers' talents, and cultivating a supportive workplace culture.

Stressing the importance of relationships, innovations, and technological adaptability to the advent of jobs like podcaster, digital reputation defender, and app developer, the book encourages organizational leaders to embrace change, foster skills for the future, and eschew a one-size-fits-all approach to hiring. It models flexibility in developing its blueprint for workforce development, which is organized by broad concepts like disruption, evolution, and connection. It progresses through a detailed pathway for creating workplaces that inspire employees. Its chapters home in on actionable particulars like hiring top talent, revolutionizing workforce educations, and ensuring that one's employees stay happy and motivated.

Throughout, abstract ideas are made accessible, as when philosopher Frithjof Bergmann's concept of new work is explored in the contexts of a light urban vehicle company, a Beatles tour, and Wyman's own culinary education. Indeed, the book often uses storytelling to convey its points, as with the tale of a chef who lost a finger and still mastered global cuisines, which is used to complement insights on risk-taking and embracing unconventionality. Sometimes, though, the conclusions are unconvincingly tidy, as when a visit to Buckingham Palace leads to the unexpected conclusion that true fulfillment stems from sources other than wealth and luxury.

Drawing on Wyman's work as a chef, the book leans into culinary metaphors to a degree that sometimes limits its perspective: Bakes, the book notes, must be tested at length before one strikes "recipe gold"; elsewhere, managing workers is compared to adding "a pinch of creativity here and a dash of innovation there." XO sauce is also used as an example of how blending different perspectives can result in innovation. Generic buzzwords are also used to excess, as with *innovation*, *reskill*, and *disruption*. Still, the book's approach to redefining skill development in the face of constant change is compellingly unconventional. It weaves notions of employee well-being, human connection, and career-long learning into a cohesive whole, mapping out the creation of future workforces with intriguing vision.

The enlightening business book *Attract, Retain & Develop* is about developing skilled workforces to meet the needs of the future.

JOSEPH S. PETE (March 5, 2025)

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