



TRUCK DRIVER RECRUITMENT:
**WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW
IN A NEW WORLD**

Recruiting is not easy for any industry right now, including trucking.

Our State of Trucking 2022 Survey showed 72% of employers say they are having a hard time recruiting drivers. This is a significant increase from 2021 where only 57% said they were having a hard time. However, the problem may lie in a lack of outside-the-box thinking. Less than 25% of those surveyed reported doing anything creative to recruit drivers. And sadly, even of those 25%, most seem to be doing the same old tricks with more money, i.e more ads, social media and bonuses or wage increases. But as the pandemic rages on and the driver shortage stretches into its umpteenth year, companies are going to have to do something more drastic.

We've put together a guide of recruitment tips and tricks to help you navigate this new recruitment landscape. From increasing diversity to adjusting your candidate focus, there are a wide range of suggestions that can help you amp up your recruitment game.

4 CREATIVE DRIVER RECRUITMENT IDEAS

The shortage of truck drivers has found its way into the news quite a bit lately, causing some of the top news sources to refer to current conditions as a “trucking crisis” or “critical driver shortage.” While some blame the pandemic for making it hard to find and retain drivers, others credit an aging workforce and truck driver lifestyle. The Journal of Commerce adds that “nearly every period of economic growth is accompanied by a driver ‘shortage,’ including the recovery that began in 2009.”

No matter what the reason, if you employ truck drivers, you may be wondering what you can do to draw in more applicants. Here are a few ideas that extend beyond the same old advice to pay more, offer better benefits, or make your company a great place to work.

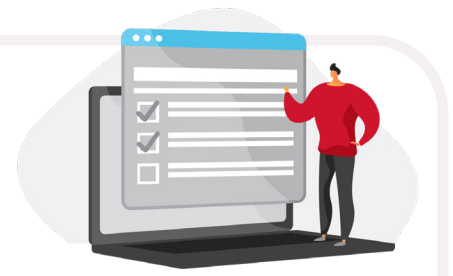
Post videos featuring your current drivers



If you have drivers who have a unique way of approaching their job, make short video clips featuring whatever it is they do. Let them share their talent with the world.

Not only does this show prospective drivers that you celebrate your employee’s individuality, but it also sparks interest in your company. Post these videos on your website and social media pages. Encourage others to like, comment, and share.

Create a FAQ webpage for interested applicants



One study found that, after reading a job post, 64% of candidates will research the company before deciding whether they’ll apply. If they’re unable to locate the information they want, it’s the end of the road for 37%.

To keep as many potential applicants engaged as you can, dedicate an entire page of your website to answering the questions that job seekers typically ask.

Topics you may want to touch on include benefits, flexibility, growth opportunities, company values and culture, your management style, and any other things that come up often during the interview process.

Collaborate with other local businesses



Hold a recruiting drive on your own and you might not have many people show up.

Partner with other local companies that are also hiring and not only are you more likely to draw a bigger crowd, but you might even spark the interest of a job seeker who didn't know you were hiring or who hadn't considered driving.

As a group, rent a local hall or meeting room. Draw up materials to market your recruitment event and ask everyone involved to share them via all of their marketing channels. Create even more buzz by sharing the event with local media (TV, radio, news) and inviting them to attend.

Reach out to an influencer



Find an influencer in the trucking industry and reach out to them to see if they are willing to assist you with your recruitment efforts. If you're not familiar with this term, an influencer is a person, group, or business with a large social media following and, as a result, can influence their audience's actions and decisions.

Maybe they could interview you about a hot trucking topic, giving you the ability to also talk about how you're looking for new drivers. Or you could supply a blog post about a trucking-related topic which they then share online. Do a search for "trucking industry influencers" and contact one or two.

These are just a few options to consider. Hold a brainstorming session with your colleagues and see what other creative ideas you can come up with. Try them out and you may find one that works!

7 WAYS TO **HELP REDUCE** THE DRIVER SHORTAGE

Companies everywhere are having trouble finding and retaining qualified drivers. Many drivers are leaving their jobs in an attempt to find work that pays more, offers better benefits, and provides more appealing working conditions. What can your business do to minimize the effects of the driver shortage so you can continue to provide your goods and services? Here are a few options to consider.

1 Increase Driver Pay

If drivers are looking for other types of work because they can earn a higher income, one potential solution to the driver shortage is to increase the amount your business pays. Not only can this convince more experienced drivers to stay in this line of work, but it also helps you stand out as an employer due to offering a higher rate of pay than your competitors.

2 Offer a Sign-On Bonus

A second option is to attract new drivers with a sign-on bonus. This type of lump-sum payment can be incredibly appealing, especially if the prospective employee has been off work for any length of time. The Hartford explains that a sign-on bonus is generally somewhere between 5% and 20% of the position's starting salary. These monies can either be paid upfront or after the new employee has stayed with the company for a specified period of time.

3 Improve Your Benefits

If increasing pay or offering a sign-on bonus aren't viable options, your company can still appeal to more driver applicants by improving the benefits you provide. This includes benefits or packages related to health insurance, disability insurance and retirement. Additional benefits that could increase your company's appeal without being a major expense are offering more days off per year, flexible scheduling and increased vacation time.

4 Provide New Driver Training

Another way for your company to circumvent the driver shortage is by providing training to people who are interested in this line of work but don't have the required skills. Depending on the size of your business and the number of drivers you employ, you may decide to provide this type of training in-house or outsource it to an already established driver training agency. Either way, structuring training into your new-hire process helps ensure that your drivers are ready for the road.

5 Create a Mentorship Program

New drivers can sometimes be apprehensive about going out on their own. One way to help relieve this stress is to create a mentorship program. Pair a new driver with an experienced driver so the new driver has someone they can reach out to whenever they have questions. Giving a new employee a mentor also strengthens the bonds they have with the company, increasing the likelihood that they will want to stick around long-term.

6 Give Referral Rewards

Businesses pay big money to headhunters as their average fee is often between 20% and 25% of the open position's first-year salary according to the job search site Indeed. You can pay much less and get just as good employees by having your current employees provide this service for you. This is generally referred to as a referral reward. Giving a reward encourages your staff to help you find high-quality drivers by reaching out to their network. It also shows them that you value their input, making them feel like a more important part of the team.

7 Listen to Your Current Drivers

Facing a driver shortage is bad enough. Contributing to it is even worse. One way to ensure that you have the drivers needed to serve your customer base is to retain those you currently have. This requires listening to what they have to say about working for your business. Is there a common theme that appears to be contributing to your drivers' unhappiness? If so, addressing it immediately can make them want to stay because they see that you're trying to improve their on-the-job experience.



SOFT SKILLS YOU SHOULD BE LOOKING FOR IN PROSPECTIVE DRIVERS

When hiring a new driver, it's important to find someone who knows how to operate a truck, has a good driving record, and can navigate traffic like a pro. But a driver's soft skills—the non-technical skills that impact the ways in which they work—are equally as critical. Here are a few soft skills that, if present in your new hire, are signs that they will likely be a great addition to your driving team.

POSITIVE ATTITUDE

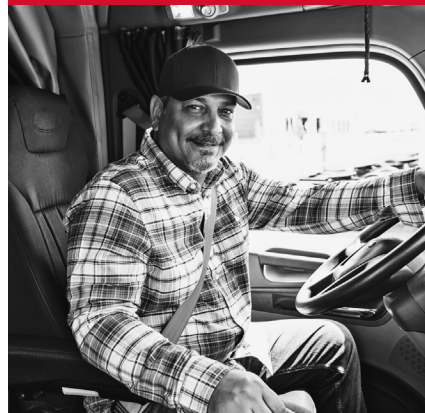
An employee's attitude can affect the entire team. If they're always positive, they tend to lift the team up. If they are negative most of the time, they'll likely bring the rest of the team down.

Since a driver is face-to-face with your customers, it's even more important that they have an upbeat demeanor. If they leave your customer with positive vibes, these feelings will often extend to the company itself, improving your reputation as a result.

One way to assess a job candidate's attitude is to ask questions about how they feel about driving, what their goals are in their career, and how they've dealt with issues in previous jobs. Their answers will give you an idea as to whether they have a more positive or negative approach. Look for a driver with a positive attitude and you'll be doing your entire workplace a favor...both from the inside out and outside in.



An employee's attitude can affect the entire team.



GOOD COMMUNICATOR

Because drivers spend a majority of their days outside of the company's four walls, having good communication skills is necessary. They need to be able to not only tell you when a problem arises but also be able to explain what is going on with enough clarity and detail to help you provide a solution.

How do you know whether a new hire may be a good communicator? Give them a scenario that they may face as a driver, such as the truck breaking down, and ask them how they would explain it to their supervisor. Make the situation more realistic by role-playing the conversation.

Look for whether they can explain what is going on clearly. Do they provide enough information to begin to resolve the issue without sharing details that likely don't matter?

TIME MANAGEMENT

Who would you rather hire as a driver: someone who knows how to effectively manage their time or someone who is late more often than not? Time management is a positive trait in many industries but especially important within the transportation of goods. If these goods don't arrive on time, you're likely to lose your customer's business.

To learn more about how the driving candidate deals with time, ask how their family and friends would describe them. Are they always the person who arrives 10 minutes early or 20 minutes late? Whatever they're like in their personal lives, they're probably going to be the same on the job.



PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS

Since drivers spend a lot of time on their own, it's also important that they have good problem-solving skills. Certainly, they can always call on management to help them if they're in a sticky situation, but it's just as critical that they are able to solve some issues on their own.



To assess a job candidate's problem-solving skills, give them a situation that can occur while on the road. Maybe they're running behind in their deliveries or face an unexpected traffic jam. Ask how they would deal with the situation. Are they able to solve the problem effectively or do they seem a bit lost and unsure what to do? If they seem unsure, do they at least know how to reach out to someone who can help them?

TEAM PLAYER

Though driving is a solo job, your new hire will still be a member of the team. As such, having a team mentality increases the likelihood that they will act and behave in a way that benefits everyone at the company versus only looking out for themselves.

To figure out whether someone is a team player, ask what they would do if they knew another driver or team member wasn't pulling their weight or was having issues that negatively impacted their work output. How would they respond? Would they intervene for the good of the team or would they do nothing because they didn't feel that it was their responsibility? Someone who is willing to help pull other members up and hold them accountable is someone who will raise the standards of the team as a whole.



TIPS FOR **ATTRACTING AND HIRING** VETERANS AS TRUCK DRIVERS



Members of the military make countless sacrifices to keep this country safe. But when they are back home, transitioning into civilian life can often be difficult. This is especially true when it comes to finding employment. Many veterans may feel that their skill sets do not translate easily into civilian jobs. However, many veterans are uniquely qualified to become truck drivers but may not realize it. With some recruiting tweaks and the right resources in place, you can provide veterans with new job opportunities as drivers. Here are a few things to keep in mind.

1 Use programs already in place

Keep in mind that many military members are already qualified to drive trucks and can transition quickly into civilian driving. Under the Military Skills Test Waiver Program, as long as drivers have had two years' experience safely operating military vehicles similar to those driven commercially, this portion of the test can be waived. That is, as long as they apply within one year of having a military position that provided this driving experience. There are a few other requirements that have to be met as well, but the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration reports that more than 19,000 current and former military personnel have already received this waiver. This is a potential untapped resource to help attract more military drivers into truck driving.

2 Use the right language

Veterans often have very applicable skills for truck driving, but often the language used in military settings is different in civilian ones. It would be helpful to get a working understanding of Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) codes. These codes are used to describe job qualifications in the military. While there is some variability among branches of the military, they can help give you a general idea of who to look for. A good resource for this is O*Net, which can help you search through MOS codes that might be applicable to your operation for driving or support roles.

3 Understand military culture

A key to attracting veterans or family members of veterans into truck driving is understanding basic military culture. This includes structure, policies, beliefs and values. This can differ from each branch of the military, but many are universal. In order to connect with veterans and build a strong relationship, it would be helpful to have a veteran on staff to help recruit with veteran candidates. They can provide unique insight into how to word job descriptions and interview veterans to attract the best drivers.

4 Provide support when necessary

Transitioning back into the workforce is a major change. So, it's not unreasonable to think that there may be a few challenges with hired veterans along the way. Outline ways to show support and provide help with anyone who may be struggling. You want to be able to help them overcome obstacles and answer questions or access resources.

5 Work with local military organizations

If you have a military veteran on staff, they can be a great resource to help walk you through recruiting them into truck driving. If you don't or want to expand your reach, there are many community veterans organizations that may be able to help. These include your local Veterans Service Organization, Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) post, American Legion post or USO. There are also a variety of non-profits and outreach programs that work to transition and employ veterans. It may be worth creating a partnership with these organizations to help them create a place for qualified military drivers to transition easily.

At Centerline, we pride ourselves on helping veterans transition to the civilian workforce and finding them trucking jobs.

We can help your company find qualified veterans to keep your company moving forward.

WAYS TO ATTRACT MORE FEMALE TRUCK DRIVERS TO YOUR COMPANY

Taking action to attract more women drivers offers companies many benefits. One, it helps reduce the impact of the current driver shortage, which American Trucking Associations warns could go from being around 61,000 short at the end of 2018 to 160,000 short by 2028. Drawing more women into the truck driver role is also good from a financial standpoint.

According to research published in the journal Management Science, when the number of women on the team increases, so do profits (up to the 50% mark). Conversely, teams with fewer women than men tend to have lower sales and profits. While all of this is great, truck driving jobs don't always appeal to women. What can you do to change this, increasing your number of female truck drivers?

Create a workplace that appeals to women

You can't expect women to walk into the ultimate bachelor pad and feel right at home. The same general principle applies in the workplace. If you want them to be excited to work for your company, you need to create an environment in which they feel welcome.

Since their primary work environment will be in the truck, consider what you can do to make this a more female-friendly place to be. For example, one study found that, when compared to men, women spend more time on their phones while on the road. Equipping your trucks with hands-free calling would likely appeal to this demographic of drivers.

Data provided by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety also reveals that women tend to be more focused on safety than men. So, keeping your trucks in good (and safe) working order is another way to appeal to these drivers' general safety sense.



Think about what you can do to make the outside-of-the-truck environment more attractive as well. Create driving routes that give ample bathroom stops to better handle women's unique physical needs (namely, monthly periods). And if there is a particular aspect of the job that women may struggle with more than men, come up with solutions that allow them to hold this role while still getting the job done.



ATTRACTING MORE WOMEN DRIVERS HELPS REDUCE THE IMPACT OF THE CURRENT DRIVER SHORTAGE

Think about your women drivers when it comes to benefits too

Another way to attract more women truck drivers is to offer benefits that many women would love to have at work. Options to potentially include are:



Equal pay, so they earn the same rate as their male counterparts



Child care benefits, either by offering services in-house or by partnering with a local child care agency that can work around a driver's typical schedule



Flexible work schedules to better handle their outside obligations, such as getting children to school or taking them to medical appointments



Maternity leave that provides enough time off for the new mother to care for her infant child without feeling as if she has to rush back to work



Sick leave, for the female employees who are also trying to care for sick or elderly parents or spouses

Use recruiting materials that speak to women drivers

Take a look at your current recruiting materials. Do any of them really speak to women? Do you use images of women drivers, for instance? And if you currently have female drivers on staff, do you highlight any of them in your recruiting pamphlets, posters, or videos?

The more you can help women picture themselves driving for your company, the more effective your efforts will be. Don't use just one woman in your recruiting materials, either. Use a variety of women, including all different shapes, sizes, and ethnicities. Aim to speak to women from numerous backgrounds. Let them know that you want them and the uniqueness that they bring.



HERE'S HOW TO GET MORE PEOPLE INTERESTED IN DRIVING A TRUCK

Driving trucks isn't for everyone. But if you're responsible for finding and hiring people to pick up or deliver your goods, it can be frustrating to have minimal options from which to choose. Certainly, you can't force people to apply for this position if they're not interested. At the same time, there are a few things you can do to raise their interest level, giving you a larger hiring pool.

LOWER THE AGE REQUIREMENT

States require that drivers be 18 to get their commercial driver's license. If your drivers only operate in-state but you have the age requirement set at 21, lowering the minimum to this age can help you get more interested drivers.

Your efforts may be even easier if you're hiring between April and July as the Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that it is during these months that the youth labor force (which applies to those between 16 and 24 years of age) is actively looking for work.

OFFER DRIVING SCHOOL INCENTIVES

Another way to spark interest in driving is to offer potential drivers incentives to help them get the schooling they need to work in this position. One option is to cover the entire cost of driving school for

qualified applicants with the understanding that they must work for you for a specified period of time or they have to pay some or all of the cost back. If this expense is too hefty for your company, even paying half or giving new hires a certain dollar amount can help. Whatever the incentive, if they must work a certain amount of time in return, put the agreement in writing before they even start the schooling. This helps prevent the scenario where they leave before their time is up and you're still left paying the costs.

EMBRACE DIVERSITY

Take a look at your recruiting materials. Do they feature only one or maybe two demographics? If so, you may be missing others who might be interested in driving truck yet don't apply because it doesn't appear that you're looking for someone with their background, ethnicity, or other life experiences. Update your recruiting materials to represent all different types of people to show that your company welcomes drivers from diverse backgrounds. At the same time, update your other marketing materials as well (your website, brochures, etc.). This shows interested applicants that diversity is a part of your company culture, which can increase their desire to apply.





TAP INTO SUBCULTURES

Some people have a genuine interest in trucks but may have never thought about driving for a living. Finding and connecting with these individuals can provoke them to consider turning their interest into an occupation. Where do you look for these types of people? There are a few different subcultures to consider.

Individuals who enjoy monster trucks, for instance, might be a good place to try. Advertise your positions at a local monster truck rally, calling on interested applicants to apply. If you have a local racetrack, this is another option too. Look at all the places in your area where people with an interest in trucks might go and advertise your job openings there.

It's often said that you can lead a horse to water, but you can't make them drink. While that may be true, you can make the horse thirsty. These are just a few ideas that can make potential drivers thirsty for the driving positions that you need to fill.



TRUCK DRIVER RECRUITMENT: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW IN A NEW WORLD

STILL STRUGGLING TO FIND QUALIFIED DRIVERS? **WE CAN HELP.**

For over 40 years, Centerline has proven that their dedicated recruiters, powered by the most advanced driver recruitment technology, can place the right drivers in the right positions better and faster than anyone else. We can find you the best driver for the job, even in today's tough market. Get in touch with us at CenterlineDrivers.com to request drivers or learn more.

Interested in applying? [View Job Opportunities Now!](#)

This guide is not, nor is it intended to constitute legal advice. You should consult your legal counsel with any specific compliance questions.

