What Employees Want in 2025 – and How to Attract Them

As the hospitality industry continues to recover and evolve post-pandemic, recruiters and HR leaders are under pressure to align talent strategies with shifting workforce expectations. Insights from broader workforce surveys offer critical clues. In 2025, attracting and retaining top hospitality talent will hinge on more than just salary—it's about values, team dynamics, and purposeful leadership.



Hospitality professionals, like many across sectors, are increasingly motivated by a sense of pride in their work, particularly when it involves delivering exceptional service to guests. This aligns perfectly with the core of the industry, where service excellence is a cultural pillar. Employees also highly value collaborate team environment, flexible work options (where applicable), and supportive leadership.

While hybrid work may not be universally applicable to frontline hotel, restaurant, or resort roles, flexibility can take other forms—such as adaptive scheduling, longer off-duty breaks, or predictable shift patterns. Smart hospitality employers are already exploring these options to support work-life balance and enhance retention.

Even as hospitality businesses aim to provide great employee experiences, communication breakdowns—especially across departments—continue to hinder cohesion. This is particularly problematic in hotel and resort settings where coordination between front desk, housekeeping, food and beverage, and maintenance teams is essential. Remote and flexible administrative roles have

compounded these silos. Effective cross-functional communication tools and transparent internal updates are crucial in maintain a unified service culture.

Another significant challenge: increased workloads without proportional staffing. Amid ongoing labour shortages and high turnover, 21% of workers in various industries say they're stretched thin—mirroring common concerns among hospitality workers asked to "do more with less." Without adequate staffing levels, even the most committed employees risk burnout. Recruitment strategies must focus not only on bringing in talent, but on retaining staff through sustainable workload management.

If there's one area where hospitality organisations can stand out in a competitive labour market, it's through skills development and clear career paths. Many employees cite the absence of professional growth opportunities as a major reason for seeking employment elsewhere. In an industry known for its fast-paced nature, leaders must carve out time and resources for training—whether it's upskilling line staff, offering management development tracks, or supporting cross-training initiatives.

Notably, leadership itself is under scrutiny. Roughly 20% of employees across sectors are asking for better communication, trust, and people management from their supervisors. In hospitality, where team morale can make or break guest experiences, effective leadership is non-negotiable. Whether in boutique hotels or global chains, recruiting and developing emotionally intelligent, consultative leaders will set successful operations apart.

What this means for recruiters

In 2025, successful hospitality recruitment isn't just about fulfilling roles quickly—it's about crafting compelling employee value propositions. Candidates want to know they'll be part of a mission-drive environment with room to grow, good communication, and supportive leadership. Recruiters should reflect these values in employer branding, onboarding and internal culture strategies.

Ultimately, the hospitality employers that thrive and nurture their talent are those who listen, adapt, and invest—not just in infrastructure or technology, but in the people who bring their guest experiences to life.