


THE RESOURCE

HR INSIGHTS

VOL. XII, ISSUE III

magazine

from the eyes of industry leaders



**How to Evaluate
Job Candidates**
for Long-term
Employee Retention

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10 Frequently Asked
Questions about Internal
Mobility

How to Understand—and
Dispel—Feelings of Fear

Today's Top 4 HR Trends

Engaging and Managing
a Multigenerational
Workforce



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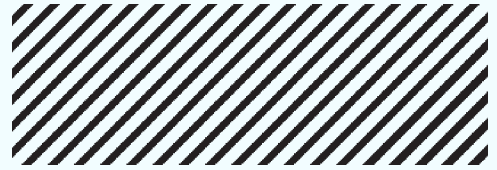
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HOW TO BUILD A COMPENSATION STRATEGY

BY MARIE-REINE PUGH



Organizations seeking new ways to attract and retain employees while staying financially stable in a volatile economy need look no further than their compensation strategies. Competition for talent is driving 70 percent of large employers to plan to enhance their benefits and compensation strategies this year.¹ Putting together a compensation strategy that's sure to impress involves more than just offering high salaries, though. It needs to be a comprehensive, thoughtful plan that defines all the forms of compensation and why each component matters to the organization and its employees. A well-constructed compensation strategy can be a deciding factor for why employees choose a company and how it reaches its growth goals.

PRIORITIZE SALARY

The most important component of a compensation strategy, salary, makes up the bulk of total compensation (with benefits, bonuses, and perks making up the rest of the package). Salary considerations include base pay (whether it's an hourly rate or an annual salary), frequency of pay, and (if applicable) timetable of scheduled pay raises.

Base Pay: Fairness Is the Ultimate Goal

When determining base pay, the safest bet is to use reliable market data to find the minimum, median, and maximum pay for comparable roles. This helps an organization set a pay range for each role that's fair and representative of the industry. Of course, a company can choose to pay below, at, or above market rates, but that decision will depend on the company's overall compensation budget and how

competitive the candidate market is for that particular industry.

Without market data, it's too easy to rely on bias or on subjective, inequitable standards (such as using the employee filling the role to set the pay range for it) when setting pay ranges. This kind of approach puts a company at risk in a number of ways:

- It could offer wages that aren't competitive and therefore lose talented employees.
- With out-of-date wages, it could struggle to attract good candidates.
- It could overpay for certain positions.
- It could be liable for pay discrimination.

Market-based pay ranges help ensure pay equity (and reduce bias) across salary decisions and help an organization stand out as an employer that cares about fair and equitable pay. With this approach, a company will be more conscientious and consistent in how it approaches wages. Also, management will be better equipped to help employees understand how and why they're compensated the way they are. By using data-backed fair pay as the foundation of its compensation strategy, an organization will also be better prepared to navigate difficult decisions, such as adjusting salaries in response to inflation.

Frequency of Pay: Support Employees Through Scheduling

If a company has already set fair pay ranges, that doesn't mean there's no more wiggle room or ways for it to improve this part of its compensation strategy to better appeal to prospective and current employees. It can change the frequency of pay, for example, by distributing paychecks weekly (instead of monthly or biweekly),

which can help employees feel more financially secure. In industries that have high turnover and difficulty attracting workers, some employers are even adopting a strategy of paying employees daily.

PAY RAISES: WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO BE UPFRONT ABOUT PAY

It's critical for a company to clearly communicate its compensation strategies with employees and candidates and, most importantly, to tell them how they specifically fit into the whole picture. Before starting a job, a new hire expects an employer to provide key information about their wages, including what their base pay will be, how often they'll get paid, and how and when they can earn or receive a raise. Even after someone is already hired or has been with a company for a while, giving them that information will help them be more engaged with their work rather than worry about their pay. Particularly with raises and promotions, people will want to know that they can grow in an organization and that it will invest in their future.

USE BONUSES AND INCENTIVES TO BUILD IN FLEXIBILITY

Bonuses and incentives make up another part of the total compensation package. They can be commission-based or given as additional compensation outside of employees' job tasks. Some common examples of indirect compensation include:

- Performance bonuses
- Overtime pay
- Stock options
- Commissions

- Referral bonuses
- Company performance bonuses

Employees deserve to be fairly compensated for their work, and most will expect some kind of raise or additional pay for their loyalty and performance. That doesn't mean an organization must give higher raises than it can sustain or must pay employees above market rate. Instead, a company can build a sustainable and flexible compensation plan by including different forms of indirect compensation. Bonuses and incentives can motivate employees without committing the company to pay higher than market wages.

When financial uncertainty looms on the horizon (whether due to high inflation or a global recession), financial support becomes increasingly important to employees. Bonuses and incentives can be a great way for companies to help mitigate financial uncertainty for their workers while continuing to be flexible in a shifting market.

OFFER BENEFITS THAT MATTER TO EMPLOYEES

Over three quarters of American workers “say benefits are a necessity for companies to offer employees,” with 84 percent of workers putting health insurance at the head of their list of “top benefits when considering employment.”² As healthcare costs continue to rise, organizations can't afford to skip this type of compensation as a component of their compensation strategy.

Employers can tailor benefits as part of their total compensation packages in two main areas: how much they contribute toward employee premiums and which benefits they offer. Types of benefits include:

- Medical. Because most employees see health insurance as a necessity, company offerings can vary on factors such as which provider networks are included, whether or not employees can add family members, and the cost of premiums.
- Dental and vision.
- Health savings account (HSA). Offering a matching contribution can encourage employees to budget better for medical expenses.
- Life insurance.

- Retirement account. As with an HSA, a matching contribution can encourage employee participation and promote financial planning.
- Short-term and long-term disability.
- Mental health services. Adding an employee assistance program to benefits can help employees access free, short-term support quickly.
- Legal and financial services. These can include access to free or low-cost legal and financial advisors.
- Childcare and family benefits.

Treat Time Off as a Key Component

In one recent survey on mental health in the workplace, “84 percent of respondents reported at least one workplace factor that negatively impacted their mental health in the past year—the most common being emotionally draining work (37 percent) and challenges with work-life balance (32 percent).” Because the time employees spend working unavoidably affects their mental health and well-being, work schedules should factor into any compensation strategy.

A company's time-off policies play a significant role in whether or not employees feel sufficiently compensated and appreciated for their efforts, and those policies are therefore instrumental in ensuring employees have the energy and ability to continue their work. Such policies should address paid and unpaid time off, paid and unpaid sick time off, and parental leave. When considering how to include time off in its compensation strategy, a company must answer three crucial concerns:

- Whether to compensate employees for time off
- How much time off to offer
- What types of time off to offer

Whatever form the time-off policy takes, its overall goal should be to support employees in their work-life balance, well-being, and effectiveness in their roles.

Tailor Perks to Employees

A one-size-fits-all compensation strategy won't meet the needs of every person in an organization. By offering perks, a company can customize compensation to its unique population and tie its compensation strategy to areas both the company and employees value. Perks can also help an

organization's company culture stand out. Benefits have a wage-base value, whereas perks are offered on top of wages and can cover something employees would have likely had to pay for themselves. An organization should think about



its employees' specific needs when choosing what to offer. For example, if total health and wellness are important to its employees, a company can provide discounted or free gym memberships and regularly catered healthy lunches. If a company has a lot of employees with young families, providing discounts or memberships to local children's attractions could make an impact. Other ideas for perks include:

- Commuter benefits
- Company-wide events
- Cell phone allowance
- Home office allowance
- Company vehicle or gas card
- Vacation funds
- Employee resource groups
- Pet-related benefits
- Tuition and continuing education support

THE VALUE OF A TOTAL COMPENSATION PACKAGE

To develop a competitive compensation strategy that will guide it both now and well into the future, a company must be sure that it fulfills the five functions outlined above. By focusing on what matters to its employees and communicating clearly about how their compensation packages benefit them, an organization can position its compensation as a key element in its recruitment and retention efforts. ■

Marie-Reine Pugh is a copy editor at BambooHR, where she draws on her background in education and almost a decade of corporate journalism and workflow analysis to provide modern HR professionals with the practical resources they need to develop actionable strategy.

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ENGAGING AND MANAGING A MULTIGENERATIONAL WORKFORCE

BY CLAIRE HASTWELL



It's a longstanding joke that every generation is suspicious of the ones that follow it—and rolls its eyes at the ones that preceded it. And of course there are stereotypes galore: Boomers are terrible with technology, Generation X hates everything, and Millennials are entitled. True, each generation has its own personality and psychology, shaped in large part by that era's world events, economic conditions, social trends, and cultural norms. But individuals don't slot into neatly defined categories. Making generational assumptions isn't just unrealistic—it's risky, too.

Five generations are currently in the workforce: Generation Z, Millennials, Generation X, Baby Boomers, and the Silent Generation. This is a first in modern history. An employer today could very well have recent graduates working alongside people who are great-grandparents. Today's managers need to toss aside generational stereotypes and learn how to engage all generations. When leaders understand how to manage diverse and inclusive workplaces, their organizations enjoy increased employee retention rates, higher revenue growth, and a greater readiness to innovate.

4 MULTIGENERATIONAL WORKFORCE CHALLENGES (AND HOW TO OVERCOME THEM)

The days of one-size-fits-all management are long gone. Workplaces are becoming more diverse in ethnicity (with 47 percent identifying as nonwhite, Generation Z is tracking to be the most ethnically diverse workforce yet) and, with employees from up to five generations working side by side, in age as well. The range of priorities, expectations, and experiences that employees bring to the workplace is now wider than ever. The challenges of this workforce fall mostly into four categories.

Differing priorities

The employees in a multigenerational workforce span the full range of life stages. Some are raising young kids, whereas others are caring for ailing parents. Some are in new relationships, whereas others are going through divorces. Some are shopping for their first homes, whereas others are researching retirement options.

Whatever is going on in employees' lives, it's important that companies don't treat one life stage as more important than another. For example, it's great to offer schedule flexibility to working parents, but employees without families should have access to it as well.

Stereotypes and assumptions

Just as people should never stereotype based on race, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation, they shouldn't stereotype based on age, either. Generational acceptance and sensitivity should be part of any company's diversity, equity, inclusiveness, and belonging (DEIB) initiatives in both manager-employee relationships and in peer-to-peer relationships. Avoiding stereotypes involves acknowledging and exploring the similarities between generations. For example, it's a common assumption that Baby Boomers are keen to return to the office post-Covid and younger generations want to continue with remote or hybrid work arrangements, but in fact, workplace flexibility is universally desired across all the generations.

Miscommunication

Over the years, workplace communication has changed dramatically—and rapidly—and now includes elements such as slang, phone calls, email, texting, and emojis. Variations in understanding and expectations can affect how employees use different media and how they interpret messages. Baby Boomers who relied on phone calls and in-person meetings for most of their careers, for example, might

find texts and FaceTime calls jarring; at the same time, "it would be quicker to pick up the phone" doesn't necessarily resonate with the members of Generation Z. Older generations might view sentences without end punctuation as "sloppy" writing, but to younger generations sentence-ending periods convey a passive-aggressive or angry tone.

Setting rigid communication rules won't resolve communication gaps between generations. Because communicating in just one style can exclude entire generations, it's important to use multiple communication methods. Savvy managers will take note of how each individual responds to different communications, then use the ones that enable them to best connect with their workforces.

"Us versus them" attitudes

Younger generations may feel nervous asking questions of their older colleagues—or think that they need to prove themselves. At the same time, older generations may feel a need to coddle younger colleagues—or may simply dismiss them as inexperienced. Managers of multigenerational workforces should keep an eye out for such power dynamics, especially in meetings: if they observe that someone's contributions to a discussion aren't being taken seriously, this is a good opportunity for them to be allies and make spaces for their employees to speak up. They should remind their staff that it's good to have a variety of opinions and that they are all collaborators, not opponents.

HOW TO ENGAGE A MULTIGENERATIONAL WORKFORCE

To keep a multigenerational workforce engaged and productive, organizations should foster a culture of trust and communication and implement strategies that help every generation feel seen and heard.



Have regular check-ins

Managers should make it a habit to check in regularly with their employees—and be sure that those check-ins aren't just about work. Learning about what is happening in each employee's life not only creates trust in the workplace but also makes it easier to offer benefits that specifically suit them (rather than generic perks that are designed to have broad appeal to their generation).

Clear up miscommunication

Because it's easy for employees from different backgrounds or age groups to have vastly different interpretations of the same message, managers should ensure that everyone understands different communication styles and how they can be misinterpreted. At the same time, though, managers should keep in mind that although it's important to understand generational differences, it's equally vital to ensure that this knowledge doesn't give rise to ageism and to recognize that each person—no matter when they were born—has their own communication preferences.

Capitalize on each generation's skills and knowledge

Every generation brings to the workplace a unique life experience informed in part by the skills its members learned in school, the world events they witnessed, and a host of other factors. Organizations should find ways to help each generation thrive in the areas it already knows, as well as learn new skills from the generations that preceded and followed it.

For example, social media is often flagged as something that younger generations raised on memes can teach to older generations. Knowledge transfers can go both ways, though: the members of Generation Z who entered a remote workforce during the pandemic might feel challenged to develop and use interpersonal skills such as negotiating,

networking, and confident public speaking that they can learn from their older colleagues. A mentorship program in which senior employees can nurture and guide their younger co-workers not only gives younger generations the feedback they crave but also helps people connect and see past their differences.

Skip the stereotypes

Some Baby Boomers are tech-savvy. Some Millennials dislike working remotely. Some Generation Z employees are already parents. Although the members of each generation have some characteristics and life stages in common, they also exhibit endless variations in interests, capabilities, and life experiences. Managers should encourage open and honest conversations in the workplace about age stereotypes and create opportunities for employees to collaborate and socialize across the generations and beyond their usual teams or social circles. Nonhierarchical check-ins and mentorships (both older-to-younger and younger-to-older) will give employees opportunities to share their stories and perspectives and can foster understanding across the generations.

Provide inclusive benefits

Some benefits, such as fertility benefits and parental leave, are generally (though not exclusively) geared to one generation. But there are countless ways for employers to ensure that their benefits span the full age ranges of their employees. For example, a company could provide paid time off for pet owners who don't have "traditional" caregiving needs but need to care for a sick pet—a benefit that could help employees of all ages.

Be a leader for all

Each generation wants different things from its leaders. For example, Millennials often desire managers who can connect employees to a common purpose, Generation X frequently seeks role models

who can roll up their sleeves and solve challenging problems, and Baby Boomers admire leaders as socially distant strategic thinkers. Managers of multigenerational workforces must keep these varying expectations top of mind. Although it's impossible to be everything to everyone all the time, managers who have an awareness of what each generation wants in a leader and strives to meet those expectations will have more success in keeping employees engaged.

LOOKING AHEAD

Although generational trends will continue to drive workplace recruitment and retention strategies, leaders' top priority should always be to fully engage each person as a unique individual. With more generations than ever working side by side, employers are positioned to create strong, innovative teams rich with diverse thought, experience, and expertise. Organizations should look at the best traits that each generation—and each individual—brings to the table and then adapt accordingly. ■

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12 NEW HR TERMS THAT EVERYONE SHOULD UNDERSTAND

BY BRIAN FORMATO

WORDS MATTER. The right words can shape and drive the actions of an individual, a team, or an organization. With the ability to adapt to the ever-evolving terminology of the HR field and a strong grasp of emergent terms, HR and staffing professionals can improve the services they provide to their organizations.



1 **churnover:**

a recurring opening in the same role or position in an organization due to the fact that new people hired into the role do not stay. Close investigation and analysis usually reveal a clear cause of churnover, which is often related to a bad manager or unrealistic job expectations. By measuring churnover as a subset of turnover, a company can reduce attrition and get to the root of the problem.

2 **forwardfill:**

to hire for the future needs of a position (rather than backfill with a clone of the incumbent). Backfilling positions is a reactive talent management approach that at best maintains the current level of talent within the team. Forwardfilling is a mindset shift that challenges the hiring manager to think about a position's future needs. Reviewing the job description and qualifications with an eye toward the evolution of the role yields a different hiring profile and candidate pool.

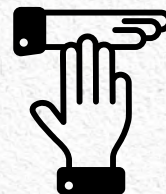
3 **headcount freeze:**

holding the full-time equivalent (FTE) count neutral but continuing to recruit and hire. When organizations face tough times they often implement hiring freezes and shut off the recruitment pipeline, which damages the employment brand and leaves leaders having to play with the talent they have. A headcount freeze, on the other hand, keeps the recruitment motion in place and allows managers to replace underperformers with new hires, thus improving organizational performance while still maintaining cost control.



4 **team timeout:**

a planned and mandatory team-building session focused on improving trust and team effectiveness. In sports, teams spend more time practicing than playing and during games will call for timeouts that can shift the momentum and be the difference between winning and losing. In business, though, teams rarely (if ever) call for timeouts, because too many leaders associate them with boondoggles or just fun team-building events. In fact, a well-planned team timeout provides an opportunity for the team to work on its dynamics by reflecting on what is working, what is not working, and what needs to change in order to enhance performance. Surprisingly, organizations are most reluctant to call for a team timeout when times are tough even though those are the times that it can have the greatest impact.



5 **riptide effect:**

a strategic decision to embrace (rather than fight) the current and to shift strategy to align with market conditions and move the organization forward. Embracing change is difficult, but the sooner an organization recognizes that resisting it is the worse strategy and starts to "go with the flow," the sooner it can begin to move forward. The shift that sales organizations have made from being geographically aligned to being vertically aligned is one example of this approach.

6 **microleadership:**

(This is a term for an approach that does not actually exist.) Asking micromanagers to differentiate between managing and leading often piques their interest and opens up a conversation on this subject. Most people would rather be viewed as leaders rather than managers, and most employees would certainly rather be led than be managed. Learning now to empower their employees can help managers become leaders.

7

crossboarding:

the act of onboarding and assimilating an internal employee transfer. When an employee changes jobs to a new department, a new function, or a new manager within the same organization, an onboarding process should be implemented to ensure their success in the new role. A move between teams or departments can be exciting for some employees and traumatic for others. In either case, a well-orchestrated move will set the employee up for success in the new role and help them feel happy and engaged and willing to provide discretionary effort.

8

kryptonite:

something that makes someone vulnerable. This term offers a useful frame for discussing failure and vulnerability. Superman tells the world that kryptonite is his weakness because he believes in humanity's goodness and is confident that by sharing his weakness with the world, more people will shield him from it than use it against him. Once a leader realizes the low risk in being more open about their kryptonite, the more they come to realize that transparency, authenticity, and vulnerability are seen by others as strengths rather than weaknesses.

9

career scaffold: a replacement for the career ladder in which lateral growth is more important and more effective than vertical development. Organizations that embrace career development opportunities for their employees, find ways to rotate people often, and create cultures in which lateral moves are seen as equally enriching as vertical moves tend to have higher engagement and retention rates. A ladder has an end point or a top, whereas a scaffold can grow infinitely, and just as the maximum height of a scaffold is determined by the breadth of its base or foundation, a person's career trajectory is determined by the breadth of their experiences: the more lateral moves they make, the stronger the foundation they have—which in the long run will allow them to progress more. Few organizations have embraced this new concept and embedded it into the learning and development plans for their employees.



10

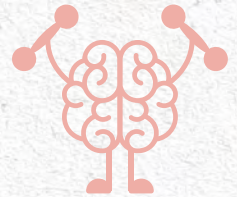
accordion effect:

the idea that just as an accordion makes music while expanding and contracting, a company can drive success while centralizing or decentralizing. Businesses follow a rhythm that's determined by the market landscape and external economic conditions. Companies adjust their strategies and resources to try to stay in tune with the changing business climate. Market conditions are always evolving, and the best organizations recognize the need to evolve not just their business strategy but their organizational structure as well in order to retain an innovative and dynamic culture that is positioned to capitalize on opportunities.

11

mental fitness:

the use of executive coaching to focus on emotional intelligence, accountability, and alignment. The role of a personal trainer and the role of an executive coach have a lot in common, but many view executive coaching as a negative, whereas a personal trainer is always seen as a positive. There should be no negative stigma around executive coaching, which can help leaders become more effective by shifting the focus of coaching within their organizations from remedial to performance enhancing.



12

healthy tension:

a way to reframe conflict, which can lead to better decisions but gets a bad rap. A paradigm shift that recognizes conflict as opportunity can have a dramatically positive impact on how conflict is addressed: instead of trying to avoid conflict, organizations can embrace it as a powerful decision-making tool. A common—and dangerous—outcome of avoiding conflict is group think that leads teams and organizations to make decisions that are contrary to the decisions that members of the team or organization would make on their own. Also, there is a correlation between the level of engagement and the amount of conflict that exists in an organization: too little conflict signals a lack of engagement, but too much conflict could decrease engagement. Therefore it is important to strike a happy balance between the two. ■

For additional information about each of these concepts, visit groovemanagement.com.

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10 Frequently Asked Questions



Over the last few years, resignation rates have soared to record highs, and employee engagement levels have dropped to record lows. To flourish in such a challenging environment, organizations must implement proactive strategies that help them identify, develop, and retain the best talent in their ranks. One of the best strategies is to build an internal mobility program. Giving employees the chance to explore new roles also provides them with opportunities to learn new skills and take on new challenges. A strong culture of internal mobility signals an organization's willingness to invest in its people—something both job seekers and current employees value.

What is internal mobility? This is the movement of employees within an organization. This movement can occur vertically or laterally: internal mobility is less about the direction of the change than about the change itself.

What are the types of internal mobility? It most often takes the form of promotions, lateral moves, transfers, and projects.

- Promotions demonstrate their benefits to both employees and employers and incentivize good performance, provide

opportunities for growth, and increase retention.

- Lateral moves involve little to no change in salary or rank. An employee who wants to learn new skills may seek an opportunity on a different team or in a new department.
- Sometimes employees transfer to new locations but keep their titles, responsibilities, and pay.
- Some workplaces create cross-functional teams to accomplish specific project-based goals.

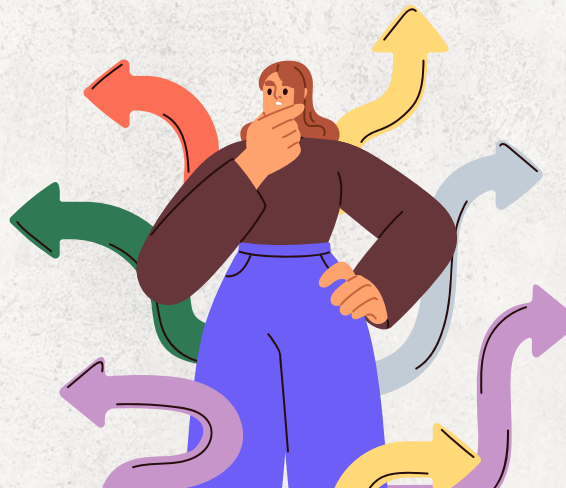
What are the business advantages of internal mobility? By recruiting from current employees, organizations spend less time and money on recruitment procedures. Hiring existing employees also improves retention—a significant cost-saving measure considering that “the cost of replacing an individual employee can range from one-half to two times the employee’s annual salary.”¹ Internal mobility also affects employee engagement: when employees know that their employers value them enough to consider them for new (and potentially more lucrative) opportunities, they’re more motivated to dig into their current work.

Does internal mobility have any disadvantages? It creates one

problem that recruiters can’t ignore: recruiting an existing employee for an open role leaves a vacancy that must be filled. There is a silver lining, though: because a robust internal mobility program creates upward movement for experienced, familiar current employees to move into more advanced roles, it leaves lower-level positions—which are easier and less expensive to fill—open to external candidates.

How does internal mobility benefit employees? It often offers them opportunities for growth. Whether a worker gets promoted or moves to a new department, the change may require them to take on their first direct reports, for example, or learn a new coding language or improve their public speaking skills.

Workers crave such opportunities: when LinkedIn asked workers if they “would stay at a company longer if it invested in their learning and development,” 94 percent of those surveyed said yes.²



Questions about Internal Mobility

BY ANNA RUBY



How does internal mobility affect DEI goals? External recruitment plays a major part in a company's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Hiring managers must ensure, for example, that they interview a diverse slate of candidates and that their recruitment practices are free from unintentional bias. Internal mobility programs don't conflict with DEI goals but can actually advance them. To create a culture of internal mobility, organizations must identify and develop talent, and to this end they often use mentorship or sponsorship programs—which are tools commonly used in DEI initiatives to advance the careers of employees from underrepresented or marginalized groups.

How does internal recruitment affect external recruitment? Internal recruitment strengthens external recruitment. Candidates strongly desire workplaces that invest in their workers, and job seekers will be attracted to organizations that showcase their internal mobility opportunities.

What external recruitment practices apply to internal recruitment? The biggest difference between the two types of recruitment lies in the candidate pool: instead of sourcing outside candidates, internal recruiters look inside the organization. Aside from that key difference, the two types of recruitment align quite closely with each other, which means organizations can take several cues from external recruitment when setting up an internal mobility program. (For example, just as external recruiters use certain practices to create a recruitment process free of discrimination, internal recruiters should post job opportunities in a place and manner that are accessible to all employees.)

What tools can help a company establish a culture of internal mobility? Using applicant tracking tools to track workers' skills and interests, HR can compile a database

that helps them and hiring managers know who may be interested in specific internal roles and opportunities. When working with internal candidates, it's important to use the same tools used with external recruits. This strategy improves the effectiveness of internal recruitment by ensuring that internal candidates have formal candidate experiences—just like those enjoyed by external candidates.

How can a company get started on building an internal mobility program? First, the organization must create an internal career page where it can post opportunities in a transparent, accessible manner. Next, it should use HR software and applicant tracking tools to track employees' skills and interests. Once these two procedures are in place, the company can rely on workflows established for external recruitment to engage and communicate with internal candidates.

Employers won't see the benefits of internal mobility without putting in the work. But implementing an internal recruitment program doesn't have to be a headache. With the right tools, organizations can proactively scope out existing talent for new and upcoming opportunities and strengthen retention and engagement at the same time. ■

Anna Ruby is a content creator at iCIMS, a leading provider of innovative Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) talent-acquisition solutions that help businesses win the war for top talent. To learn more about how iCIMS can help your organization, visit www.icims.com.

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How to Evaluate Job Candidates for Long-term Employee Retention

BY JUAN BETANCOURT



The recruitment landscape has evolved considerably during the last few years, as rapid employment shifts throughout the pandemic kept changing the game. With workers continuing to leave jobs in high numbers, it has never been more important for organizations to understand how to hire for employee retention. Being able to identify the best fits for a company's roles, teams, and culture and understanding candidates on a deeper level can make the difference between success and failure.

4 Lenses for Assessing Candidates

Organizations that want to hire for retention should keep four key factors in mind as they evaluate candidates.

Behaviors (“how”). When used by trained interviewers, behavior-oriented questions can reveal quite a bit about how a person will behave in a given situation. Typically starting with “Tell me about a time when . . .” or “Give me an example of . . .” these questions are fairly traditional, and most recruiters have a good understanding of how to interpret candidates’ responses.

Motivators and values (“why”). Each person’s motivators are generally hidden from others, and candidates often do not know how to articulate them in an interview. A failure to understand a candidate’s motivators can be costly and painful for everyone if an organization hires someone who is driven by internal values that are polar opposites of the values held by the rest of the team. In those cases, that “great new hire” may head right back out the door.

Work energizers (“what”). Everyone wants to do work that energizes them and wants people on their teams who are productive and engaged. Those responsible for filling the talent pipeline also know how much better it is to retain a great employee than to go find a new one. Therefore, in addition to filling jobs with external candidates, companies need to be intentional about internal mobility and develop opportunity pathways for current employees. When leaders understand the type of work and the environment that energizes their employees and candidates, they can optimize teams, hire for retention, and fill even the most challenging-to-staff open roles.

Life priorities (“now”). A candidate’s life priorities can help hiring managers understand the things that are most

important to them at this point in their life and career. Are personal development or achievement key priorities? What about their need for social interaction and belonging? When hiring managers know the answers to these questions and those answers align with the available opportunity, they can walk a candidate through why they're a good fit for the role.

Focus on Culture

The best approach to hiring for retention is to focus on culture fit—an often-neglected candidate qualification. Hiring someone just because the manager likes them is no longer sufficient: it's important to dig deeper and find the kind of talent fit that can last. Infusing interviews with psychometrics assessments can yield valuable information about a candidate's behavioral strengths and weaknesses as well as their ability to adjust to situations at work. Managers can identify candidates' key motivators and values, as well as uncover the kind of work that energizes them.

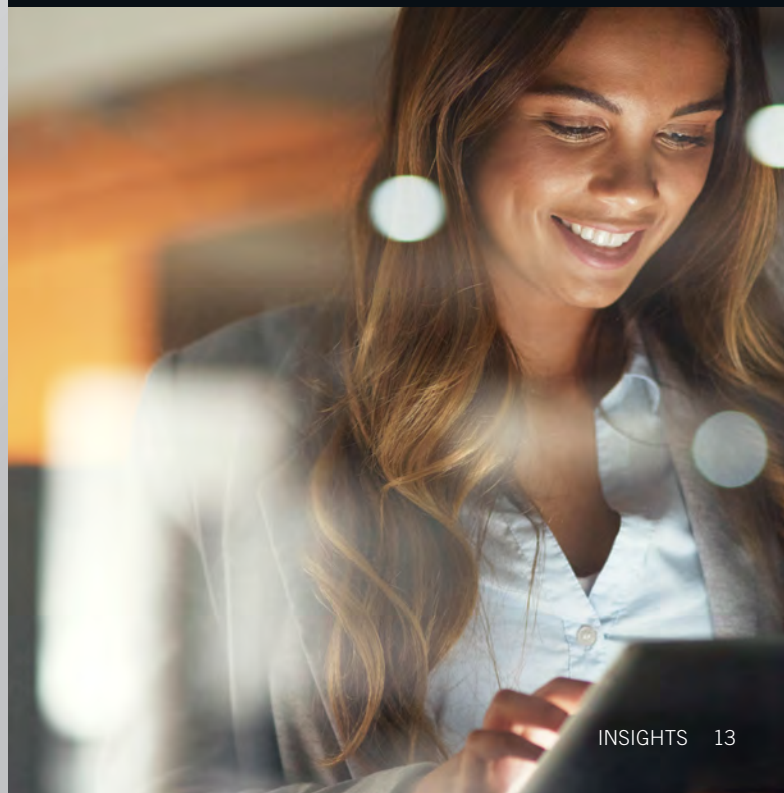
In order to assess and hire candidates for culture fit, an organization must first evaluate its current team and create a current profile of the team's culture as well as a target profile. With this information in hand, hiring managers use psychometric assessments to create each candidate's profile, draw on benchmarks to assess their future success in the role, examine similarities and complements between each candidate and the team, and identify the candidate who will make the most significant positive impact. Hiring in a way that allows the company to achieve its target and the best balance of the behaviors, motivators, and work styles for the team in which the role resides is hiring for fit and managing culture by intention.

Recruitment and employee retention won't get easier any time soon. Organizations need a better, more effective approach for evaluating their applicants. By evaluating candidates through the lenses of behaviors, motivators, values, work energizers, and life priorities, companies will make selections that strengthen their teams and fill gaps—and have more success in hiring for retention. ■

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"With workers continuing to leave jobs in high numbers, it has never been more important for organizations to understand how to hire for employee retention."



Today's TOP 4 HR TRENDS



BY STRATEGIC HR

Many HR professionals are excited about the emerging trends that will enable HR to work hand in hand with departments across their organizations to bring about sorely needed boosts in workforce culture and engagement for improved retention. Much of the business world is still navigating the impact of inflation, economic growth and turns, labor shortages, changing workforce demographics, and health and emotional stressors coming from every direction, all of which contributed to the Great Resignation of 2021 that rolled right through 2022. With quit rates staying steady, it's no surprise that most HR trends are related to retention.

Increased Emphasis on Retention Strategies

Organizations have realized just how important it is—now more than ever—to retain hard-to-find team members. The top reasons why employers lost employees last year include workers' dissatisfaction with their bosses, compensation, and work-life balance, as well as a “lack of recognition/appreciation” and “few growth/advancement opportunities.”¹ The right retention strategies can help employees mitigate these factors and can help position an organization as

the top choice for both current and prospective employees.

Revamp onboarding. New hires are more likely to stay at an organization longer when they go through a good onboarding process that introduces them to the company culture, builds community and belonging for them, and makes them feel good about their choice to join the organization. A well-planned onboarding process also decreases the time it takes them to get up to speed and become productive in their new roles.

Engage early and often. Gathering feedback from new hires during their first 90 days gives them enough time to become familiar with the company and their new role but still leaves plenty of time to fix anything that might be wrong. Options include having someone other than the new hire's manager conduct one-on-one interviews with them and using an online tool to roll out short, easy-to-complete pulse surveys to provide data that management can act on immediately without waiting for an annual review or more formal engagement survey.

Keep pay competitive. This strategy should not be limited to new hires but applied across the entire organization—after all, it's

less expensive to keep a good employee than to hire a new one. For companies that increased starting pay last year, now may be an excellent time to ensure that pay scales are equitable and competitive for current employees, too. (This goal can be achieved through programs such as benchmarking key roles and evaluating pay bands, for example.) If no changes are needed, management and HR could consider sharing a total compensation statement that allows employees to see and appreciate a complete picture of the total pay and benefits they receive.

Evaluate benefits offerings. With one recent survey identifying “fair pay and benefits” among the main factors influencing employees' “intent to stay,”² organizations should consider a benefit benchmarking study to see how they stack up against their competition. Asking employees which benefits are most important to them could yield additional useful information. (For example, a company might learn that it could save money and retain employees by offering a benefit that's more attractive to Millennials and Generation Z employees and dropping an outdated, expensive benefit that isn't appreciated by a younger workforce.)

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2. Antonio Pangallo et al. 2022. “2023 Employee Experience Trends.” Qualtrics website, success.qualtrics.com/rs/542-FMF-412/images/Employee-Experience-Trends-2023-Global-US.pdf.

Give managers training and resources to be successful.

Great managers inspire their employees and bring the best out of them. Being a great manager isn't an inherent skill, however, but one that must be learned. Organizations should provide training for managers that can help them relate to and guide their teams by learning how to give feedback, coach for development and goal planning, engage in hybrid or remote environments, and develop their business communication or soft skills.

Promote overall balance. People talk about “work-life balance,” but that term is too limiting, because it's really a question of overall life balance. When organizations enable life balance and support growth and development holistically (flexibility, wellness, growth, engagement, etc.), they create thriving employee communities in which business outcomes are abundant.

Succession Planning

“Our CEO is new and unlikely to go anywhere for a long time. So why would we need a succession plan?”

This refrain is common in the business world but fails to take into account the fact that succession plans aren't just for the C-suite. What could happen if a company's only IT person—the person who reigns over its network systems and security—suddenly left? Or what about the unexpected departure of the salesperson who brings in most of an organization's revenue? Companies need to consider the impact that key people and roles at all levels can have on the health of their business and operations. Succession planning can help ensure that valuable knowledge and experiences don't leave an organization when employees do.

Savvy organizations that are paying attention to this HR trend will seize the opportunity to get “rising stars” ready for critical roles that retirees may vacate soon and to prepare for unexpected turnover. Planned succession benefits both the existing employees prepared to share their knowledge and those

valued employees seeking growth and advancement opportunities (which are critical for retention). Effective strategies for getting employees ready for the next level include implementing mentorships for relationship building and knowledge sharing, using assessments for growth coaching, hosting informal “lunch and learn” sessions for training, and providing leadership training that includes business and soft skills.

Recruitment Amid Workforce Shortages

Despite some cutbacks (notably in the tech industry), many sectors continue to scale up. Although the frantic rush of 2022 to get hires in the door has subsided a bit, employers are adding jobs at a rate still well above average trend growth, and staffing shortages and the fight for talent will likely continue through much of 2023.

In this environment, organizations need to make sure that their recruitment efforts don't go to waste. They can do this in part by mitigating “shift shock,” the feeling a new hire has when they find that “that the position or company is very different from what [they] were led to believe” and an experience that is a major cause of turnover among new employees.

By crafting accurate job descriptions that state not just skills needed but identified and proven job success factors as well as the company's key traits and values, an organization can reduce the possibility of mismatched hires. Training interviewers and hiring managers to use the job description appropriately throughout the hiring process can also lead to better hires.

Holistic Approaches to DEIB

Current HR trends include an increased emphasis on diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) strategies. Improvements to an organization's DEIB efforts can have a considerable impact on company culture and employee retention. More and more companies are working to make DEIB a core element of their organizations by implementing a variety of practices:

- Linking DEIB goals to leader performance measures to ensure accountability and importance. (For example, executive compensation incentive plans can be connected to DEIB successes.)
- Implementing transparent pay practices. Some organizations are doing this proactively, but many states already mandate pay transparency in hiring practices (and more are expected to do so in the near future). Pay transparency seems scary to some at first, but it can promote fair pay, establish clarity about promotional goals or merit increases, and even lead to more trust.
- Promoting inclusivity in benefit offerings. Demonstrating a commitment to DEIB through policy updates or added benefits can encourage and support a desired company culture. Many new benefit options include policies of particular interest to nontraditional families, enhanced parental leaves, and flexible holiday and PTO policies.

Using Employee Feedback to Address HR Trends

One organization's needs will differ from those of another. Some will opt to highlight retention issues, for example, whereas many will focus instead on DEIB efforts. Measuring employee feedback can help leaders identify their candidates' and employees' needs and interests. Keeping an eye on—and responding to—the HR trends of today will help organizations be better prepared for whatever comes their way tomorrow. ■

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How to Understand— and Dispel— Feelings of Fear



Fear is an emotion that everyone feels many times throughout their lives—and often at inconvenient or expected moments. Even highly experienced leaders encounter this saboteur while executing routine leadership tasks. By learning how to understand and manage that fear, leaders can avoid being paralyzed by it and will therefore be ready and able to lead effectively.

Recognition

The first step of managing fear is recognizing the indications of its presence and understanding how it manifests. Often it's accompanied by physical symptoms such as headaches or sweaty palms. In uncomfortable moments people often sense such bodily changes. The key is to connect them to a feeling of fear and identify their causes.

Consultation With a Trusted Adviser

Sometimes people struggle to understand what they are afraid of, so they ask a colleague, friend, boss, or coach to help them. **It's time for someone to reach out for help when:**

- “Something” is preventing them from making healthy decisions.
- They feel “stuck” and can't make progress (and feel as though they're being swallowed by quicksand).
- They struggle to get through ordinary daily actions and choices.
- Their thoughts are dominated by negative chatter.

New Perspectives

Looking at fear through a different and creative lens can help people see new ways of moving out of their paralysis. They can imagine being an animal, for example, or perhaps a famous person

or someone they admire, and then let that new perspective guide them through the fear. (This can be an eye-opening exercise to do with a coach.)

Meaningful Goodbyes

Saying goodbye to the causes of frustration and paralysis is one way to bury fear. This kind of goodbye can take many possible forms. For example, someone might write about their fear on a piece of paper and then put the document away on a shelf or rip it up. Or perhaps someone might resolve not to live with that fear any longer and announce that intention either to themselves (while looking in a mirror) or to a person who is personally or professionally important to them.

New Commitments

The final step in ending fear is to commit to taking new actions. Imagining how they will behave differently and reflecting on what they have learned (and celebrating those successes) can help someone achieve more success on their leadership journey. Once their fear has been identified, addressed, and conquered, a leader will be better prepared to handle the challenges and become the best leader they can be. ■



Terri Klaas is a highly sought-after leadership skills facilitator, trainer, coach, and speaker who helps organizations develop influential leaders and retain their experienced talent. She can be reached at www.terriklassconsulting.com.

A Not-so-quiet Problem

BY JAMES MOUL



In spite of its name, quiet constraint has been making big noises since it first hit the HR scene in fall 2022. In short, quiet constraint is the employee practice of holding onto information or knowledge rather than sharing it with co-workers.

Hot on the heels of quiet quitting (the big HR trend of 2021), quiet constraint is the latest example of behavior whose seemingly calm surface masks employee dissatisfaction and disengagement. With its high potential for turbulence and disruption, it's something that employers will want to understand and address sooner rather than later.

At its most fundamental level, quiet constraint leads to reduced outcomes. It's hard for teams, departments, and even organizations to achieve their best results if they aren't working with the best resources. And if someone has innovative ideas, insights that others have overlooked, or some other unique contribution to the conversation—and then keeps that information in their pocket—their teams (and departments and organizations) don't have all the resources they need to achieve optimal outcomes.

Quiet constraint is a type of lack of communication. In general,

a lack of communication generally has a negative effect on a workplace. People feel out of the loop, misinformed, and undervalued when they know there's information out there that they need but aren't getting. It's bad enough when employees think "management doesn't tell us everything"—that's not ideal, but at least people aren't surprised by that trope. But when employees know (or believe) that their colleagues are holding out on them, that can accelerate the decline of an organization's culture.

Quiet constraint is a pretty new phenomenon and one that HR leaders are only beginning to study carefully. But even though these analyses are still in their infancy, a few shared understandings about the quiet constraint's causes—and solutions—are emerging.

CAUSE: Employees want to use the withheld information for their own benefit. For example, they may want to use it in their own projects or reveal it at a later moment when they think it will have the most impact on their careers.

SOLUTION: Remind employees that when they engage in brainstorming and idea-sharing, everyone benefits. Today someone might have a great idea to share,

and tomorrow that same person might be helped by a great one they hear from someone else.

CAUSE: Employees actively don't want to help their coworkers (and might even dislike them).

SOLUTION: Team building and other efforts to strengthen the company culture are key. When employees share trust, goals, and strong connections, they are more likely to want to help each other.

CAUSE: Employees don't realize the need for the information they have. Not all quiet constraint is intentional. Sometimes employees feel disconnected from their workplace or colleagues (a feeling that can be exacerbated by remote or hybrid work arrangements that don't have everyone in the office together) and just don't know that their information is valuable to someone else.

SOLUTION: Here, too, team building is essential. Managing remote or hybrid teams presents its own unique challenges—in particular, to communication and inclusion—so leaders need to be mindful to treat off-site employees as full team members (and ensure that on-site workers do so as well).

CAUSE: Employees might lack the confidence to speak up and share their information, even if they think it might be helpful to others. Not all quiet constraint is malicious. Sometimes people feel talked over by their colleagues or managers or don't think their ideas are "ready" for sharing.

SOLUTION: Skill building, mentoring, training, and other employee development efforts can help people feel more confident in their abilities. A bit of encouragement can also work wonders for drawing someone out of their shell and getting them to contribute more actively in meetings—and to advocate for themselves when others try to ignore them.

Will quiet constraint have as much of an impact on the workplace as quiet quitting? That remains to be seen. But rather than wait to see how things shake out, companies should work hard to nip this phenomenon in the bud now. Resolving the issues that underlie quiet constraint not only removes that problem but also strengthens the company culture generally and makes the workplace a more productive and engaging environment for everyone. ■

James Moul is a copywriter with Haley Marketing Group and the editor in chief of HR Insights. He can be reached at jmoul@haleymarketing.com.

RECIPE

Sugar Snap Peas with Mint

One of the first non-lettuce vegetables to hit the farmers' markets in the spring, sugar snap peas herald the arrival of the summer bounty to come in later months. Parboiling takes the raw edge off these crunchy, vibrant green pods, and butter and mint add a finishing touch that doesn't overwhelm the star of the show. This simple dish is so enticingly delicious that you should not be surprised if you find yourself stealing a pea pod—or two! or three!—from the serving bowl before you get it to the table!

YIELD: 4 servings **TIME:** 10 min.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1 lb sugar snap peas, stemmed and trimmed
- 2 Tb unsalted butter
- 2 Tb fresh mint, julienned
- Salt and pepper to taste



DIRECTIONS:

- Bring 2-quart (or larger) pot of water to boil, then add the sugar snap peas.
- After about 3 minutes, drain the sugar snap peas and place them in a serving bowl.
- Add the butter and mint, then toss until they are well distributed. Add salt and pepper to taste.

- Serve immediately before the peas lose their snap and color.

NOTE:

- It's far, far preferable to undercook the peas than to overcook them. Few things are sadder than sugar snap peas that have lost their crunch and their color.

Nutrition Facts

Amount per Serving	
Calories:	99 cal
Fat:	6 g
Dietary fiber:	3 g
Sugars:	4.5 g
Protein:	5.3 g

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