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Don't Rush to Re-Hire

By: [Les Cunningham](#)

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It takes at least 90 days to decide you have a problem, 90 more days to decide what to do about it, and another 90 to follow through on your decisions. If you add that up, it takes a minimum of nine months to take an action. Despite this extended timeline, many remodelers are optimistic about the rest of the year and are considering hiring back the employees they laid off during the recession.

At the Remodeling Leadership Conference in May, I heard some remodelers talking about re-hiring employees due to an increase in leads. When a remodeler brought this up, I asked two questions: What did your company do that caused the increase in leads? How many of those leads resulted in signed contracts?

Generally, the answer to the first question was, "Not much, the phone has just started ringing." The answer to the second question was, "None ... yet." You should consider these eight steps before re-hiring employees:

1. Wait until you have signed contracts that have been signed for at least three days.
2. Start with part-time work and expand an employee's hours if, and when, you need them.
3. Be clear that job security is based on both employee performance and the company's performance.
4. Rewrite the job description for each returning employee based on changes to your company.
5. Interview a returning employee as though he or she was a new hire. Discuss expectations on both sides.
6. Review the compensation package in your local area for each job. Offer pay on the lower side of the local rate but include an incentive for employees to earn additional income based on their performance.
7. Look for ways to complement an employee's abilities that will promote profitability.
8. Keep employees informed on a monthly basis as to where they stand and where the company stands.

—*Les Cunningham is president of Business Networks, a peer-review organization for the remodeling and insurance restoration industries. les@businessnetworks.com*

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