



Small Business Bulletin

June 2026

Overcoming Summer Workforce Challenges



Summer presents both opportunities and challenges for small businesses. Seasonal demand and warmer weather can boost growth, but increased employee absences, higher turnover among temporary staff, productivity fluctuations and spikes in customer demand can strain operations. To manage these pressures, small businesses should take a proactive approach to workforce planning by preparing for time-off coverage, simplifying seasonal hiring and onboarding, keeping employees engaged during slower periods and adjusting staffing to match demand. With thoughtful planning, businesses can maintain performance, support employee morale and make the most of the summer season.

Strategies for Navigating Talent Challenges During the Summer

Consider these best practices for overcoming talent challenges and boosting employee productivity and satisfaction:

- **Implement early vacation planning.** Encouraging employees to submit vacation requests in advance allows managers to anticipate coverage needs and adjust schedules.
- **Cross-train key roles.** Cross-training employees ensures greater flexibility when absences occur. This approach minimizes disruptions and supports employee development by broadening skill sets.
- **Leverage temporary and on-demand talent.** Partnering with staffing agencies or freelance platforms can provide additional workforce support during peak periods. These options are especially useful for businesses that need seasonal help without long-term commitments.
- **Enhance staff onboarding.** Clear expectations, concise training and regular feedback are critical for integrating short-term employees. Well-prepared seasonal staff can contribute meaningfully, reduce the load on permanent team members and maintain service quality.
- **Use technology to maximize efficiency.** Digital tools can help automate scheduling, streamline internal communication and reduce administrative burdens.
- **Maintain regular communication.** Frequent check-ins and open communication help managers stay informed about team capacity and morale. Listening to employee concerns and recognizing contributions are key to sustaining engagement throughout the summer.

Employer Takeaway

Employee absences, workforce fluctuations and shifting productivity patterns can disrupt operations. By approaching the summer months with strategic foresight, small businesses can mitigate disruptions, maintain performance and foster a supportive work environment.

How Small Businesses Can Protect Their HR Teams From AI-driven Scams