

# THE RESOURCE

# HR INSIGHTS

VOL. XI, ISSUE II

magazine

*from the eyes of industry leaders*

## THE BEST RECRUITMENT METRICS TO TRACK IN 2022

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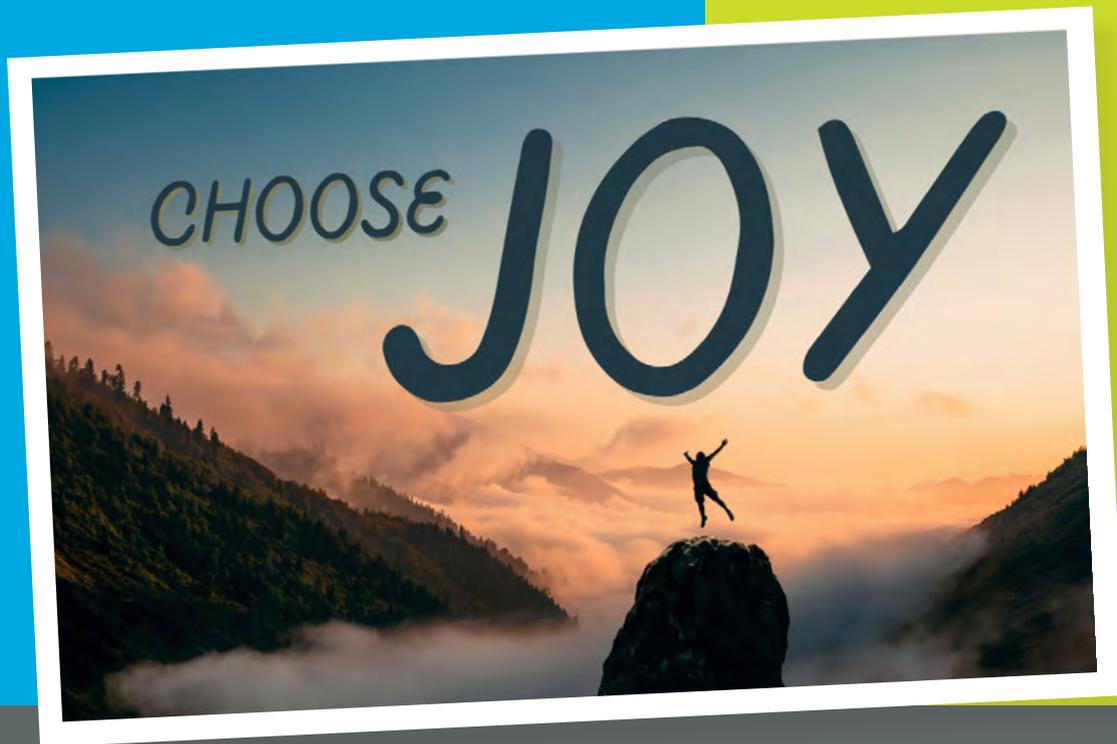
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Using KPIs to Improve  
HR Strategy

Tapping Into Purpose

8 Effective Employee  
Retention Strategies

# **Our Mantra for 2022** ...and our Challenge for You



**Don't wait for things to get easier, simpler, better. Life will always be complicated. Learn to be happy right now. Otherwise, you'll run out of time.**

# **THE RESOURCE**

# HR INSIGHTS

Magazine



**VOL. XI, ISSUE II**

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# 5 TRENDS THAT ARE TRANSFORMING WORK IN 2022 (and Beyond)

BY SARAH BLOZNALIS

Last spring, many of the predictions for the upcoming year were centered around the “new normal.” With the rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine getting underway, the end of the pandemic seemed to be in sight. In the wake of the social and political unrest that followed the murder of George Floyd, business leaders promised to help ease that unrest by making diversity, equity, and inclusion top priorities for 2021.

Unfortunately, the vaccine did not bring a quick end to the pandemic as everyone had hoped. Nor has the social and political unrest subsided. Instead, the business outlook was further complicated by the rise of hybrid work and the phenomenon that’s become known as the Great Resignation, both of which will persist in 2022 as employees who are done with “business as usual” (e.g., burnout, meager benefits, unappreciative bosses) demand more flexibility and more equitable and empathetic treatment from their employers.

Rather than a return to some kind of “normal,” 2021 turned out to be “the year of transition”<sup>1</sup> to whatever comes next. But what will 2022 bring? Based on an extensive survey of executives and an analysis of data collected from thousands of workers around the world, here are five key trends that will influence the workplace in 2022 (and beyond).

## REIMAGINING CULTURE FOR HYBRID WORK IS ESSENTIAL.

The sudden shift to remote work at the start of the pandemic quickly proved that employees could be productive working outside the office. Although remote work offers a plethora of benefits, most organizations (and many employees) are not quite ready to let go of the office completely. Therefore, many companies are turning to a hybrid work model that blends in-office work and remote work.

For hybrid work to truly become part of the “new normal,” however, business leaders must be cognizant of how this shift will affect organizational culture. Steve Pemberton of Workhuman explains, “As the majority of organizations continue to operate in a hybrid environment, business leaders will need to continue investing time, resources, and effort in programs that help build and maintain company culture and that help humans stay connected, productive, and engaged.”<sup>2</sup>

## INTERNAL MOBILITY AND BOOMERANG EMPLOYEES WILL BECOME THE NORM.

For employees and employers alike, the Great Resignation has created both opportunities and challenges. Employers have watched turnover levels spike, leaving holes in their organizational structures and damaging their bottom lines.

To break this high-cost cycle, organizations should start looking inward in 2022: rather than fill vacated roles through external hires, they should focus on internal mobility and provide current employees with the training and skills needed to move into more senior roles. Just as retaining customers is easier (and cheaper) than replacing them, the same can be said for talent.

In general, employees have weathered the Great Resignation better than organizations have, with most workers seeing it as a positive change in the workplace. But some workers who left their employers in search of something better are beginning to realize the grass isn't always greener on the other side. Because of this, 2022 will likely see an increase in “boomerang employees”—past employees who return to a company after some time (months or even years) away. Whether those employees left to pursue a new opportunity elsewhere, to care for a sick family member, or for some other reason, the experience they gained during their absence and their prior connection to the organization will benefit both them and their employers.

## RECRUITMENT MUST ADAPT TO THE NEW WORLD OF WORK.

It's clear that old methods of recruitment no longer suffice. Whether or not the Great Resignation continues, employees are likely to have the upper hand over organizations for some time. Workers want to feel valued by their employers, which means they will no longer acquiesce to going through ten rounds of interviews for a position with meager benefits at a company with no workplace culture.

And although salary will continue to be an important factor, it certainly won't be the only thing candidates take into consideration when evaluating job opportunities. Company culture, employee experience, corporate social responsibility, and flexibility are becoming more important than ever, and potential employees will no longer settle for any less.

## DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION (DEI) EFFORTS REMAIN A TOP PRIORITY.

Discrimination based on race, gender, and identity has long been part of the workplace, and in the past many organizations chose not to take a stand against it. After racial violence dominated the headlines across the country in 2020, however, corporations could no longer avoid addressing these issues, and 2021 became the year in which they publicly committed to supporting

diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace. But have companies been following through on those promises?

Results are mixed: some may have made progress in these areas, but many others have not—even though 66 percent of respondents to one survey indicated that how their organizations approached DE&I affect “their feelings about how long they plan to stay in their position.”<sup>3</sup> For organizations that don't want to risk losing two-thirds of their staff, DE&I is no longer a “nice to have” but is now a “must have.” Whether or not changes were made last year, this will be the year words must turn into actions.

## ORGANIZATIONS MUST CARE FOR THEIR PEOPLE—AND FOR THE COMMUNITY.

It's human nature for people to want to be valued and recognized for the work they do. In 2022, employees are more eager than ever to have this appreciation. Organizations looking to prevent more turnover need to build a culture of authentic gratitude to which employees will want to belong. Valuing employees has nothing to do with swag bags and pizza parties and everything to do with ensuring that employees have what they need to do their best work.

The pandemic has highlighted the importance of mental well-being in employees' professional lives and in their personal lives. Companies will be expected to step up their mental health support in 2022.

Corporate social responsibility is another issue that has become increasingly important to workers (and consumers) in recent years. In one survey, 88 percent of respondents indicated that they felt “it is no longer acceptable for companies just to make money; companies must positively impact society as well.”<sup>4</sup> With Millennials and the members of Generation Z—two generations that are loudly calling for corporations to do their part to better the world—on track to make up the majority of the workforce soon, this push for increased corporate responsibility will likely persist long after 2022.

Each of these five trends has the potential to transform work in ways that benefit everyone involved. As the business world eases in 2022, organizations, leaders, and employees must be prepared to take action in these areas, which will help shape the business landscape over the next year—and beyond. ■

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# THE BEST RECRUITMENT METRICS TO TRACK IN 2022

BY THOMAS FORSTNER



For the vast majority of hiring managers, attracting high-quality candidates is the biggest challenge they face today. Although there are plenty of metrics that recruitment teams can track when looking to capture the best talent for their businesses, some metrics are more important than others, depending on how a business defines success and health in terms of recruitment. In 2022, though, every organization should put the following seven recruitment metrics at the top of its priority list.

## HIRES-PER-MONTH AND HEAD-COUNT GROWTH

These are two of the most important metrics for recruitment teams to track. Hires-per-month is how many people a company is hiring on a monthly basis, and the head-count growth is the staffing number the company aspires to achieve over a longer period of time. These growth

targets need to be realistic and account for the size and capacity of the hiring team, as well as for market trends and the nature of the roles. (For instance, it can be unrealistic for a business to hire someone for a managerial position on a regular basis.) Both metrics can shed light on how successful an organization is at meeting its hiring and expansion goals.

## AVERAGE INTERVIEW TIME

A common mistake made when setting recruitment metrics is being too rigid about time-to-hire targets when different levels and types of roles require unique timelines. (For example, Glassdoor's study found that although the average hiring time for a waiter was 8 days, the average hiring time for a professor was 60 days.<sup>1</sup>) Given the unique circumstances of each hire, the average time to hire might be too broad of a metric. Instead of measuring the time

between the date the position was advertised and the date an offer was accepted, it can be more useful to measure the average interview time, which spans from when someone's application is received to when they have their initial interview. This metric will shed light on both the candidate's interview experience and the overall time to hire, without the need to sacrifice candidate quality for the sake of speed.

## COST PER HIRE

To calculate the cost per hire, look at factors such as how much is being paid to agencies, how much the company is spending for memberships in certain networks and for job board listings, and the salary of the recruitment team. Some businesses also include the costs associated with relocations and visas.

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## PERCENTAGE OF NEW HIRES WHO PASS PROBATION

Hiring candidates who don't stick around can drain company time and resources, so it's surprising how few businesses consider the performance of candidates post-hire as a measure of effective recruitment. By measuring the percentage of new hires who pass their probation periods, a company can quickly identify whether it's hiring the right candidates, in terms of both quality and cultural fit. This metric sheds light on how successful a company's onboarding practices are and the hiring team's ability to do excellent work, but it is equally influenced by a candidate's potential and motivation.

If a concerning number of candidates are failing their probation, it's likely that the new hires have been poorly selected or that the organization's expectations fail to align with the new hires' abilities. This can be a sign that the company needs to be clearer about its expectations of candidates before hiring them, or that the company could benefit from more extensive and rigorous recruiting processes to better predict each candidate's success.

*(Note that this metric is controversial among talent professionals, many of whom hold managers and individual employees most responsible for the success of a new hire's probation period.)*

## PERCENTAGE OF INBOUND HIRES

To determine if it's attracting the right candidates through its marketing, a company should examine where the candidates it's hiring come from and how they find the company. By tracking the number and proportion of inbound hires, an organization can get a sense of whether it's attracting the right talent with its content marketing and job advertisements. If the majority of hires are reached through outbound recruitment, it's possible that the company's target applicants either aren't encountering its outreach or simply aren't converting into hires when they do. To reduce the time and money spent sourcing candidates through outbound efforts, a company should measure the percentage of inbound hires it has coming into the organization, then (if necessary) find ways to increase this number to about 30 percent to 40 percent of hires (or 50 percent, if referrals are included as an inbound recruitment source).

## OFFER ACCEPTANCE RATE

The offer acceptance rate reflects how often a business succeeds in its goal of securing the best candidates it can. But this metric offers useful data on other areas as well. For example, a low offer acceptance rate could



indicate that a company is delivering a substandard hiring experience, that its offers aren't appealing enough, or that it takes too long to progress candidates through the hiring process. That said, it's unrealistic to aspire to achieve a perfect offer acceptance rate. Organizations that achieve this may not be sufficiently ambitious or focused in their hiring. Generally speaking, 75 percent to 85 percent is a good acceptance rate to target.

## DECIDING WHAT TO TRACK

When deciding which recruitment metrics to track, it pays to be strategic.

Although it can be tempting to try to track every recruitment metric under the sun, it's important to recognize which metrics provide only limited value or information. A better strategy is to prioritize the recruitment metrics that best align with the organization's specific overarching business goals and to keep the others on the back burner until they're needed to examine particular issues. ■

*A version of the article was originally published as a guest post on the JazzHR blog.*

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SOME METRICS ARE MORE IMPORTANT THAN OTHERS, DEPENDING ON HOW A BUSINESS DEFINES SUCCESS AND HEALTH IN TERMS OF RECRUITMENT

# Tapping Into Purpose

BY VALERIE M. GRUBB



*Everyone has a purpose.*

—DOLLY PARTON

A key aspect of a manager's job is to help employees succeed and achieve their full potential. Servant leadership is the embodiment of that perspective, and specific actions (such as training, feedback, and coaching) can support that approach. Those actions are most effective, though, when leaders first step back and take in the “big picture.”

It's easy to guide someone to finish a project or other finite task. But those tasks alone don't define someone's professional life or career. Leaders need to ask each employee these questions:

- Beyond completing project X and hitting deadline Y, what is your purpose at the organization?
- What are your goals?
- What do you want to achieve?

Unfortunately, too often, managers focus on the company's bottom line: how to maximize profits, how to cut costs, how to get more clients, how to make widgets faster, etc. Those things are important (after all, businesses are in business in order to make money!). But even though focusing on the money to the exclusion of other considerations can bring short-term financial gains, those gains usually come at a significant long-term cost. Without paying attention to and meeting employees' needs and without tapping into purpose, organizations set the stage for disengagement, dissatisfaction, and turnover. That's why the best leaders figure out how to help their employees pursue their purpose.

## Purpose: What It Is—and Who Has It

*The value of identity of course is that so often with it comes purpose.*

—RICHARD GRANT

Purpose is more than just the pursuit of a paycheck. There are some people for whom the primary motivation for working is to get paid, but it's rare to find someone who doesn't have at least one other driver aside from a salary.

Purpose can take an infinite number of forms because each individual has their own goals. For example, someone's purpose could be one (or more) of the following:

- A desire to be part of a team
- The motivation to do work that is groundbreaking and innovative
- An interest in contributing to an organization's success
- An impulse to do work that has a positive societal impact
- The satisfaction of a job well done

It's important to understand that every person can have a purpose. There's been a lot of talk in recent years about how Millennials (and now the members of Generation Z) place a high value on jobs “that have purpose.” In those contexts, “purpose” is used as a shorthand for opportunities to “make the world a better place” through volunteering, donating to nonprofits, developing environmentally friendly products and services, supporting initiatives that target certain social issues, etc.

However, this conception of purpose has two problems. First, it fails to recognize the individuality of each person: it's likely that any two individuals will have very different interests. For example, whatever their purposes are, Pat's purpose is just as important to Pat as Terry's is to Terry. Leaders who want to tap into their employees' sense of purpose need to realize (and accept) that everyone is different.

Second, this conception dismisses older generations. Generation X employees have purpose, too, as do Baby Boomers and anyone else who isn't a Millennial or from Generation Z. Although some generational “themes” do exist,

they aren't absolutes, and it's important to remember that the idea of purpose transcends generational divides. Whether that purpose lies in one of those "make the world a better place" goals or takes another form entirely; a purpose is equally accessible to anyone of any age.

## Why Is Tapping Into Purpose Important?

*The secret of success is constancy to purpose.*

—BENJAMIN DISRAELI

Purpose is what makes someone love their work and want to give it their all. Fulfilled purpose leads to happiness and engagement, which in turn can translate not only to excellent performance but also to enduring loyalty.

A purpose-driven workplace is one that enables employees to pursue activities and goals that are significant to them and provide them with meaning. Considering how much time people spend at their jobs, it makes sense that they want to find some meaning there. Unfortunately, for many people, their jobs don't have the meaning and purpose that they seek.

Right now, the business world is in the middle of a staffing crisis. For the past several years, companies have been struggling to find and hire great employees, and now they are struggling to retain the employees they already have. The pandemic is playing a big role in this: living in these challenging and uncertain times (and perhaps dealing with medical, social, or financial problems at the same time) is making many people reevaluate their lives. Employees are bailing from their jobs at such high rates that a new term has arisen to describe this specific phenomenon: the Great Resignation. It is possible to mitigate this trend, though.

First, managers should ask each employee, "What is your purpose? What do you want to accomplish?" then do what they can to support each employee's efforts to fulfill that purpose. If career advancement is someone's goal, for example, help them build their leadership skills. If an employee wants to do more innovative work, help them find (or develop) projects that give them opportunities to innovate.

Obviously "do what they can" has the modifier "within reason" attached to it. For example, if someone says that they seek purpose in efforts to improve literacy, and their organization is a steel manufacturer, it may not be possible to find ways for the employee to pursue that purpose in their role—and of course they can't expect the company to retool its core function to accommodate that goal. In this case, if they place a very high priority on doing work that has a direct impact on that purpose, perhaps a steel manufacturer isn't the best fit for them.

Whether or not an employee is able to directly pursue their purpose in their jobs, though, managers can encourage them to find it elsewhere. An employee who's interested in literacy programs, for example, might volunteer for a local literacy group (and, if the organization offers paid volunteer days, some of that volunteer time could take place during regular work hours).

Managers should have yearly conversations with their employees about their long-term personal and professional goals and discuss what opportunities exist within the organization to help them grow in one or both areas. When employees can pursue such opportunities—and learn how to make the connection between their hopes and dreams and their everyday tasks—they are likely to be more engaged (and stay longer) because they know that they are learning and growing into what they hope to become. That's the power of tapping into purpose.

## Final Thoughts

*Do your homework. Find your voice. Be authentic. And then dive in with purpose.*

—JULIE FOUDY

It's important to remember that purpose doesn't exist only in the office. Managers can't dictate what their employees do in their personal lives, but managers can encourage and support employees' efforts to pursue purpose outside the office. (And, as human beings, managers can definitely seek purpose in the nonwork aspects of their own lives—in their relationships with family and friends, in their social activities, etc.)

Good managers understand that they need to treat employees as critical—and valued—components of the organization. They also understand that employees each have their own individual motivations and goals. By helping employees to tap into their purpose, leaders can help those employees find the satisfaction and engagement they need to succeed in their roles and careers. ■

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# 8 EFFECTIVE EMPLOYEE RETENTION STRATEGIES FOR COUNTERING THE GREAT RESIGNATION

BY O.C. TANNER



**R**etention—the ability of companies to keep their employees from quitting their jobs—suffered a devastating blow during the COVID-19 pandemic. In the USA alone, nearly 4 million people quit their jobs during April 2021; by November 2021, that number soared to a record 4.5 million.<sup>1</sup> In the wake of this mass exodus of employees, dubbed “the Great Resignation,” how can organizations reduce turnover and keep their employees working?

First, it’s helpful to understand why employees stay. A recent study by the Society for Human Resource Management<sup>2</sup> identified the five leading factors that keep employees happy and satisfied with their jobs:

- Respectful treatment of all employees at all levels
- Compensation/pay, overall
- Trust between employees and senior management
- Job security
- Opportunities to use [their] skills and abilities in [their] work

To retain top employees in 2022 and beyond, employers must implement effective employee retention strategies that support the five factors listed above (and other crucial areas). Instead of trying to retain employees by doing the bare minimum (such as offering more compensation opportunities with tenure), successful employee retention strategies focus on multiple areas of the work experience and take steps that are proven to combat high turnover rates and keep employees longer. They explore why employees are leaving the organization (e.g., unhappiness with advancement changes, decreased engagement, dissatisfaction with the work, negative experiences with a manager or coworker, toxic workplace culture) and actively work to address those reasons.

No single strategy can guarantee that employees will choose to stay longer with the organization. But combining modern leadership principles with focused drivers of retention will not only help reduce the turnover rate, but also increase the organization’s productivity. The

following seven strategies can be especially effective at improving the employee experience and making employees want to stay.

## IMMERSE EMPLOYEES IN THE CULTURE

# 1

Large businesses and small businesses alike continually find that company culture is a significant contributor to how employees feel and whether they are satisfied with their jobs, with one survey of 615,000 Glassdoor users finding that the top predictors of employee satisfaction are “culture and values of the organization.”<sup>3</sup> Building an organizational culture in which employees can thrive can do more to help

employees want to stay than almost any other factor. Instead of just educating new hires about their health benefits and 401k plans, HR leaders should introduce new team members to the workplace culture and let them know how that culture will help them prosper throughout their careers at the organization.

## FOCUS ON MAKING CONNECTIONS

# 2

When companies have a work environment in which employees form strong connections with their teams, leaders, and organizations, those employees are likely to stay longer (even as much as six or more years, according to one study<sup>4</sup>). Leaders can encourage greater connection by focusing on efforts such as team building, holding regular one-to-one meetings, and connecting employees’ work to the purpose of the organization. They can also check in frequently with employees and trigger meaningful conversations.



## RECOGNIZE AND APPRECIATE EMPLOYEES

# 3

It's no secret that employee recognition plays a significant role in keeping employees happy and motivated to stay with the organization, and stronger connections result "when recognition for great work and extra effort is a consistent part of everyday culture."<sup>5</sup>

This is most effectively done through a formal program that allows employees to use peer-to-peer recognition applications and other tools to appreciate their colleagues' great work as it happens. Employee appreciation works best when it is a constant, integrated element of the organization's culture and personalized to fit each employee. Most importantly, it should always connect employees to purpose, accomplishment, and one another.

## PROVIDE ONGOING TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

# 4

By offering opportunities for professional development, organizations demonstrate their commitment to employees' long-term career paths. Such opportunities can include company training programs, tuition support for college courses or degrees, participation in trade shows, software certification, and even mentoring.

Another option is to "design development into everyday experience" and "build learning and advancement right into people's roles," as illustrated by this example:

One organization started a program they called "Walk in their shoes," intended to strengthen connections between employees from different parts of the organization. It consisted of weekly peer-mentoring sessions between people in adjacent functions that regularly worked together. The HR executive from that company told me, "Our initial intention was to make sure cross-functional collaboration remained strong despite remote work. What we hadn't planned on was how much people would learn in the process, changing how people perform their own jobs, and opening lateral career paths we hadn't considered." Building on the unexpected success, they now offer job shadowing of higher-level jobs and training programs taught by those who've completed rotations. It's become a regular part of the company's career-development efforts.<sup>6</sup>

## PROVIDE WORK-LIFE BALANCE

# 5

Elevating the well-being of workers and creating a healthy work-life balance can make a significant difference in how employees feel about job satisfaction in their place of work. Factors that can lead to burnout include "decreased work/life balance, feeling like work has a negative effect on health, or a decreased sense of belonging," and with "40 percent of employees

experiencing moderate-to-severe burnout," it's clearly a problem that companies need to address.<sup>7</sup> One solution is to help employees create clear boundaries between work and home life, especially when they are working remotely.

# ”

**SUCCESSFUL EMPLOYEE RETENTION STRATEGIES FOCUS ON MULTIPLE AREAS OF THE WORK EXPERIENCE.**

## OFFER THE FREEDOM TO WORK REMOTELY

# 6

There's no question that the increased ability of workers to work remotely has contributed to the scale of the Great Resignation. To accommodate the need for employees to isolate during the pandemic, employers had to offer more flexible work and make new policies on remote work or hybrid work. At the same time, though, increased freedom to engage in remote work or hybrid work has actually improved employee experiences and engagement.<sup>8</sup>

## DELIVER PEAK EXPERIENCES

# 7

These big, impactful events build lasting connections and lead to greater employee satisfaction in the workplace. Some examples of peak experiences include leading a big project, receiving company-wide recognition for making a significant contribution, or getting a chance to apply skills and knowledge in new ways. "When an organization meets an employee's needs of autonomy, connection, and mastery," the employee experience is dramatically improved.<sup>9</sup> At the same time, leaders who act as mentors, advocate for employee development, and connect employees to meaningful opportunities help employees (and themselves) feel a greater sense of purpose, accomplishment, and connection with each other, which in turn can lead to greater employee morale and feelings of success.

## CREATE RETENTION STRATEGIES THAT FIT

# 8

The most successful employee retention strategies address the reasons why people are leaving. HR retention strategies that are the best for retention at one organization may not be the best strategies at another. (For example, improving compensation and benefits is likely to have the most impact in organizations that lag behind their competitors in those areas but might not be feasible in companies that already pay highly.) The best, most generally useful approach is to focus on strengthening and reinforcing workplace culture, then to implement strategies that will provide the kinds of employee experiences (including meaningful work and regular recognition) that people want. ■

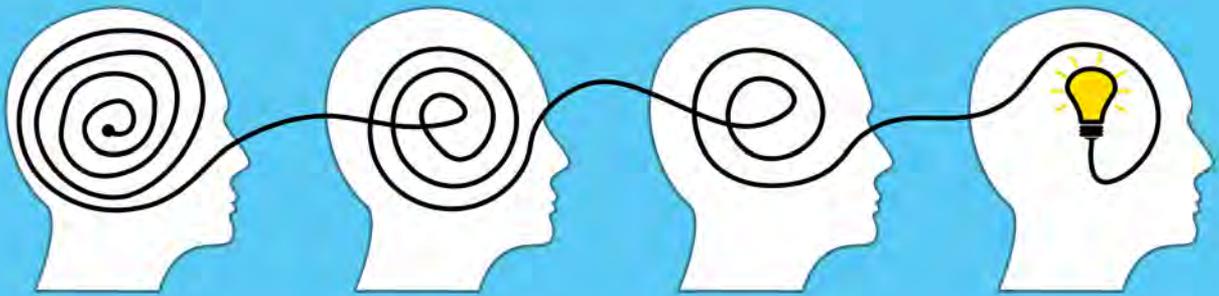
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# 6 STEPS

## OF EFFECTIVE PROBLEM SOLVING

BY TERRI KLASS



# S

ometimes, when a group is working on a problem (and especially when the challenge

they're trying to resolve is a complicated one), different perspectives and opposing suggestions can give way to heated discussion, which in turn can lead to an impasse. Such roadblocks aren't inevitable, though: disagreements are common, but how participants approach problem solving is the key to a meaningful outcome. By implementing certain best practices in a six-step process, teams can be better positioned to tackle their problems straight on and therefore achieve solutions that all team members can live with.

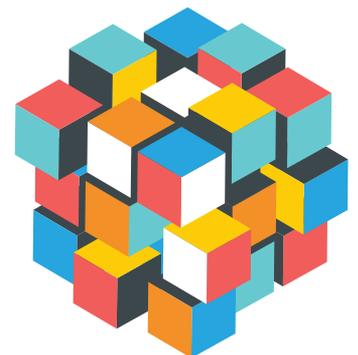
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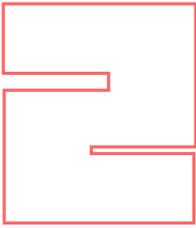
### DEFINE THE TRUE PROBLEM

To end up with the most effective solution to a problem, the team must clearly identify the real issue at hand. (This sounds like common sense, but unfortunately, people often fail to do this.) For example, if a team starts with the assumption that the problem with a deliverable is due to a delay in the work being shared, but the problem is actually due to the process being used, then the solution it comes up with will never resolve the issue.

Questions that can help get to the real problem might include:

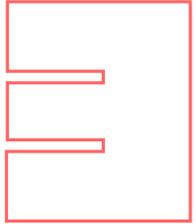
- Why is this a problem?
- Whom does this problem affect?
- What isn't the problem?
- What are the different elements of the problem?





## BRAINSTORM A LIST OF POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Once the true problem is clearly defined, the team can then attempt to identify possible solutions to it. The most effective way to start this process is brainstorming—that is, throwing out as many ideas as possible without making snap judgments about them or discounting any of them right off the bat. (For some team members, brainstorming can be difficult if they are unable to refrain from sharing their comments.) This step is all about quantity, not quality.

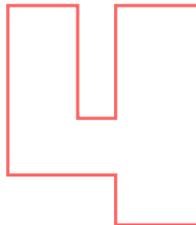


## INCLUDE ALL STAKEHOLDERS

The brainstorming process must include all team members so that everyone feels buy-in with the end result. When people see themselves as part of the problem-solving process, they will keep sharing their important ideas. To ensure that all team members are included:

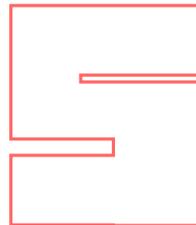
- Ask each person how they would go about resolving the issue. (Encourage them to keep their emotions at bay and to focus on actions.)
- Validate all the suggestions and opinions being shared.

Also, think about stakeholders who may not be part of the team but may be helpful in resolving the issue. Ask for their input, too: their insights may lead to a more inclusive solution.



## WEIGH THE PROS AND CONS OF THE SOLUTIONS

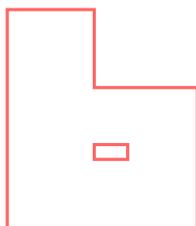
When all the solutions are on the table and all the stakeholders have been consulted, it's time to analyze the options. At this point, a back-and-forth discussion of the positives and negatives of each solution should take place (keeping in mind that some of the possible solutions could lead to further challenges). Ask participants to be honest with one another and open-minded to different alternatives as they take the time to look at all sides of each possibility.



## CLEARLY IDENTIFY THE BEST OUTCOME

When the evaluation of all the proposed solutions is complete, choose the best one and go with it. That means being clear about the decision and what it might entail for the rest of the team and the organization. A professional report should be generated that includes:

- The clearly defined problem
- The stakeholders involved in the solution reached
- The process undertaken to arrive at the decision
- A concise and purposeful statement of the solution



## PRESENT THE SOLUTION CLEARLY AND CONFIDENTLY

Finally, determine which stakeholders should share the results of this process. Those team members should carefully prepare an impactful presentation that maps out how the problem was resolved and why that particular solution was selected. Presenting the solution with conviction and clarity will help the team gain more support for it. ■

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# Using KPIs to Improve HR Strategy

BY LISA JASPER

In recent years, the workplace has experienced many changes, such as the acceleration of digital transformation, greater awareness of the need for inclusion, and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. With so many businesses now having to pivot and adjust to new ways of working—and with job candidates becoming more selective—it's a good time for companies to review their HR key performance indicators (KPIs). This review might indicate that those metrics need to be adjusted so the organization can better track its current goals, or it might reveal new ways to use them to measure specific initiatives.

An effective HR strategy is proactive and delivers the tools, environment, structure, and resources employees need to achieve the company's goals. With this in mind, the strategy needs to help an organization fulfill these tasks:

- Identify and hire the right people
- Manage and grow those people in the right ways
- Develop each role to achieve its business strategy
- Build a company culture that supports the company's customer promise

In order to know whether an HR strategy is truly working and its effects on the company's objectives, the business outcomes that are influenced by HR practices must be quantified, measured, and tracked. But first, the organization must determine what its HR KPIs are.

## WHAT ARE HR KPIS?

A KPI is a quantifiable measure used to evaluate how effective a company is at achieving key business objectives. (This doesn't mean that everything measurable is a KPI, though; only metrics that have a direct link to the organizational strategy can be called KPIs.) Because KPIs shed light on

a company's progress toward its short- and long-term goals, the organization should select KPIs that directly link to its overall objectives, goals and strategies.

HR KPIs measure both how HR contributes to the rest of the organization by realizing the organization's HR strategy, and how the HR strategy follows the organizational performance for HR because they are defined based on the HR outcomes that are relevant to achieve business goals.

By constantly measuring and tracking these metrics, HR can gauge whether its practices are proactively making a positive impact on the business's profitability. Choosing the right KPIs can also help HR track engagement, especially when hybrid or remote workplaces make it difficult for managers to interact with their teams in person through regular meetings or quick, casual, desk-side check-ins.

For many companies, core HR KPIs include the following:

- Turnover rate (voluntary, involuntary, unwanted by role, by department, by manager, etc.)
- Retention of talent
- Time to fill an open position (or the length of the entire hiring process)
- Employee productivity

No single set of metrics exists that fits every organization, though. Instead of searching the internet for long lists of HR KPIs—a practice that only encourages the bad habit of measuring for measurement's sake—a company should identify the right three or four HR KPIs for its specific needs (e.g., diversity enhancement, hiring, employee retention).



## MEASURING DEI PROGRESS WITH HR METRICS

As increasing numbers of organizations pursue the benefits of having a more diverse workforce, it's important that they have KPIs in place to track progress toward those diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) goals. In particular, they can monitor their internal promotion data to see what numbers of women, people of color, LGBTQ employees, and members of other protected groups are being promoted from within. They can also review internal promotion data to see if employees in those groups are being promoted primarily to line roles or to individual contributor roles, or to management and leadership positions.

## ASSESSING AND IMPROVING HIRING PRACTICES WITH KPIS

When hiring the right talent is a challenge, KPIs can help a company identify any issues in its recruitment and hiring processes. Some of the metrics an organization might choose to measure include:

- Cost per application
- Cost per hire
- Time to hire (the length of time between when someone enters the talent pipeline and when they accept an employment offer)
- Number of qualified candidates (which may include both internal candidates and external candidates)
- Quality of hire

These KPIs confirm which efforts are

working, which aspects of recruitment need improvement, and how recruitment affects other components of the human capital strategy.

## MEASURING EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION AND RETENTION

It's always been true that employee satisfaction drives engagement, motivation, and retention. However, the factors that affect engagement and motivation may differ today from what they were before the COVID-19 pandemic. To get a sense of what employee satisfaction is like now, companies can look at factors that include:

- Duration in a position
- Dismissal rate
- Employee satisfaction index
- Employee engagement index



- Internal net promoter scores

By gathering and examining data on which employees stay, how long they stay, and when they choose to leave, organizations can see some correlations between employee satisfaction and retention. By being transparent about what's being measured, companies can also use the KPIs to help individual employees and teams see how their work contributes to the big picture.

## HR KPIS IN ACTION

Two of the most recognized drivers of organizational success are employee engagement and leadership alignment. Employee engagement has a direct impact on profitability and revenue generation for a pretty simple reason: engaged employees are more productive, and productivity leads to more opportunities for revenue generation.

In addition, it's critical that the entire leadership team works to move the organization in the same direction. If each leader has a different goal in mind, they may be misleading their employees and spending time and money on unnecessary projects.

For example, imagine a company that is experiencing fast growth but has high turnover among the leadership team and low employee engagement. If the company's business goal is to achieve profitable double-digit growth, the leadership team will need to identify the critical success factors that will drive that level of growth. (Some leaders may be able to identify key drivers based on their own experiences; others may need to research best practices to find that information.) Once the leadership team identifies the short- and long-term goals needed to achieve double-digit growth, it can outline the strategies that are necessary to achieve those goals. (For example, the leaders may choose to develop goals that focus on reducing operating costs related to productivity and turnover costs.)

## MEASURABLE GOALS ARE A MUST FOR HR METRICS

The difference between average-performing organizations and high-performing organizations is often as simple as having measurable goals. Keep in mind that KPIs are a mechanism that allows an organization to monitor the effectiveness of its strategies. That said, there should be clear connection among:

- The objective
- The goals that must be accomplished to achieve that objective
- Strategies used to meet those goals
- The metrics that prove the effectiveness of the organization's efforts toward achieving its primary objective

To illustrate how this all works, consider the hypothetical company described above. The following outline spells out the organization's key objective as well as the goals, strategies, and KPIs that it might use to support this initiative.

**Objective:** To achieve double-digit growth

### Goals

- Retain the organization's top 10 percent of performers
- Increase employee engagement by 15 percent
- Reduce first-year voluntary turnover by 12 percent
- Identify successors for all leadership positions

### Strategies

- Create a talent review process
- Implement a high-potential program
- Identify and evaluate critical drivers of employee engagement
- Begin exit interview process
- Establish leadership training curriculum focused on strategy, financials, and problem solving

### KPIs

- Monthly voluntary turnover rate
- Internal promotion rate
- First-year retention rate
- Annual employee engagement score

Although creating the list of key performance indicators is challenging, collecting the data can be an even larger obstacle for many organizations: after establishing a baseline measurement for each KPI, companies must then track and document any changes (or lack thereof) during every month or quarter. If it's difficult to get a precise measurement at the start, though, using estimates is an acceptable option.

## KPIS HAVE HIGH VALUE FOR HR

During and after times of major change, KPIs can serve as essential HR metrics to help keep organizations on track. Building a purposeful plan to set, measure, and recalibrate HR KPIs for goals for remote teams, DEI initiatives, hiring, employee retention, and other areas sets the stage for a company to grow and thrive. ■

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# HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OUT OF 24 HOURS

BY LEO BABAUTA



**M**ost people often feel rushed, that there's not enough time to do everything. They feel that they're always behind—and never feel that they're doing enough. This problem of “time scarcity” is one of the most common stressors in modern society.

Most people feel some kind of time stress, thinking to themselves some version of “I'm not making the most of my time,” or “Time is slipping away too quickly,” or “I feel overwhelmed by it all.” The feeling that there's not enough time leads to stress about not getting everything done—and a sense of falling behind.

To overcome this feeling of time scarcity, people need to realize three important things:

- There's always a fresh supply of time. Everyone gets the same amount of time, no matter who they are. And everyone gets a fresh batch of 24 hours every day, no matter how terribly they spent the previous 24 hours. It's a clean start, over and over—a chance to try something new.
- It doesn't matter how much someone gets done, because doing more doesn't solve the problem of not enough time. Even when someone has a fantastically productive day (completing 20 to 30 tasks with zero procrastination or distractions, for example), they might still feel that they need to do more—and still wish they had more time.
- Time is a precious gift. Most people take each day's hours for granted and don't appreciate them to the fullest; instead, they just go through their days doing routine things and not really paying attention. That's why they feel that the hours are slipping away and wonder where all the time went.

Unfortunately, there's no easy way to eliminate time scarcity. But with those three key understandings in mind, anyone can take the following steps to make the most of their 24 hours.

**Be intentional at the start of each day.** It's easy to fall into the usual rhythm of starting each day as usual. But in order to make the most of a new batch of hours, it's important to take a few moments at the start of the day to reflect on what to do with those hours. Even when someone doesn't end up doing things exactly as they planned, they're much more likely to spend the hours wisely if they start the day by making a list of their intentions.

**Don't simply do more—do what matters.** Doing lots of things in one day won't get rid of the time scarcity and often makes the stress even worse. Creating a long to-do list each day can also contribute to feelings of stress and scarcity. So start each day with a list of three important tasks (limiting a to-do list to three things forces careful choices) and work on each one as though it were the only thing that mattered. After those three things are done, there's still the possibility—but not the expectation—to do more.

**Create moments of transcendence.** Rushing through tasks and chores to get to the next thing makes all experiences blend together into a dull soup. But what if everyday moments could be elevated to something special, sacred, alive? Everyone has experienced a transcendent moment of feeling incredibly connected to the entire world, losing a sense of separate self, and feeling part of something bigger (while looking down with awe from the top of a mountain, gazing up at the stars, floating in the ocean, feeling breathless at the sight of a sunset or a field of flowers, etc.). With practice and mindfulness, it's possible to intentionally create such moments in daily life. Working through tasks on a to-do list, washing dishes, having a conversation, driving home, eating kale and beans—any of those everyday moments can be elevated into a moment of transcendence. This is by far the most important thing anyone can do to address time scarcity: when people create multiple transcendent moments throughout the day, time feels less scarce—and incredibly abundant.

**Reflect with gratitude.** At the end of each day, take a few moments to reflect on the day and think about what to be grateful for. This is common advice, but it's worth repeating, because a gratitude practice can have an incredibly powerful and positive effect on how people perceive time.

Together, these four strategies suggest a way of being that radically differs from what most experience each day. Time scarcity is largely a matter of perspective and attitude. By using time more effectively and efficiently—and focusing on what's truly important—anyone can learn how to make the most out of their time. ■

*Leo Babauta is the author of *The Power of Less: The Fine Art of Limiting Yourself to the Essential . . . in Business and in Life*. He can be reached via Twitter at @zen\_habits.*

# BUILDING YOUR COMPANY'S DREAM TEAM

BY MACKENZIE FROESE



Every team consists of individuals who each have their own strengths and weaknesses. When the strengths outweigh the weaknesses and the team functions like a finely tuned machine, the result is a “dream team”—a group of individuals who, together, can accomplish great things.

The name “dream” implies that this type of assemblage is nonexistent or at least extremely rare (like the 1992 U.S. men’s Olympic basketball team that was dubbed “the Dream Team”). But if you think of “dream” not as “impossible” but as “ideal,” you’ll find that putting together your own dream team is easily within the realm of possibility.

First, you need to find the right employees. Here’s where the concept of “top talent” comes into play: whether you’re bringing in employees who are new to the company or drawing on current staff, you’ll want to hone in on people who have the great skills and experience required for certain roles. (Don’t overlook people who might not yet have the credentials but definitely have clear potential—you and the rest of the team can help them get there!) Be

sure to look beyond the resumes. Your goal isn’t to build a “dream individual”—you want someone who can be part of a great team. So pay close attention to personality, “fit” with the rest of the team (and the organization at large), and a general ability to “play well with others.”

Then, once you find the people you want, put them in the right seats.

Leverage each individual’s skills (and interests) so that all of the team members work together well, support each other, and excel in their defined roles. Someone who has amazing culinary skills, a passion for cooking, and zero ability or interest in gardening, will do their best work and make their best contributions to the team when they can wield a whisk—not a trowel—in their hand.

Next, remember that the success of your dream team of top-notch employees depends not just on their skills but on their engagement: only when people are truly engaged and satisfied with their jobs can they do their very best work. Obviously, a competitive compensation package is a key motivator. But

don’t neglect other factors, such as recognition for their accomplishments, opportunities for growth, and the ability to do work that they find meaningful in some way. When all of these criteria are met, you’re more likely to have great employees who stick around.

Finally, look for ways to support your dream team and augment their efforts. Make sure they get the training they need to be most effective at their jobs. For example, consider partnering with industry experts who can help improve your team and advise you on how to fill any skill or knowledge gaps it has.

Putting together a dream team isn’t easy but, when leaders focus their efforts properly, it is very doable. Do your research to figure out what you need, find the people who best meet those needs, then do what you can to support those people and keep them around. That’s all there is to it! ■

*Mackenzie Froese is the director of content marketing at Haley Marketing Group and the editor in chief of HR Insights. She can be reached at [mfroese@haleymarketing.com](mailto:mfroese@haleymarketing.com).*

RECIPE

# COLD-BREW COFFEE



If you love cold-brew coffee but don’t have the time (or the budget) to visit your local cafe every day, make it yourself! It’s easy to create a low-acid, caffeine-supercharged concentrate that can be diluted with water or milk to create the hot or cold coffee-based beverage of your dreams. No special equipment is required—you need just a few household items and some time (so you definitely must plan ahead). What are you waiting for?

**Yield:** 5 servings

**Time:** 5 minutes  
(then 12 hours of waiting)

**What you’ll need:**

- ▶ 1 quart-sized Mason jar with a lid
- ▶ 2/3 cup coarsely ground coffee
- ▶ Fine mesh strainer, paper coffee filter, or cheesecloth

**Directions:**

- ▶ In the jar, stir together the coffee and 3 cups of cold water.
- ▶ Cover the jar and let it sit on the counter for 12 hours.
- ▶ Strain the contents into another jar, discarding the solids.
- ▶ Store the cold-brew coffee in the refrigerator.

**Notes:**

- ☞ Use a 1:1 ratio of concentrate to water for a cup of coffee.
- ☞ For a twist, add a stick of cinnamon and one or two whole cloves to the steeping mixture.
- ☞ The extraction process results in a much less bitter coffee than you’re probably used to. If you usually add milk and sugar to your coffee, you might find that you like cold-brew coffee without those additions.

**Nutrition Facts**

| Amount per Serving    |       |
|-----------------------|-------|
| <b>Calories:</b>      | 5 cal |
| <b>Fat:</b>           | 0 g   |
| <b>Dietary fiber:</b> | 0 g   |
| <b>Sugars:</b>        | 0 g   |
| <b>Protein:</b>       | 0 g   |

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