5 Ways to Retain Your People

FINDINGS FROM THE WORKHUMAN IQ FALL 2021 INTERNATIONAL SURVEY REPORT
Are you worried about a mass migration of employees during the Great Resignation? Eric Mosley, CEO of Workhuman, coins it the Great Talent Swap, as talent will migrate to new organizations rather than resign entirely from the workforce.

The employer/employee dynamic has changed dramatically during the pandemic. Working from home brought new stress levels, longer hours, and difficulty separating work hours from family time for many employees. Fresh from this experience, many workers are reevaluating what they want from their careers and employers. Unhappy workers are willing to move to new organizations for more flexibility and a better workplace culture.

The latest Workhuman® iQ survey of more than 3,500 full-time workers gives insight into the employee experience and who might be your greatest flight risk.

Based on the report findings, here are five revolutionary ways you can retain your best humans.
Foster flexibility and empathy in your workplace.

Stress, isolation, and burnout over the past 18 months have contributed to **38% of workers surveyed looking for new jobs** over the next year. Of those employees who will look for a new job, 30% cited wanting more flexibility as their primary reason for looking. Flexibility can mean different things to each worker, but many workers are simply looking for better work-life balance.

Data shows working parents feel especially stressed as child care is still not what it was pre-pandemic. Of those seeking new jobs, 65% are working parents. They want flexibility and empathy to accommodate both their families and their careers. Offering a hybrid work environment or flexibility around working hours may help these workers balance career and family obligations.
According to Gallup, flexibility can come in three different areas: flexibility in a work schedule, work location, and flexibility to dress for the day. Flexibility doesn’t mean changing performance goals. Instead, flexibility means leaders may need to reimagine what best accommodates their workers in new hybrid solutions.

Kate Lister, president of Global Workplace Analytics, spoke about flexibility at the SHRM Annual Conference & Expo 2021. She suggested companies establish goals and measurable results for flexible and remote work options.

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If you want to keep your people, you need to find ways to accommodate them.

KATE LISTER
President at Global Workplace Analytics
TWO
Infuse gratitude and appreciation into your workplace culture.

Creating an environment of appreciation and gratitude for quality contributions can be a powerful way to retain your top performers. Workers recognized in the last month are nearly half as likely to be looking for a new job (26% vs. 49%). Having a culture of gratitude and appreciation contributes to the overall health and well-being of your organization.
Expressing gratitude through thanks and recognition helps workers feel valued and part of a team. Both givers and receivers of appreciation are 2x as likely to be highly engaged and nearly 3x as likely to feel that their work has meaning and purpose. Data reveals the more recently someone has received thanks at work, the lower their stress level and the greater their sense of gratitude.

Here’s a simple way to start: Begin every meeting by talking about something positive. What’s going right? Celebrate a team win or milestone. Give your colleagues kudos. This appreciation can help set a tone of positivity and gratitude within your organization.

“There is no joy without gratitude.”

BRENÉ BROWN
Bestselling Author and Professor
THREE
Create an employee recognition program.

Recognition may be one of the most valuable tools in strengthening culture and helping to prevent employee turnover. And the best way to ensure that appreciation is available to all employees is to establish an employee recognition program. Historically, recognition has been tactical in nature – consisting of managers randomly handing out gift cards from a drawer or years-of-service programs that give tenured employees items such as watches or pins.

A comprehensive, strategic employee recognition program, on the other hand, leverages technology to amplify recognition and broadcast it throughout your company. That way, everyone can see what your organization values, participate in congratulating and reinforcing those values, and be inspired to emulate them. The program should reward employees for achievements, anniversaries, and milestones.
When a recognition program is present, employees feel a sense of connection to their company. They are 2x as likely to see a path to grow in the organization and 2x as likely to trust the company’s leadership team to make the right decisions for the company and its stakeholders.

Gallup data also shows that giving teams praise benefits an organization: 74% of workers who say their team receives praise also strongly agree that they “have the feeling that what [they are] doing at work is valuable and useful.” Employees who can clearly see the connection between their work and broader company goals are more likely to stay.

Employees who receive 5 awards are 2x less likely to leave P&G.
Clear, consistent communication is more critical than ever, whether you’re working in-office, remotely, or in a hybrid model. Regular check-ins help keep priorities clear and workflows on track. Expectations and goals need to be shared frequently and clearly with all team members and workers.

That’s why frequent check-ins between managers and employees are essential for employee perceptions of their value and role in the company overall. The good news is this latest survey reveals the majority of workers (61%) are having check-ins at least once per week. Both workers and managers benefit from these frequent communications.
Data shows that managers who regularly give their direct reports feedback demonstrate their investment in the work and commitment to professional development. And these same managers are rated more than 2x higher by their employees versus managers who rarely or never check in.

Much like receiving recognition, the latest research shows employees who receive feedback in the past month are much more likely to feel a sense of connection to their company as a whole (50% vs. 31%). Consistent, clear, and open communication is one key to retaining employees in the Great Talent Swap.

"Continuous, meaningful conversations among managers, peers, and executives provide a new model for the human workplace."

ERIC MOSLEY
CEO at Workhuman
High levels of psychological safety drive successful teams, and Workhuman® data show it may also be a secret to retention. Psychological safety is an environment of social support where everyone believes they can bring their whole selves to work and can freely bring up ideas, questions, and concerns to others without adverse repercussions. Employees may remain silent for fear someone may reject their ideas rather than being engaged and potentially making innovative contributions.
A study by Google found teams with high rates of psychological safety were more likely to stay employed with Google. In the past few years, a focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I) has helped many workers feel a stronger sense of inclusion at their companies. However, this year’s survey reveals only 11% of job seekers feel psychologically safe compared to 29% of non-job seekers.

So how do you create an environment of psychological safety?

• Create space for new ideas.

• Ask open-ended questions while listening to understand facts and values.

• Recognize when mistakes happen and use them as learning opportunities.

• Check in with employees weekly, recognize their achievements, and purposefully create an environment where people feel safe to engage.

Workers with weekly or daily check-ins with their managers are more likely to feel a sense of psychological safety than those whose managers rarely check in with them.
This is just the beginning. Download the complete Workhuman iQ Fall 2021 International Survey Report for more data and insights on how to retain more of your best people.

Ready to get started? Contact Workhuman today to take the first step in building a magnetic company culture.

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