



How to Recruit and Retain *More Drivers...*

THE TOP
10
THINGS YOU
NEED TO KNOW



The Top 10 Things you need to know How to Recruit and Retain More Drivers...

In this guide, we'll show you how to recruit and retain the right drivers for your taxi business.

Drivers that will become an asset to your business, generate praise from your customers, and help build your reputation as a great place to work.

Whilst you may face stiff competition from other taxi businesses in your area, as well as companies such as Uber, there are still many ways to maintain an upper hand.

In the following pages you'll discover the things that good drivers need in order to feel secure and confident in the business they choose to work for.

You'll also learn how to increase your chances of success, by clearly showing potential new drivers how you can help them secure their future and earn more money as a result.

And by doing so, you'll never need to settle for average drivers again.

So, if you want to succeed in recruiting and retaining good drivers, that help your business grow in reputation and profitability, here are the top 10 things you need to know...

1

Be Fair!

You'll quickly build a reputation for being fair.

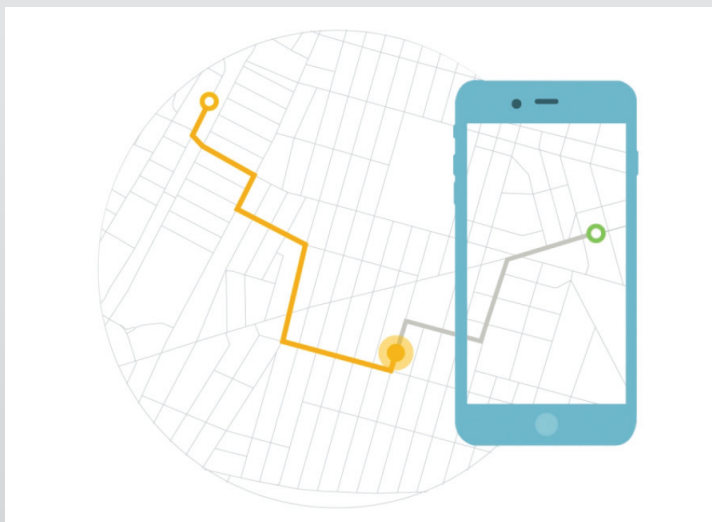
When it comes to earning money, you know that there are two types of drivers. The ones who jump on every call, whether it's worth £40 or £2.50 – and the ones who'll hang around just waiting for the big jobs to come in – the 'grabbers'. That's all fine and normal... but what happens when you're looking to recruit new drivers?

One thing that quickly annoys your drivers is if they suspect that they are missing out on their fair share of the best jobs. So, if you employ new drivers and they quickly realise that the best jobs are going to one or two 'grabbers', they may not stick around long.

Worse still, if they hear through the 'driver's grapevine' that your business operates that way, they may simply avoid talking with you in the first place. But if you ensure that all your drivers, whether that's 10 or 110, get the same chance to drive the high-earning jobs, you'll quickly build a reputation as a fair employer. And that reputation can be like gold-dust when it comes to attracting new drivers.

It doesn't matter if you assign journeys manually or via an automated system (where the software does it for you), but what does matter, is that your controllers are not favouring some drivers over others.

Give all your drivers an equal opportunity to drive the high-earning jobs so that new drivers coming into the business are happy and loyal to you.



2 Effective Communication

You need to communicate to potential new drivers.

With your drivers out on the road morning, noon and night, communication isn't always easy. And yet keeping new drivers informed and up to date is key to making them feel involved in the business they've just joined... and when they feel involved, they also feel invested and loyal. If it's impractical to get your drivers together physically on a regular basis, then you might try regular email updates or even text messages.

The taxi industry is perhaps unique in the ease with which drivers can move from one firm to another... and ensuring that your new drivers know upfront that you are there and that you are committed to them is a powerful way to get them to join and then stick around. There are a few key messages that we believe you need to communicate to potential new drivers:

- **Fair Allocation** – let them know that work is allocated fairly to all drivers with no favouritism (if you use a system like iCabbi remind them that the system does this automatically).
- **Avoid Uber** – explain driving for Uber may be tempting but remind them that Uber takes 25% of their earnings **AND** reports it all directly to the tax man.
- **High Standards** – tell them that your customers really value clean cars and uniformed drivers, and that you'll encourage them to keep their standards high.
- **Customer App** – explain that a high percentage of customers love using your customer app (if you have one), and that this is one of the reasons why you are successful and growing, and why you can give them a high volume of work.
- **Positive Feedback** – let them know that you'll relay praise from customers back to the specific driver and copy in all your drivers, showing them just how much you value their commitment to excellent service.

3 Supply a Uniform

Smartly dressed drivers suggest a high level of professionalism.

Ok, so this might seem a little out of place here but, supplying a uniform to your new drivers really can help give you an edge when it comes to recruiting. And no, we're not talking about a full chauffeur's suit and hat! Even offering your drivers a branded shirt can give you a competitive edge.

Firstly, it helps your drivers feel like part of the team – your drivers stop being an odd assortment of individuals and become a recognisable team. It gives them an identity and helps to build loyalty. And just as important, it creates a great impression with your customers.

Smartly dressed drivers suggest a high level of professionalism that will give your customers an extra degree of confidence in the service you provide. Secondly, it helps your drivers decide what's appropriate to wear for work.

It takes the decision process out of it for them and it ensures that your customers are never greeted by a scruffy or inappropriately dressed driver.



4

Respect and Leadership

Keep your business profitable, efficient and well-run.

As we've touched on earlier in this guide, it's important to make new drivers feel like they'll be a valuable part of your team. Doing so will increase your chances of getting them to join you, stay with you, and act as advocates for your business.

However, it's equally important that they understand their position and that they cannot 'take over'. When it is so easy for drivers to move from one firm to another, and there's competition for good drivers, it can be tempting to give in to their demands, and slowly hand over control. But to keep your business profitable, efficient and well-run, you must always stay in control – leading from the front.

Respecting your drivers and treating them as valued individuals doesn't mean that you can't still be the boss. And when your drivers respect you for taking control, and they know that your leadership of the business will provide them with the right level of earnings, you'll increase their sense of security and their desire to stay loyal to you.



5 Don't Compromise on Driver Quality

Leave your customers delighted after every journey.

All drivers want to drive for a successful, profitable firm where their earning potential is high. Your customers want to book taxis from a firm where drivers are polite, timely and helpful, willing to go 'above and beyond' in order to make them feel valued.

So, when recruiting new drivers, it's critical that they understand your need for the very highest standards of performance in all aspects of their job. That might be as simple as greeting their passengers by name or helping them with shopping or luggage (to the door, not just out of the boot!). Whatever it takes to ensure that your customers leave delighted after every journey.

If you employ drivers and they fail to uphold these standards, be fair but be tough. There's no point holding on to a driver who's bringing down your reputation. It's something that your customers will notice, and that will have a knock-on effect on your other drivers too. What's more, if you run a profitable taxi business that treats its drivers fairly and with respect, you'll always have new drivers willing to work for you and to the standards you require.



6 Use a Great System

Use the best and most up to date dispatch systems.

Time and time again when we speak to taxi company owners and managers, we hear that their outdated dispatch systems are a major cause of upset among their drivers. Not only that, but it can also be a barrier in getting the right standard of new driver to join their business when recruiting. That's because they perceive that outdated systems allow dispatchers to favour some drivers over others, and that they can make it harder for drivers to do their jobs effectively.

In addition, poor and out of date GPS, slow interfaces and inefficient dispatch software (resulting in dead miles) are also big issues. These can all be solved when you use the best and most up to date dispatch systems (such as iCabbi). When your dispatch system works well, your drivers can perform better and earn more. That means new drivers are keen to work for you.

Sticking with an old, outdated or inefficient system can cost you dearly – not just in aggravation with your customers and office staff, but crucially in recruiting good drivers. If, however, you already have a good system in place, make sure you communicate this to any potential new driver you speak to.



7 Your Marketing

Help generate a constant stream of customers.

In a marketplace swamped with competition (both from other taxi companies and newer solutions like Uber) it's critical potential new drivers you talk to understand how your marketing ensures they'll have a constant flow of customers. Busy drivers, with a 'fair share' of the work, are happy drivers.

The good news is that there are numerous low-cost ways to market your business, from simple flyers and beer mats to social media. This could include running limited special offers and promotions designed to attract new customers and keep existing customers happy and loyal... and this all filters through to how your drivers feel about working for you. We notice that the most successful taxi businesses actively promote themselves with lots of simple, low cost (and proven) marketing techniques that help generate a constant stream of customers. And, when you have that, you'll attract the right new drivers to your business.

Here are some marketing ideas that we see working day in, day out...

- **Flyers** – yes, very old fashioned, but simple flyers distributed through local hotels, pubs, local businesses and at other hot spots are an effective way to keep the phone ringing.
- **Beer Mats** – effectively a mini flyer, but right under your potential customer's nose – another great way to get more bookings.
- **Bus Stop Shelter Posters** – on a cold rainy night, when waiting for the bus soon loses its appeal, your posters will get customers who need a taxi on the phone or using your app.
- **Email** – some well targeted emails to your best customers at the right time can generate great bookings. For example, promoting airport transfers in the lead up to school holiday periods and over the summer holidays can generate lots of high earning work.
- **Website** – as a local company, your website can be a key tool for new (and old) customers to find you. A simple, attractive and well-designed website gives you a marketing advantage, especially when you incorporate a web booker (like iCabbi's) into the site.
- **Social Media** – you can promote special offers and discounts to specific audiences (such as students) to attract bookings around certain times of the week and special events.

Striving to be the best company to work for might take some work, but in the end, it'll not only make your business more profitable, but also make it easier when it comes to driver recruitment.

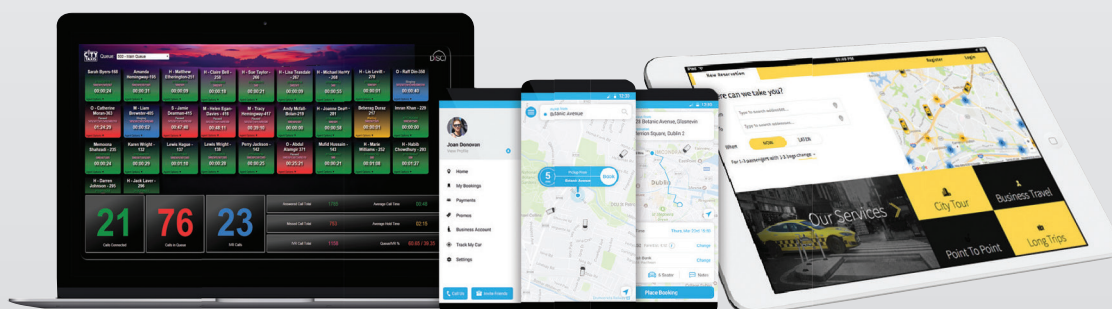
8 Customer App and Automation

Keep your drivers busy and happy.

Today more and more customers are experiencing an automated booking service either via a customer app (often with Uber), a web booker or an IVR (Interactive Voice Response) system. Whilst some customers don't like apps and automated phone systems, the reality is that many do. That's one of the key reasons that Uber is growing so quickly – the plain truth is that some people really like the app experience, they find it incredibly simple, easy and fast to use. The same goes for drivers too. That means you need to provide a similar experience to keep pace with the market if you want new drivers to choose your business ahead of your competition.

The good news for you is that utilising 'Uber-like' technology, such as iCabbi, helps keep your drivers busy and happy by allowing you to offer your customers as many ways as possible of booking with you – phone, app, website and automated phone system. The more ways to book that you offer, the broader the appeal of your business will be to different groups of customers – and more work will flow your way.

And when potential new drivers understand the extra work that flows from automation, and how much easier it makes their daily workload, there's much more chance they'll join you and stay with you long term.



DiSC IVR Phone
Solution

Consumer
App

Embedded
Web Booker

9 Help Your Drivers Make More Money

A great way to give you the edge over your competitors.

Whilst money isn't the only thing that keeps your drivers happy, it's certainly a big factor. Being able to tell new drivers that you utilise surge pricing to help them make more money, is a great way to give you the edge over your competitors. Surge pricing, or price surcharging, is simply charging an extra amount on top of your normal rates for journeys at certain peak times.

Uber were one of the first to trial it aggressively and have been hit (deservedly) with some bad press about it by increasing charges automatically during disasters. However, what this has done has opened the door to local taxi businesses like yours to use a modest surcharge at peak (and unsociable) times to increase income and earnings for your drivers.

With a modern booking and dispatch system (like iCabbi) it's easy to introduce a small surcharge at peak times that you can share with your drivers.

If you apply a booking surcharge of £2 per booking to each job on a Saturday night between 6pm and 2am, a driver doing 3 jobs an hour will earn an extra £48 during their 8-hour shift.

Testing has shown that customers don't mind a small increase at the busy and unsociable times. This could mean an extra £100 or even £200 per month for your new drivers, which is sure to make them think long and hard about joining you and staying with you for years to come.



10 Better Earning Potential & Job Security

Uber take 25% of the driver's earnings.

When it comes to recruiting the right standard of driver, you'll always have competition - and not just from other taxi businesses in your area. The rise of Uber, and other services like it, means that good drivers have options as to how they work and who they work for.

That can mean that drivers you'd like to have work for you, may also be considering working for themselves via Uber or similar. The good news is that whilst this may seem a great option, the reality of the money aspect may quickly have them decide in your favour. So, if they haven't already done the maths, here's how you can help them go through the numbers, so they can see how much better off they might be working for a taxi business like yours.

Let's start with the deductions. Uber take 25% of the driver's earnings and it is well-known that driver earnings are automatically provided to HMRC. Knowing that, let's look at some examples that you can share with potential new drivers to show how much they stand to lose working with Uber compared to working with you...

Driving For You VS Driving For Uber

Drivers Gross Weekly Fares	£1500	£1250	£1000	£750	£500
UBER					
Amount Taken by UBER - 25%	£375	£313	£250	£188	£125
Fees Remaining	£1125	£938	£750	£563	£375
YOUR FIRM					
Radio Rent / Circuit Fee	£100	£100	£100	£100	£100
Fees Remaining	£1400	£1150	£900	£650	£400
Amount Driver is Better Off	£275	£213	£150	£88	£25

Obviously, we don't know your radio rent/circuit fee (it may be more or less than the £100 shown above) but none-the-less you can quickly see that a driver is much worse off working for Uber. And remember that in the above examples Uber is declaring the driver's earnings to the tax man. The driver declares their own earnings when they work for you.

Don't assume that new drivers you talk to have done the maths for themselves. And even if they're not openly discussing Uber as an option, it's a great idea to show them why it shouldn't be one. If they're a good driver, and you want them to join you, it's easy to use the maths to show them how much more money they could make working for you.

Summary

Recruitment can be tough. Add in significant competition for the right standard of driver, and it can quickly become a battle. The good news is, it doesn't need to be.

By utilising the information in this guide, combined with the right approach, and a reliable taxi dispatch system (like iCabbi), you'll be in the perfect position to recruit the right drivers, whilst avoiding those that are likely to end up damaging your reputation.

So, instead of seeing your recruitment as a battle, see it as an opportunity to make your taxi business even stronger.

Recruiting and retaining good quality drivers, that are happy with their earnings and confident in your ability to maintain customer volumes, not only helps your profits, but also your overall reputation.

As that reputation grows, more customers want to use you and more of the right drivers want to work for you.

Need More Help?

We hope this guide has proven useful to you, but it's left you with questions we're here to help. You can call our friendly advisers on **01623 44 22 11** or email your questions to **enquiries@iCabbiUK.co.uk**

Thanks for requesting our guide.

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