



5 Steps to Retain More of Your Workforce

Nonprofit leaders understand that people are key to mission success. But the Great Resignation brought home for all employers the urgency to retain as many great employees as possible. No organization will ever have a 100% employee retention rate—many talented individuals will move on to new opportunities in time, as they should. But your organization can take concrete, practical steps to ensure more of your great employees stay with the team longer. Here's how.



Offer your employees opportunities to grow.

Even at a small nonprofit with few positions to promote employees into, leaders can provide many kinds of growth opportunities. Have one employee mentor another in a skill they want to learn. Cross-training offers another chance for staff to learn new skills and build support for each other.



Show appreciation for your employees in multiple ways.

Recognize employees' achievements publicly. Celebrate birthdays and other milestones. Share positive feedback with them regularly in one-on-one conversations, and make sure your bosses hear about their great work!



Provide as much flexibility as possible in how, when, and where employees work.

Offer schedule options that allow your team members to do tasks in the time, place, and manner that works best for them. Research shows this is one of the biggest factors in employees' decisions about where to work.



Pay your staff competitively and invest wisely in employee benefits.

Although it is not always true, some nonprofits do not offer competitive compensation and generous benefits programs. The challenge of recruiting and retaining great employees, and the national movement towards a living wage, increase the urgency to offer competitive pay and benefits. This work may require difficult conversations with funders and donors who permit lower than reasonable overhead rates. It may also require additional investments in programs that generate unrestricted net income. But over time, you'll need to have those conversations less, as the entire sector and society evolve toward more equitable pay.



Commit and recommit to an inclusive culture.

Employees won't stay in a place where they feel like they can't be themselves, or their input is not valued. [A Deloitte survey found](#) that 39 percent of respondents would leave their organization for a more inclusive one. The survey found employees value workplaces that make them feel comfortable being themselves, offer workplace flexibility, and provide a sense of purpose. Organizations should evaluate managers on how well they foster inclusion. To do that, ask managers what strategies they are using to foster inclusion, and ask employees to rate their supervisors on the degree to which they foster inclusion and their perceptions of the most effective methods for doing so.