

TACKLING DRIVER TURNOVER

WITH FLEET MANAGER TRAINING



People
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Headquartered in Rocky Mount, North Carolina, [Eagle Transport Corporation](#) began operating in 1969 with four trucks. They now own more than 440 power units and operate out of 22 terminals located throughout the eastern United States.

After nearly 50 years of business, Eagle Transport remains committed to their mission statement: To Be the Best! They're focused on planning and developing ways to improve the company, the service they provide for customers, and the work environment they create for drivers.

.....
*Eagle Transport has
been shipping goods
for almost 50 years.*
.....

Respect and management issues created company challenges. In spite of their commitment to being the best, Eagle Transport—like many trucking companies—found they were experiencing challenges with high rates of driver turnover. According to the [American Trucking Associations](#),

turnover at companies has risen above 90 percent and the numbers are increasing across the industry at alarming rates.

But rather than ignoring the issue, Eagle Transport decided to investigate. After conducting a company-wide engagement assessment, they compared the responses from current drivers with the responses they received during exit interviews. Eagle gained valuable insights from the comparison, and used the data to identify two primary reasons why drivers were choosing to leave:

- *Leadership/Terminal Management (11% of drivers)*
- *Respect/Treatment: (11% of drivers)*

Drivers who left also cited low levels of trust and the ineffective flow of information as reasons why they weren't satisfied. In addition, drivers said they didn't feel like they were heard, valued, or recognized for a job well done.

The team at Eagle Transport knew that in order to address turnover issues they had to find a way to improve management practices and ensure their drivers felt respected.

Experts Enter the Picture with Fleet Manager Training

Eagle Transport's expertise is in hauling petroleum and chemical products, but when it came to tackling their turnover issues, the leadership team knew they couldn't do it alone. They needed a partner that had experience working with the transportation industry and expert knowledge of organizational assessments, performance management tools, and data-driven workforce retention solutions.

They brought in [People Element](#) and worked together to identify an approach that would not only help uncover the root cause but also provide solutions and tools to address the issues. The team at Eagle Transport took their goal of reducing turnover seriously. From senior leadership down to management, everyone was engaged, involved, and committed to the process.

By using the data collected from exit interviews and engagement assessments for Eagle Transport, People Element delivered the Fleet Manager Training Program. All Eagle Transport terminal managers completed the program during the summer of 2015. The training focused on several key areas to optimize the effectiveness of fleet managers:

- *Coaching for Productivity*
- *Accountability*
- *Engagement*
- *Personality Styles*
- *Retention*

“The terminal, district, and regional managers took the time and effort to stretch and learn new skills to do their jobs,” says Ron Thomas, Vice President of Human Resources at Eagle Transport. “During the sessions I heard many comments such as, ‘I tried this, and I would’ve never tried it before.’ That’s a wonderful vote of confidence in our efforts.”



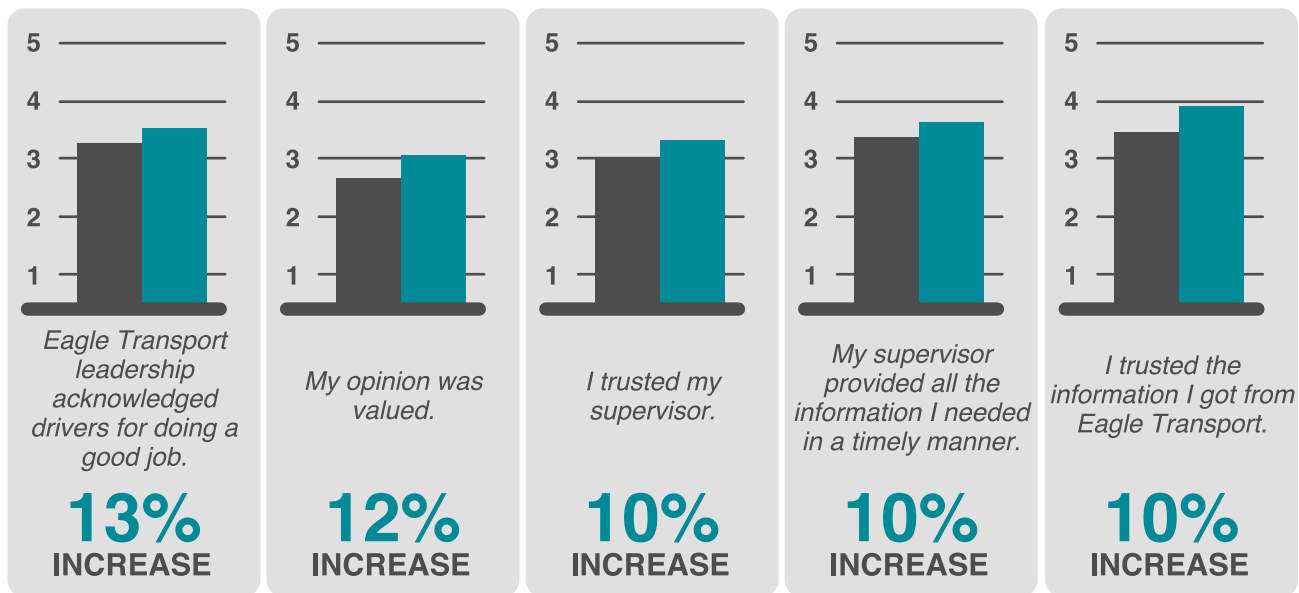
After 1 year, the cost of turnover had decreased by 21.15%.

The investment and hard work from everyone at Eagle Transport paid off. Not only did the training help terminal, district, and regional managers learn and demonstrate new skills, the improved management practices resulted in a profound improvement in turnover metrics.

As the follow-up surveys conducted by People Element demonstrate (see graphic), every area of concern identified during the exit interviews saw a significant improvement.

Top Truck Driver Survey Responses

KEY: ■ 2014 ■ 2015 1=DISAGREE 5=AGREE



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“The results speak for themselves; we saw dramatic improvements in trust, information flow, and just the feeling that drivers were being heard and valued. We firmly believe this training had an effect on these results,” says Ron Thomas.

Thanks to the investment in training their managers, Eagle Transport also realized improvements in turnover costs. In 2014, the cost of turnover was \$1.7M. A year later, after the Fleet Manager Training program was in place, Eagle Transport's cost of turnover decreased by 21.15% to \$1.3M. The training investment delivered significant results.

Eagle Transport continues to expand and train their management base going forward.

As Eagle Transport continues to expand and train their manager base, they are incorporating the Fleet Manager Training modules and recorded sessions as part of their standard process.

“Is it painful? Yes, but the proof is in the data...it makes us all better,” says Ron Thomas.

Always committed to being the best, the ongoing expectation is for every Terminal Manager to go through the Fleet Manager Training program. The entire team at Eagle Transport understands firsthand the value—and positive results—that come from doing everything in their power to make leaders better communicators and managers.



The Eagle Transport leadership team.