

Rebuild Your ECE Program for the New Normal

PART 2: BUSINESS PRACTICES STAFFING & ENROLLMENT



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Our Company

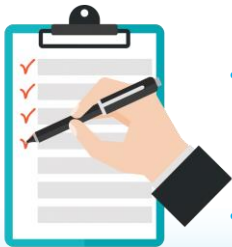
What We Do:

- Business Management Training Programs
- Business Consulting
- Technology Implementation
- Train-the-Trainer for Communities



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Part 2: Staffing & Marketing



Agenda

- Business Practices
- Staffing
- Recruitment
- Retention
- Marketing Tools
- Organizational Tips

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What has changed with COVID-19?

- Staff & parent fear
- Extreme uncertainty
- Increased requirements for providers
- Teacher shortage
- Lower enrollment
- Less face-to-face



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Sound Business Decisions


Driven by Fear


Follow a Process

Strategic planning process:

1. Establish a goal
2. Gather information, research, discuss, plan
3. Understand the financial implications of each scenario
4. Make informed decisions, best way forward

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Put on Your Business Hat!



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The Systems Mindset

Standardizing Key Business Activities



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Documented BEST PRACTICES



- Handbooks
- Policies/Procedures Manual
- Management Binder
- Operations Manual
- By-Laws



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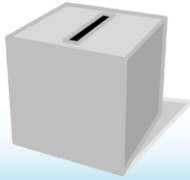
Communication (in COVID era)

- **Communicate well & often**
- Confident, consistent, fact-based language
- Update documented procedures
- Keep sharing positive things happening at the center
- Be a trusted resource
- Update families on how you're keeping up with health requirements and staff training on best practices
- Implement a process to keep communication technology up-to-date



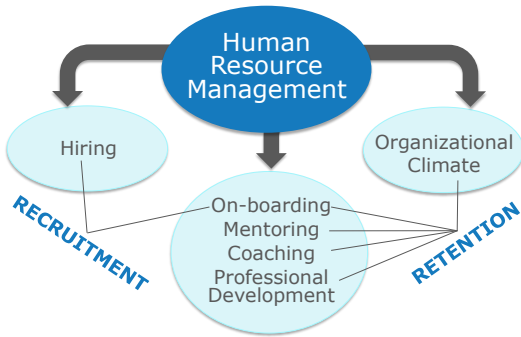
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POLL QUESTION



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HR Management Systems



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The smaller the organization, the more important the hiring.

John Maxwell

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What Tools Support Your Process?



RECRUITMENT

- Hiring Procedures
- Online Ad Platform
- Job Advertisement
- Job Descriptions
- Interview Questions
- Candidate Rating Tool
- Employment Forms

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Job Description

ATTRIBUTES NEEDED

- Customer Service
Parent Interaction
- Child Interaction & Trust
- Initiative
- Technical Knowledge
- Teamwork & Collaboration
- Communication Verbal & Written
- Reliability



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Interview Techniques

- Pre-Interview Screening
- Behavioral Based Interview Questions
- Use The Same Questions For Everyone
- Adjust Observational Interview
- Virtual Panel Interviews
 - Zoom
 - Facetime
 - Google Meet
 - Microsoft Teams



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"We often lose potentially great staff, not only because of inadequate wages, but because we throw them into a deep Olympic-size pool without giving them carefully fitted goggles and a clear life-support system. How can they become long-distance swimmers if our orientation and staff development is focused only on treading water?"



Margie Carter

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Support Tools

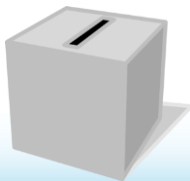
On-Boarding



- Policies & Procedures
- Job Description
- Orientation Plan & Schedule
- Ability to Demonstrate Understanding
- Adult Learning
- Mentor Role

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POLL QUESTION



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Back to Marketing Basics

- COVID an opportunity to rebuild where weak before
- Create solid foundation of branding
- New normal means new message focus (What do parents want to hear?)



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Messaging (in COVID era)

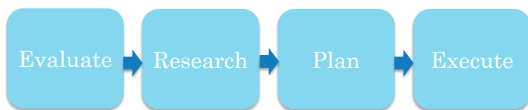
Program changes must be communicated! Think of places you need to update your website:

- Hours of operation
- Health & safety practices
- Class ratios
- Dropoff/pickup procedures
- Some programs doing a popup with COVID measures

GOAL IS TO REDUCE PARENT FEAR/HESITATION

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PIVOT Strategy



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Back to Marketing Basics



- Top-Quality Service
- Branding
- Signage
- Virtual Tours
- Strong Online Presence
- Testimonials
- Parent Engagement



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Have Strong Online Presence!



- **Website** *optimized for search engines* (make sure any web person you hire mentions "SEO" in their services)
- **Google My Business** page completely filled out (first must "claim" the listing)
- **Social Media:** Facebook #1, Instagram also good
- **Other Business Listings:** Claim your business and regularly check/answer reviews

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Your Website

- Top marketing tool
- Online tour (key in COVID!)
- Show expertise in child development
- CAN be parent communication tool (majority of website visitors will be prospective parents... newsletters and emails better for reaching current parents.
- Avoid DIY websites... this is a place to invest in a professional!



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The Virtual Tour

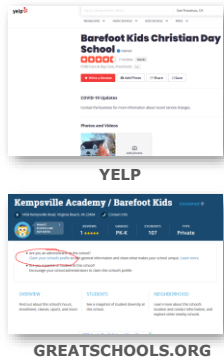
- Showcases best features
- Can be photo gallery, video, or interactive tour (hire professional)
- Can be done with or without people in it
- Captions help point out benefits ("Play mat where our infants get tummy time 3 times per day")



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Maximizing Business Listings

- Easy to copy/paste your business details
- Keep these up to date!
- Set a weekly reminder to check for new reviews (Google usually emails you when you get a new review though)
- ANSWER ALL REVIEWS!



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Testimonials

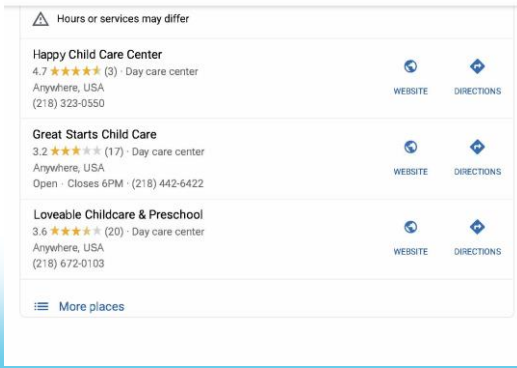
- New Word of Mouth
- Website, Facebook, Google, Yelp
- Vital to Your Online Presence
- ASK!
- What if You Get a Bad Review?



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Google for Business



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Social Media

- Focus on Facebook & Instagram
- Post at least once a week
- Mix of center-happenings, links to parenting articles, reminders
- Include visual with every post
- Photo release
- Best times of day to post (you can pre-schedule it):
 - ✓ 6-7:30 a.m.
 - ✓ 12-1 p.m.
 - ✓ 4:30 to 6 p.m.



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Website Photo Tips

- Use good lighting – no dark images or shadows
- Avoid backgrounds like Dumpsters, parked cars...
- Capture the Children
 - ✓ Interacting with happy teachers (Posed & Candid)
Include: circle time, reading, physical activities...
 - ✓ Show diversity in age, gender and race
 - ✓ Represent each age group
- Don't forget the Building
 - ✓ Storefront - wide view from street & closer view
 - ✓ Sign in front of building
 - ✓ Unique center features
 - ✓ Outdoor photos, showing playground space...

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Organizational Tips

Must haves for busy owners/directors

- ✓ Calendar (Digital/Paper)
- ✓ Center Master Checklist
- ✓ Childcare Management System
- ✓ Task List/Project Management Tool
- ✓ Cloud or Backed Up File Management
- ✓ Master Password System
- ✓ Parent/Staff Communication Platform



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Role of Automation

- Determine your need
- Eliminate time-consuming manual
- Evaluate software
- Set a timeline
- Develop implementation plan



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Resources

- McCormick Institute Early Childhood Leadership at <http://www.mccormickcenter.nl.edu/>
- "The Right Fit, Recruiting, Selecting and Orienting Staff" by Kay Albrecht
- "Program Administration Scale, Measuring Early Childhood Leadership and Management," by Teri N. Talan and Paula Jorde Bloom
- "Employee Turnover" by Marcy Whitebook
- Marketing – Early Childhood Investigations Webinars and SBDC's www.AmericanSBDC.org
- Opportunities Exchange – Shared Services <https://opportunities-exchange.org/alliances-in-action/>
- ChildCare Aware <https://www.childcareaware.org/resources/map/>
- Director Networking Groups



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