

Project Report

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Sherwin-Eights

The University of Akron

**Table of Contents**

<b>Abstract</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Primary Research Methods</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Primary Research Findings</b>	<b>3</b>
Focus Group	3
Survey	4
In-Store Interview	6
<b>Limitations of Primary Research</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Conclusions and Recommendations</b>	<b>10</b>
Innovation Recommendation #1: Expanding the TAM Program	10
Innovation Recommendation #2: Sherwin EDGE Mentor Program	13
Innovation Recommendation #3: Goal-Based Pay Program	17
Summary of Recommendations	21
<b>Thoughts on Future Research</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>References</b>	<b>24</b>

### **Abstract**

The Honors Business Forum project is to test and research the main factors that influence recruitment and retention trends, with a focus on Sherwin-Williams. Specifically, our team focused on retention with a recruitment mindset when approaching the project. Following a secondary research report and the gathering and analysis of our primary research, we were then tasked by Sherwin-Williams to provide some innovative recommendations to solve recruitment and retention challenges that the company is facing.

### **Primary Research Methods**

In order to establish a route to take for our recruitment and retention recommendations, our team conducted a focus group and an online survey. These tactics were created to collect quantitative and qualitative from our target demographic, college graduates or soon-to-be graduates, and see what they looked for in job opportunities.

For our primary research methods, we chose to utilize a focus group, a survey, and an in-store interview. Implementing three methods provided a variety of feedback and knowledge to fuel our findings.

A focus group allowed us to obtain feedback on important aspects of the job recruiting and hiring processes through open-ended prompts. Specifically, a focus group allowed us to approach the component of our research that focused on the interests of job-seekers and their expectations of a full-time position and the interview and hiring processes of such a position. A survey allowed us to gather more quantitative feedback from our target group. In addition to obtaining feedback from potential candidates, we conducted a in-store interview for feedback from a current employee of Sherwin-Williams. This allowed us to obtain knowledge about the

current aspects of a position within the company to compare to focus group and survey results regarding the interests and expectations of potential candidates.

### **Primary Research Findings**

#### **Focus Group**

Our focus group was comprised of six college students from the University of Akron. The students were from a variety of majors; speech pathology, marketing communications, education, social work, and sales. When asked what their career goals were they all hoped to find a job in the field they are studying. We established that they all use online sources when looking for jobs such as LinkedIn, Indeed, and Handshake, as well as career fairs and references from friends and family. Participants were divided on how the hiring process affected their opinion on companies--some liked a shorter process, while others thought a longer process was necessary for them to learn about the company and the position. Participants also stated if they had an awful recruiting experience but the company met all their criteria, they would want to speak with someone other than the recruiter to get a better feel of the culture.

Benefits were the biggest factor the focus group participants looked at when deciding to accept or apply to a job opportunity. Health benefits, 401(K), paid time off, educational opportunities, room to grow in the company, and job satisfaction were all big contenders in job evaluation. In a vote, 90 percent of focus group participants said on a scale of 1-5, 5 being extremely important, that benefits were a 4 or higher.

In regards to brand awareness, the participants were really focused on one thing--if I personally would not use the product, why should someone else? One participant stated, "It is easier to sell or promote a product or service you believe in yourself. I would want to work for a

company that I would shop or work with.” Remembering that job applicants are also potential consumers is important when building your brand and writing job offers.

When asking the participants about their future career plans, they all stated they expected to be evaluated based on their academics and their experience. “If you are an education major and you want to teach special ed, you can’t get that type of position if you have no experience working with special ed children,” one participant stated. When discussing being a retail manager, a few loved the idea of being the boss and others were not keen on the structure and responsibility that the position required.

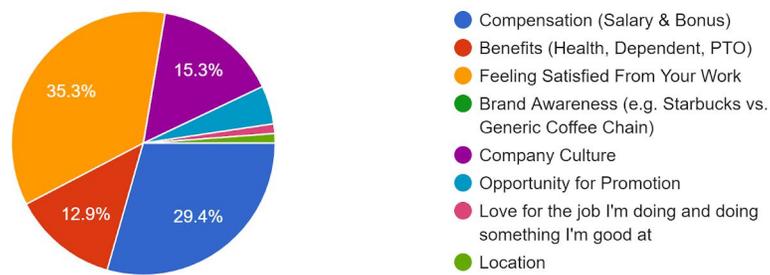
Overall the focus group established that college students would be interested in the management position with Sherwin-Williams if it was marketed correctly, had appropriate benefits, and led to overall job satisfaction.

## Survey

Our Recruitment & Retention Survey provided us the most quantitative data out of our three primary research methods. Over 50 percent of participants stated that they use technological resources, such as LinkedIn or online searches, to seek out job opportunities. Accordingly, it is important to note the secondary research that supports technology as an

Which of these factors is most important to you when searching for a job?

85 responses



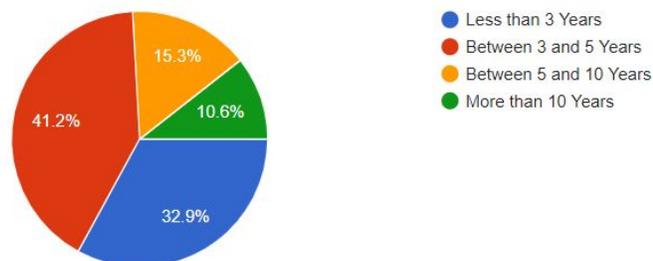
essential factor of methods of recruiting. Additionally, out of the 85 primarily college-aged respondents, 65 percent of participants stated that compensation and job satisfaction were two of the most crucial factors in determining where one would work. In our short answer option, most participants indicated that they were far more interested in the opportunity to work in a career field for which they are passionate rather than work solely for a salary. A statement reflecting this sentiment from one participant is shown below:

*“Most importantly, I’m looking to make a tangible impact on the world. I currently work in healthcare and get to make a real difference. I also think culture and fulfillment is essential to enjoying your work. An employer could offer me \$1 million per year to work as a cashier and I wouldn’t do it. My personal goals and passions have to fall in line with the work I’m doing.”*

Other short answers follow the same line of thinking, citing phrases such as “personal fulfillment,” “meaningful work,” “enjoyment of the job,” and “purpose-driven career.” From this sample of responses, it is clear that the general career necessity of many respondents is purposeful and satisfying work.

How long do you plan to stay at your first full-time job, all other things equal? If you have already accepted your first full-time job, how long did you stay with that company?

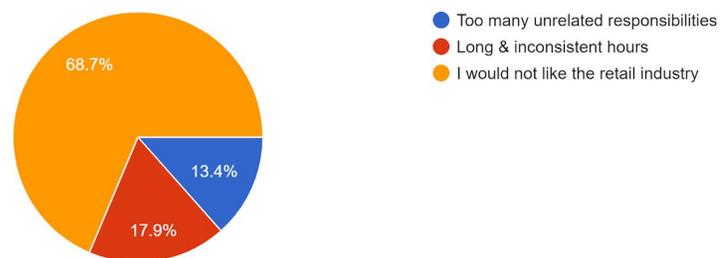
85 responses



While most respondents were looking for work that contributes to the greater good of the world that they would enjoy, they were also focused on looking for careers in which they could advance quickly. As such, most responses indicated that the average participant did not plan to stay with their first job for a period of more than five years. The coexistence of these two themes within our survey responses indicates that while Sherwin's strategy of internal promotion is essential and may be enticing to potential candidates, it is just as important that the company is marketing their positions as careers that provide a tangible benefit to the world. Survey research also indicated that 78 percent of respondents were not interested in the retail industry, primarily because of the work typically associated with the retail industry (e.g. a broad range of responsibilities).

#### Why would you not be interested in managing a retail store?

67 responses



#### **In-Store Interview**

Our team met with Lauren Kraska, a recruiter for Sherwin-Williams, and Jessica Kirr, a store manager at a Sherwin retail location in Stow, to discuss the experience of a Sherwin-Williams store manager. Jessica was a University of Akron graduate who had discovered the position with Sherwin-Williams through a career fair. She stated that it took a few

months for her to move from a part-time position into the MTP program, indicating that Sherwin-Williams provides much opportunity for advancement within the company. This is supported by the fact that Lauren mentioned that ninety percent of promotions happen internally, and thus many store managers are “lost” when they move up to the corporate level. As both of our two other methods of primary research and also our secondary research on millennials found, this is an important factor to the job candidates who will eventually make up the bulk of the U.S. workforce.

When discussing the Management Training Program versus the Trainee Assistant Manager program with Lauren, it was stated they are essentially the same program training and benefits wise, with the exception of monetary compensation because Sherwin intends to reward those who obtain four-year degrees. Lauren also noted that in regards to recruitment for the TAM program, they looked for people who worked in tough industries without post-secondary degrees. This includes industries like food service or other retail jobs, where there is a heavy workload and many people who do not necessarily have a higher education.

A final key point made by Jessica was about work-life balance. A lot of our secondary research showed that millennials put a big emphasis on wanting work-life balance. Jessica stated that her work-life balance was much better as an assistant manager than as a store manager. However, she also noted that being a store manager is rewarding, and she does have a lot of recruiters reaching out to her weekly because they see the value in work she does. Lauren, who achieved her position as HR Recruitment Specialist after traversing through the MTP program. Additionally, working as an MTP provided Lauren with a great deal of responsibility and room

to grow, as she stated that she “was basically running [her] own business at the age of 23, under the protection of Sherwin-Williams.”

### **Primary Research Implications**

Across all three primary research methods, we found that most respondents were looking for more than just one single factor in their search for a career. As such, this implies that employers need to offer a holistic range of employee packages to attract the most talented job candidates, including non-monetary benefits such as paid time off. Additionally, we found across the board that the youngest generations of the U.S. workforce are primarily focused in 1.) working in a field they are passionate about and 2.) finding opportunities to advance and grow. When looking at these findings through the lens of Sherwin-Williams in particular, it is clear that Sherwin needs to market their management programs in ways that both emphasize the entrepreneurship of the positions Sherwin has to offer and the opportunities for advancement that are apparent in the S-W chain of command. Furthermore, the results of the primary research imply that Sherwin-Williams needs to connect with passionate candidates early on in their careers so as to teach them all that the company has to offer to both employees and society as a whole, thus encouraging passion within their work.

### **Limitations of Primary Research**

After collecting and analyzing the data from our multiple primary research methods, there were several limitations that needed to be taken into account. Sample size, financial resources, peer influence, intimidation, and time management were our primary limitations.

The sample size of our focus group study was limited to who we could recruit as volunteers anonymously on campus. We wanted to survey students from the University of Akron

since that is a large recruitment pool for Sherwin-Williams. We received six volunteers who were incentivized with food and Amazon gift cards. This sample size is a limitation because it is unrealistic to believe that the mindsets of our six volunteers represents the entire population of University of Akron, or the mindset of all college graduates. Our survey sample size was also limited to those in our networks. Our team sent it out on social media and to our family and friends, who shared it with those they know. This only resulted in 85 responses, which again is unrealistic to believe it represents an entire population.

Our financial resources were limited to what was budgeted for each team in this project. Research plans and strategies were planned based on this budget. With a larger budget our team would be able to conduct more extensive research, and potentially more focus groups to reach a larger portion of the population.

Peer influence primarily affected focus group participants. The challenge with a focus group is people are afraid to conflict others' opinions and responses, so not all answers may be accurate. If one participant feels strongly about something, there is the potential for them to intimidate other participants into agreeing with them without meaning to.

The in-store interviews provided a lot of information from employees who have actually worked in the setting and environment we were researching. The issue with in-store interviews was the employee intimidation factor. Employees may be afraid to be completely honest because that is their job and talking bad about it may reflect poorly on them and the company. Fear of retaliation from the store manager or Sherwin-Williams must be taken into account when analyzing the data collected from employee interviews.

Our final limitation was time management. Our team was comprised of five college students who are full-time students and work full-time. Starting out on a year-long project was daunting at first, however we created a time and established a good pace for the project. As we progressed in this project, we learned how to better manage our time.. Overall, we are proud of the research we executed.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

In addressing Sherwin-Williams' problem of employee and recruitment and retention, we saw throughout both our primary and secondary research that the biggest factors that affect employee recruitment and retention were "Compensation/Benefits Packages" and "Job Satisfaction." As it relates to Sherwin-Williams, we believe that because the company already offers very competitive compensation in comparison to the rest of the industry, employees most likely leave because they are unsatisfied with their work. As a result, we have come up with three innovative recommendations to this problem that we feel may solve Sherwin-Williams' turnover challenges:

#### **Innovation Recommendation #1: Expanding the TAM Program**

Our first solution involves Sherwin-Williams expanding their TAM program, which is the company's equivalent of the MTP program for people without college degrees. The reasoning for this is that people who have college degrees are typically considered more valuable by all companies and are more likely to have multiple job offerings for different types of companies right out of college. Additionally, if Sherwin-Williams is not a candidate's first preference, they may only be taking the job as a "fallback" until they can find something better.

For these reasons, while they could possibly be better employees, job candidates with college degrees will be more difficult to both recruit and retain.

For those with only a high school education however, working for Sherwin-Williams offers an excellent opportunity. Sherwin-Williams is a large Fortune 500 Company with above average pay and benefits that has extensive opportunities for professional growth and development. These aspects of the job are something that is not always offered in other jobs to people without college degrees. Therefore, we believe that non-degreed workers will be more excited about the opportunity to work for Sherwin-Williams, and will therefore be easier to both attract and retain.

Also, while employees who go through the TAM program may not be as educated as their MTP counterparts, they still receive the same training and professional opportunities. Furthermore, many people never obtain a college education for financial reasons, family obligations, etc... rather than simply not being smart enough. If Sherwin-Williams is able to find candidates who demonstrate the right intangible qualities such as being smart, motivated, and passionate about their work, among others, we believe that these candidates have just as much potential to be trained and become highly successful Sherwin-Williams employees.

In order to actually increase the size of the TAM program, we would like to propose that Sherwin-Williams expand the program to students who are still in high school. Many high school students work while in school, and working a retail job at a paint store is well within the capabilities of most high school students. By actively seeking current high school students, Sherwin-Williams will be able to get an early start recruiting and vetting candidates that have the potential to continue working for the company long-term. They will also benefit because students

that start with Sherwin-Williams, for example, when they're 16, will already have 2 years of experience working for the company by the time they graduate from high school at age 18.

The other advantage of recruiting high school students is that Sherwin-Williams can help provide an opportunity for those students to go to college when they otherwise might not have the means. This not only benefits the employees, but the company as well by creating a more educated workforce. By implementing a scholarship program or work-while-in-school program, Sherwin-Williams may be able to help support employees who are interested in obtaining a college education and who demonstrate an interest in staying with the company long-term.

The method we are proposing to begin recruiting high school age students is for Sherwin-Williams to partner with certain career development programs that are offered in high schools. One of the largest programs offered to high school students is the Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA) Program. DECA teaches students real-world skills such as how to interact with other professionals, dealing with customers, money management, and many other skills through hands-on experience.

For example, at Firestone High School in Akron, the DECA program partners with Acme Grocery Stores. Students will go to traditional school for the first half of their day, and then leave to go to work at Acme during the second half of their day. By doing this, the students benefit by working and making money while also learning professional skills; the employer benefits by having laborers to work in their stores. Employers can also benefit because the students they receive are typically good workers since both the school and employer hold the students accountable.

Since Sherwin-Williams is such a large company with so many retail locations, we believe they would be an excellent company to partner with programs such as the DECA program. In addition to the DECA Program, we would also recommend looking into the Junior Achievement Program, as well as generally advertising the TAM program in high schools.

### **Innovation Recommendation #2: Sherwin EDGE Mentor Program**

Our second innovative solution focuses on creating a college based mentoring program which will work to foster a recruitment pipeline for the Sherwin-Williams Management Training Program. To fulfill this goal of expanding the MTP program which will increase the quality of employees that are recruited and eventually retained, we have developed the Sherin EDGE Mentor program. The Sherwin EDGE Mentor program begins with recruiting a student to the EDGE Program, and after going through the EDGE program and graduating from college, the student is recruited to the MTP program. The mentor is a current Sherwin-Williams store manager or assistant store manager.

EDGE stands for Entrepreneurial, Developmental, Goal-Oriented, and Experiential. These serve as the main tenets of the Mentor program. The EDGE program seeks to foster entrepreneurial skills and change the stigma from “having just another career in retail,” to “being an entrepreneur,” which sounds more attractive to college students. As we saw in our secondary research, college graduates just do not see a retail management career as being a fulfilling career. However, as seen in our focus group results, if we can paint the idea of running your own small business as opposed to just working another retail job, then willing entrepreneurs will be interested in a retail management position at Sherwin-Williams.

Communicating this message is crucial, that is where the Developmental piece of the EDGE program comes in. We recommend that Sherwin target students who have a Sophomore or Junior standing. This is because most Freshmen are overwhelmed just trying to adapt to a new way of life, and most seniors either already have a career lined up or already know what they want in a career. Sophomores and Juniors are at a key developmental stage because they are starting to move past their core classes and exploring career options. This would also give the Sherwin mentor more time with the mentee to really create a lasting professional relationship.

EDGE is structured to be a goal-based program, so that is where the Goal-Oriented portion of the program is implemented. The mentee is expected to own the program and the experience, with the mentor acting as a guide. Current store managers have a lot on their plate, so we do not expect them to act as a manager to the student. The student will have to take the initiative in completing milestones that are assigned by the mentor. Milestones include anything from building a resume to doing an analysis of the current performance of a retail store, to giving a mock performance review of an employee. These milestones should be designed to establish an effective mix of mock store management functions and professional development.

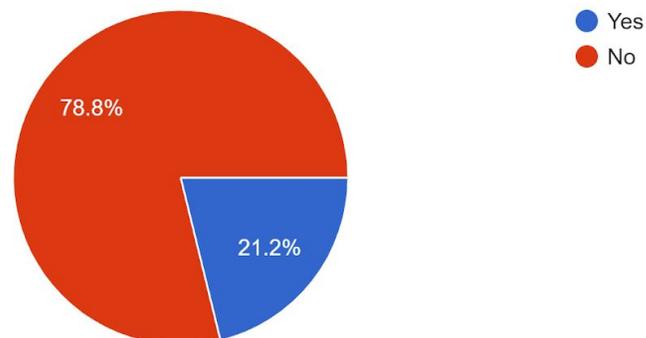
The last part of the EDGE program, Experiential, is aimed at providing a valuable learning experience to mentees through real world applications. This can be accomplished through milestones as mentioned above, or through store and company site visits. The idea is not to have the student complete free work for the company, but to have the student learn from the work that the company does. This would be an important boundary to establish in the program. Students who enjoy the real world experiences and the work that is done in a retail management

role, are more likely to be satisfied with their retail job and remain retained in a retail management role.

The rationale for starting a program as involved as this one is stems from our primary and secondary research findings. Specifically, in regard to the effects that job satisfaction and compensation have on recruitment and retention. Competitive starting pay and benefits have proven not to be enough to attract and retain college graduates to the MTP program. However, job satisfaction has a large impact on turnover, and most college graduates are not satisfied with a career in retail management. This stems from having a broad array of responsibilities that lie outside of the employees satisfying interests and the image of a retail management position being an unappealing career path for most college graduates. In fact, in our survey, we found that the vast majority of college students surveyed do not find managing a retail store location to be interesting. This data is best reflected in the figure below.

### Would managing a retail store location interest you?

85 responses



The idea that approximately 80% of college students are not interested in a career in retail management is certainly a threat to recruiting and retaining quality candidates to the MTP program. However, we believe that the real opportunity for Sherwin-Williams lies with the approximately 20% of students who indicated that they would find interest in managing a retail location. Sherwin would attract this minority of students who would likely find satisfaction from a career in retail through the Sherwin EDGE Mentor program by partnering with colleges and universities across the country.

As stated before, the mentor's involvement would be crucial, but not overwhelming. Any participating employee would receive an annual bonus of \$1,000.00 per mentee assigned to compensate them for the additional time and effort spent on the EDGE program. The mentee would be required to hold a monthly phone or video call with their mentor to review the previous milestone, check-in on progress, and assign a new milestone. This call would last about 15-30 minutes, and would be scheduled by the mentee. Similarly, the mentee would be required to hold an in-person casual meeting once per semester with their mentor to review their overall progress in the program. This would also be the responsibility of the mentee to schedule and would last about an hour. In addition to the monthly calls and semesterly meetings, the mentee will be required to complete the milestones established in the monthly calls, which should take about an hour to complete. The goal is to provide a substantive experiential learning program without overwhelming the mentor or mentee, as both are already very involved at different levels.

There are many benefits that Sherwin-Williams can expect after creating an implementing the Sherwin EDGE Mentor program. Benefits to the firms recruitment strategies include cutting down on inefficiencies in regards to time and money. Human Resources will save

time that would normally be used for all-day career fairs and other recruitment events that may not be as effective in attracting the 20% of students that are interested in a retail management career. Costs saved include wages lost from staffing ineffective recruiting events, and the high cost of recruiting in general. Another benefit to recruitment is the increasing quality of the candidates that are being recruited through the program. They are all students that are interested in managing a retail location and they are pursuing a degree in higher education. This will increase the education level and knowledge level of the company and lead to further future innovations.

Benefits to retention are similar in that because we are attracting a workforce that is satisfied with this type of a position, they are more likely to not fall victim to a feeling of dissatisfaction from the work that they are doing. This eventually translates into a more motivated, productive, and all around happier workforce, which equates to lower and less frequent turnover for Sherwin-Williams. As mentioned previously, the implementation of the Sherwin EDGE Mentor program also leads to a higher educated workforce that Sherwin is able to retain, which is vital to the continued success of the brand and the company. A satisfied workforce also means a boost for the firm's current referral program. Employees are more likely to refer qualified candidates if they themselves enjoy the work and enjoy where they are working.

### **Innovation Recommendation #3: Goal-Based Pay Program**

The final solution our team developed is a goal-based pay program that focuses on driving the profit sharing deeper into the company. The program incentives would be based on employee performance, as well as company overall performance. This would ensure that

Sherwin-Williams was rewarding their employees, yet not paying out bonuses if the company was not seeing progress. The program would depend on Sherwin-Williams providing updates on company and store performance weekly. A huge issue amongst retail stores is they are unaware of how the company is doing. Understanding where the company is headed can help managers better run their stores. Each weekly performance spreadsheet would include a year-to-date net profit and key figures of that number, the bonus they have earned thus far, and the opportunity to add views and insight on the performance. Additionally, managers would have weekly meetings where they can share results, good or bad, and determine a plan of action. Finally, updating projected profits and bonuses weekly and sharing those numbers with all employees will boost awareness of store performance.

An example of this program being successful can be seen in the company One Week Bath, a bathroom remodeling service in Los Angeles, California. The company established a goal budget for net profits for all four quarters of the year, as well as the equivalent bonus pay that would be awarded if those numbers were reached. One Week Bath recorded the bonuses of their employees for an entire year, and it showed the goal-based pay program working effectively.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
1	<b>Bonus Plan</b>												
2		Q1	Q1		Q2 YTD	Q2 YTD		Q3 YTD	Q3 YTD		Full Year	Full Year	
3		Net	Bonus in		Net	Bonus in		Net	Bonus in		Net	Bonus in	
4		Profit	Paid Hours		Profit	Paid Hours		Profit	Paid Hours		Profit	Paid Hours	
14		\$ 108,062	15		\$ 216,124	30		\$ 324,186	59		\$ 432,248	99	
15		\$ 118,062	17		\$ 236,124	34		\$ 354,186	68		\$ 472,248	113	
16		\$ 128,062	19		\$ 256,124	38		\$ 384,186	77		\$ 512,248	128	
17	Budget	\$ 138,062	22		\$ 276,124	43		\$ 414,186	86		\$ 552,248	144	
18		\$ 148,062	24		\$ 296,124	48		\$ 444,186	96		\$ 592,248	160	
19		\$ 158,062	27		\$ 316,124	53		\$ 474,186	107		\$ 632,248	178	
20		\$ 168,062	29		\$ 336,124	59		\$ 504,186	117		\$ 672,248	196	
21		\$ 178,062	32		\$ 356,124	64		\$ 534,186	129	59	\$ 712,248	215	
22		\$ 188,062	35		\$ 376,124	70	41	\$ 564,186	141		\$ 752,248	235	94
23		\$ 198,062	38		\$ 396,124	77		\$ 594,186	153		\$ 792,248	255	
24		\$ 208,062	42		\$ 416,124	83		\$ 624,186	166		\$ 832,248	277	
25		\$ 218,062	45		\$ 436,124	90		\$ 654,186	180		\$ 872,248	299	

Image Source: Forbes

The first quarter saw a bonus of 29 hours of pay, the second was a bonus of 41 hours of pay, the third quarter saw a bonus of 59 hours of pay, and the final quarter saw 94 hours in bonus pay (Case and Fotsch 2015). These numbers show that the visibility of the program gives employees an incentive to better manage themselves and their staff. This bonus program is distinguished because it is transparent and does not depend on an executive's assessment. Employees are aware, in advance, of what they need to do in order to reach a specific bonus level.

Sherwin-Williams is a much larger company than One Week Bath, so the bonuses would be based on stores and the company as a whole. Additionally, the program One Week Bath used was based on hourly pay. For those employees on a salary, a pay scale would have to be developed separately from hourly employees. Developing this program would allow employees to connect their performance with rewards, motivate them to do better, and boost their job satisfaction.

The goal-based payment program could involve other forms of compensation as well. During both our primary and secondary research, we found that money was not the sole factor that retained employees. One of the biggest compensation options the group emphasized as personally important was paid time off. Our focus group participants stated they loved traveling and having time to spend with their families. The opportunity to earn extra paid vacation days as an incentive was overall well-received amongst the participants. The second compensation option was educational opportunities. "Big benefits are less important in comparison to the opportunity to grow. I could make more at a different company, but my current position has a lot of growth and education opportunities," one focus group participant stated. As such, providing the opportunity to attend educational conferences, special training, experiences for career

development, and other similar developmental programs is a viable avenue for attracting the most talented candidates. Finally, job satisfaction was the overarching factor that participants said would make or break a job opportunity. If they were not satisfied with or passionate about their work, the money was not worth the sacrifice. Recognizing managers and employees who go above and beyond is an essential way for employees to know their hard work is being acknowledged and they are appreciated.

In regards to recruitment, the goal-based pay program would also result in increasing the incentive for the referral program. After speaking with Kristen Zaluski, the employee relations manager for Sherwin-Williams, last November, she stated that the current referral program awarded the employee approximately \$100 if the candidate is hired and passes a 90-day minimum. In comparison to other companies, such as Smuckers who offers \$1,500 per referral, this is an extremely low incentive. By raising the incentive to \$500-\$1,000 per referred employee who is hired and is employed for at least 90 days, employees would be properly incentivized to refer higher quality candidates and thus improve overall retention within the company.

Overall, the goal-based pay program would focus on driving the profit sharing deeper into the firm. Recruitment and retention would go up because there are incentives and recognition to those employees who work hard. Managers and employees will see the results of their efforts and be driven to continue working hard. An indirect outcome of this program is job satisfaction, which was one of the most important factors in a job for our focus group participants.

### **Summary of Recommendations**

The three innovative recommendations that we have proposed to Sherwin-Williams to help resolve their recruitment and retention issues are as follows:

1. Grow the TAM Program by expanding opportunities to students while they're still in high school. This will provide a larger pool of candidates who are more likely to be committed to working for the company long-term.
2. Create the Sherwin EDGE program, a mentor/mentee program that provides students the opportunity to learn and grow with the company while still in college. Doing so will provide Sherwin-Williams contact with job candidates while still in college, and give them a chance to show candidates the many rewarding aspects of a career with Sherwin-Williams.
3. Create a Goal-Based Pay program by driving the profit-sharing plan deeper into the company and increasing the size of employee referral bonuses. By doing this, employees will feel more motivated to work where they feel they have control over how well they are compensated and have extra incentive to find people to refer to the company who will stay long-term.

To start implementing these programs, Sherwin-Williams may want to take the following steps for each program:

1. Expanding the TAM Program - Sherwin-Williams will want to begin to look into what partnership opportunities exist with high schools. While we have recommended opportunities with National Organizations such as DECA and Junior Achievement, there

may be smaller regional and local programs with which Sherwin-Williams could partner, which may be better investigated by the retail locations that would ultimately employ the students.

2. The Sherwin EDGE Program - Sherwin-Williams will need to first look internally for candidates within the company that are dedicated enough that they can really commit to mentoring a student and are willing to continually follow-up with students despite the busy schedules of both the mentor and mentee. Once potential mentors are identified, the program could begin to be advertised by reaching out to partnership schools.
3. Implementing a Goal-Based Pay Program and Increasing Referral Bonuses - Sherwin-Williams will need to work with the company's accountants to figure out where the financial resources for the program can come from. Accountants will also need to analyze financial resources to determine what referral bonus amount is manageable for the company financially, but still provides employees with significant incentive to recruit other employees. In regard to the goal-based pay program, it is possible that more detailed accounting would be necessary to track the effect lower-level employees are having on sales as well as determine when and how often bonuses are paid out.

Each of these solutions will reinforce the aspects of a job that are most important to employees, which are making sure that they are satisfied with their job and feel they are compensated well for the work that they do. With effective implementation, we believe each of these solutions, independently or all together, will help contribute to a higher overall success rate

for Sherwin-Williams in regard to the recruitment and retention of high quality employees in the future.

### **Thoughts on Future Research**

Notwithstanding the primary research conducted and subsequent results found with Sherwin-Williams specifically in mind, it may be beneficial for future research to look to other industries' methods of recruitment. Industries that generally have a negative connotation of the work and/or hours associated with the career, such as public accounting, could be of particular interest to future researchers on methods of recruitment and retention. In terms of specific areas of recruitment and retention that could use more analysis from future research, hard data on job satisfaction, such as how many and how much current employees are satisfied with their careers, is lacking a wide array of insight. Additionally, while there is some analysis of social media usage effectiveness in recruiting in the current literature, future research could focus on what exact forms and functionalities of social media would entice job seekers to seek and ultimately stay with a company. Above all, future research of recruitment and retention should focus on a holistic view of what makes employees decide to become or stay employed with companies, including generational trends, individual factors of employee benefits and satisfaction, and the broader economic and social systems in which these factors exist.

### References

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*\*Graphs are from the Sherwin-Eights honors project presentation survey*