



TIP SHEET

EMPLOYEE RETENTION - 5 DIMENSIONS OF GREAT WORKPLACE EXPERIENCE

WHO IS THIS RESOURCE FOR?

This tipsheet is designed for employers. It provides a list of five key factors that support employee retention.

WHAT DO EMPLOYEES WANT?

Employee retention is vital for a thriving workplace. When employees and leaders are engaged and positive about their work, talents are maximized, productivity rises, targets are met (or exceeded) and innovation is unleashed. To become an employer of choice, where a healthy, positive culture draws people in and keeps them committed over the long haul, it's important to build these dimensions of workplace experience:

1. EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (EDI)

Why it Matters:

An equitable, diverse and inclusive workplace leverages difference to make a difference. It enjoys the benefits of multiple, varying perspectives and talents, working collaboratively toward a common goal. The resulting culture empowers each person to thrive by honouring their unique identity and offering them the unique supports they need to succeed.

Actions to Take:

- Take the [50 – 30 Challenge pledge](#)
- Invite input from employees, customers and other interested parties
- Assess current levels of equity, diversity and inclusion
- Develop a plan to enhance EDI, aligned with organizational values and vision
- Identify action items to drive improvements and measures to track progress

2. SENSE OF PURPOSE

Why it Matters:

Everyone wants to feel like their work is meaningful. Feeling useful and contributing to something important fosters a sense of belonging and achievement.

Actions to Take:

- Invest in high-quality, individualized onboarding for new hires that focuses on purpose
- Recognize individual and team contributions
- Celebrate successes

- Demonstrate the positive impact of the work
- Involve employees in decision-making

3. OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

Why it Matters:

Supporting the learning and growth of employees shows them you care while enhancing their capacity to contribute to the organization's success. When people feel highly capable in doing their work, they also feel proud and valued.

Actions to Take:

- Offer inhouse learning and development sessions and resources
- Reimburse tuition fees and costs for conferences and seminars outside of work
- Involve employees in career and succession planning
- Establish mentorship programs
- Reward those who take the initiative to learn and grow

4. THE WORK ENVIRONMENT

Why it Matters:

No matter how much they love the work, if the environment is not meeting their needs, employees will not stay. A work environment that feels unsafe, uncomfortable or inflexible is guaranteed to drive high employee turnover.

Actions to Take:

- Encourage and reinforce personal and professional boundaries
- Allow flexibility and autonomy wherever possible
- Provide sufficient equipment and supplies
- Provide a safe, accessible and harmonious physical environment
- Check in on workload distribution regularly
- Set and enforce clear expectations for behaviour and performance
- Support mental health with programs and resources

5. SKILLED AND SUPPORTIVE LEADERS

Why it Matters:

There is a saying the people don't leave their organizations – they leave their managers. Employees often leave work roles because they see their leader as an obstacle to their success. Essential skills for leaders go beyond the technical demands of the work and include sharing their vision; communicating positively; inspiring confidence; knowing how to adapt; and showing up authentically.

Actions to Take:

- Provide leaders with ongoing leadership development and coaching supports
- Develop a leader competency model and use it to reinforce desired behaviours
- Promote employees into leadership roles based on people skills as well as technical skills
- Prioritize recognition and feedback
- Encourage regular one-on-one meetings between leaders and their direct reports

CONCLUSION

There are many other factors that support employee commitment to stay with an organization. The five identified here also share a common EDI-related focus: ensuring that EDI principles and practices are embedded; paying attention to the meaningfulness of work for employees; ensuring that they have access to opportunities to grow and develop their skills; ensuring the work environment is accessible, harmonious and safe; and enabling leaders to lead with effectiveness.

