

MTA Carrier Spotlight:

Commitment, Purpose, Culture. How Employee Ownership Unites at Long Haul Trucking

Since opening their doors in 1986, Long Haul Trucking has found purpose in being a place where some of the nation's greatest truck drivers can find a home. For years, Long Haul Trucking has been synonymous with beautiful show trucks decked out with every piece of technology imaginable, attracting some of the safest, most professional drivers on the roads. As Long Haul's driver count has continued to grow, and business only becomes busier, they realized that the only way to retain and continue operating some of the best drivers and equipment in the industry is to surround it with the best office employees possible. In 2013, when Long Haul made the first move in converting to be an Employee Owned Company, (ESOP) they doubled down on culture, and have been laser focused on hiring only the highest level of professionals possible to keep their fleet rolling as strong as ever. Since establishing their company as being an ESOP, the Long Haul Trucking team has proven time and time again that they share a commitment in making the company one to be proud of with the purpose of creating the best culture for drivers, clients and the industry possible.

Being an ESOP is something Long Haul Trucking has taken a lot of pride in and it has helped build an internal culture based on commitment. Since it was first appraised for Employee Ownership in 2013, their price of stock has seen a growth of 1550%. "One of the biggest game changers in my opinion is the level of employee commitment that's displayed daily. Our people really take pride in meeting and exceeding their personal goals and as a team it's proven to do well for us all." (CFO, Tiffani Steinke). Employee commitment is something that has become a part of Long Haul's culture and a big part of how the company reaches success. Commitment is a trait that has formed in large part through the ESOP and ownership mentality as they have been fortunate to witness individuals at all levels of the

organization go out of their way to help clear the path of success for others. Safety Director Susan Brown also made a comment on the level of employee commitment that she sees at Long Haul when stating, "The level of employee commitment I have experienced working for an ESOP company is not like anything I have experienced at any other company. People are ready to step it up when they know they have a personal stake in the company." Commitment in large has played a major role in the advancement of Long Haul and it is clear they feel fortunate to have a group of teammates committed to ensuring that the company continues to do well for its people, clients and drivers for years to come.

Along with a strong sense of employee commitment, another positive trait that Long Haul has seen from its workers daily while being employee owned is a sense of purpose for what Long Haul does. "Everyone seems to be more mindful of their work effort since we are all part owners and our end goal is to make the company more profitable." (Shop Manager, Rob Winter) Studies have proven that companies which operate as an ESOP tend to be more successful because the employees are motivated by the rewards that their hard work contributes towards for growth and stock value. Long Haul has been fortunate to see the company grow organically since first converting to an ESOP, based predominately on the hard work, desire and purpose that people find in their careers there every day. At the core of their day to day work is a shared commitment that employees must do well for the good of the company, drivers and people. Long Haul likes to think the company isn't the kind of outfit where people show up to just do a job and go home, but where they arrive to use their own skills and strengths at the best of their abilities to create a winning result for everyone involved. Part of their mission includes creating a first class expe-



rience for clients and in turn an opportunity for drivers to have a career full of great opportunity and success. Becoming an ESOP has helped Long Haul spread a shared sense of motivation across the board for all employees to buy into and take ownership in. "I feel that working for an ESOP corporation makes people feel like they actually have skin in the game and in return makes them give it their all, which makes the company more successful in the end. It also creates more of that team atmosphere which helps with the ups and downs of the daily grind and everyone seems to stay on the same path which is just win no matter what it takes. Failure is not an option for an ESOP corporation, give it your all." (Vice President of Fleet Management, Josh Hainstock)

Commitment and purpose are two significant traits that have been formed through becoming an ESOP and a company full of employee owners. Second to none, however, is the culture that's been developed at Long Haul throughout the years and the way that it anchors their values in place for any new individual who joins the team. "We are eager to remain at the top of our field in safety, retention, service and technology, but even more important, we refuse to compromise the values that the culture of our company stands for. Being trustworthy, ethical and fair are just as important to the success of our company as anything else. We've always had the motto of "running on the power of promises kept." And keeping our promises has done well for our people throughout the years. Our ESOP endorses the fact that we need to create a workplace where

people want to be, and our team focuses daily on doing just that." (Jason Michels, CEO) Another pillar that's stood tall in the company's culture since becoming an ESOP is the way that commitment and purpose have helped their employees focus on a shared goal with a desire to create as strong of a company possible. When you have a group of over 300 drivers and 70 employees all rowing the boat in the same direction, it's amazing what you can achieve!

Employee ownership at Long Haul Trucking has proven to be a major factor of their success and has brought out a sense of commitment, pride and focus on culture in each member of their team. Being an ESOP is a major part of what makes Long Haul Trucking special and it's something that all their employees have found value in. "People are always looking for that stand out in an organization that screams 'work here!' and that is really what an ESOP does. Although people aren't often very familiar with what an ESOP is, the further you dig, the more stand out it becomes. It's not only the company investing in you, but you are investing in yourself and setting yourself up for your future." (Jessica Harff, HR) It's clear Long Haul is proud to have a team of individuals that have bought into the employee owned mentality and they can't wait to continue sharing the rewards for years to come. **TM**

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