

The Case for Good Jobs

A quality-jobs focus can be transformative for your business

High-quality jobs can create real short- and long-term cost savings for your business' bottom line. Not only that, quality jobs provide your employees with greater financial security, enhance productivity, and support professional and personal success. As a retail business owner, you have the opportunity to shape the quality of jobs you offer in a way that works for your business and your employees.

Improving job quality isn't easy. We know that retail small businesses operate in an increasingly competitive landscape, often with thin margins, a tight labor pool, and significant time and resource constraints. However, small changes over time to job quality can enhance your business' performance and we want to help show you how. We created this toolkit to remove the guesswork from the "how" of creating quality jobs and strengthening your business.

There are three main reasons why you would want to focus on quality jobs in your business:

It's the right thing to do

Do you believe meeting your employees' basic needs is the right thing to do? Are you comfortable as a leader if a significant portion of your workforce is on public assistance?

We know you want to do right by your employees and be a model business within your community. Focusing on good jobs can enhance your company's reputation, drawing in both customers as well as high quality talent because of the way you run your business.

It's a financial opportunity

How much are high turnover, operational and customer service problems, low productivity, and waste costing you? What would your performance look like if you tackled some of these obstacles through good jobs?

Investing in your workforce is no simple feat, with labor expenses often accounting for more than 10% of retailers' revenues. However, cutting labor costs through low wages, insufficient benefits, and lack of training can have serious implications on your staff 's productivity,

turnover, commitment, levels of customer service—and therefore your bottom line.

According to Zeynep Ton of The Good Jobs Institute, “When retailers view labor not as a cost to be minimized but as a driver of sales and profits, they create a virtuous cycle. Investment in employees allows for excellent operational execution, which boosts sales and profits, which allows for a larger labor budget, which results in even more investment in store employees.”

It’s a competitive advantage

Are you providing a compelling reason for customers to buy from your business? Can you adapt to changes in the business environment, including changes in customer needs and technology, and to higher minimum wages?

Retail small businesses operate in an increasingly competitive market, especially with rising minimum wages and a growing number of laws related to workers’ rights to stable schedules and paid leave. Proactively taking steps such as raising wages, providing scheduling that works for your employees and your business, and streamlining operations can help your business provide exceptional customer service and enable you to readily adapt to market- and legislation-based changes.