

[HR Planning, Talent Acquisition, Retention and Reward Strategies]



Lecture Title: [Retention: Creating and Evaluating Retention Plans]

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Date: Monday 20th April 9.00-13.00 hrs



**Masters in
Human Resources Management**

Learning Objectives

- Develop effective retention plans to ensure talent is retained.
- *Creating effective retention plans is essential for retaining talent and maintaining a motivated workforce. Strategies will include:- Enhance Employee Engagement; Offer Competitive Compensation; Prioritize Career Development; Build a Positive Work Environment; Analyse Retention Data.*
- Explore ways to enhance employee engagement and satisfaction to improve retention.
- *These include: - Foster Open Communication; Personalize Recognition and Rewards; Encourage Collaboration; Empower Autonomy and Innovation; Invest in Well-Being; Provide Purpose and Meaning; Create Opportunities for Growth; Tailor Benefits and Perks.*
- Evaluate the effectiveness of retention strategies through metrics and feedback.
- *Some steps using metrics and feedback include - Employee Turnover Rate; Retention Rate; Exit Interview Data; Engagement Scores; Internal Mobility Rates; Conduct Feedback Loops; Employee Surveys; Focus Groups.*



Learning Method

- **Lecture focused on learning objectives** supported by **formative assessment tools**, to provides feedback and information during the instructional process, while learning is taking place, and while learning is occurring.
- Formative assessment through participative learning activities will be utilised evaluating students' comprehension and academic progress throughout the lecture - particularly with respect to understanding and applying HRM concepts.



Discussion

Identify ways to enhance employee engagement
and satisfaction to improve retention.



Develop effective retention plans to ensure talent is retained

- *Creating effective retention plans is essential for retaining talent and maintaining a motivated workforce. Strategies will include:- Enhance Employee Engagement; Offer Competitive Compensation; Prioritize Career Development; Build a Positive Work Environment; Analyse Retention Data.*
- *An effective retention plan truly lays the foundation for a motivated and committed workforce. Here's how these strategies can be developed and implemented in detail:*



1. Enhance Employee Engagement:

- Foster open communication channels to give employees a voice.
- Celebrate achievements, recognize contributions, and create a sense of belonging.
- Organize team-building activities and initiatives that align with the organization's culture.



2. Offer Competitive Compensation:

- Regularly benchmark salaries and benefits against industry standards.
- Include performance-based incentives and non-monetary rewards, such as additional leave, wellness programs, or flexible working arrangements.



3. Prioritize Career Development:

- Provide clear career progression pathways and opportunities for upskilling.
- Invest in mentorship programs and ongoing learning opportunities.
- Conduct regular development-focused performance reviews.



4. Build a Positive Work Environment:

- Promote inclusivity, diversity, and respect throughout the organization.
- Create a supportive workplace that prioritizes work-life balance and mental well-being.
- Ensure leaders and managers embody the values of the organization and inspire trust.



5. Analyse Retention Data:

- Regularly monitor turnover rates and exit interview feedback.
- Use employee surveys to identify potential pain points or areas for improvement.
- Leverage data to continuously refine and optimize retention strategies.
- *With these strategies, you'll not only retain talent but also nurture a thriving and resilient workforce.*



Employee Surveys

Employee Engagement Surveys

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7vTqo-OLnF0>

The Truth About Employee Engagement Surveys

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m6FnQFJeN8U>



- Explore ways to enhance employee engagement and satisfaction to improve retention
- *These include: - Foster Open Communication; Personalize Recognition and Rewards; Encourage Collaboration; Empower Autonomy and Innovation; Invest in Well-Being; Provide Purpose and Meaning; Create Opportunities for Growth; Tailor Benefits and Perks.*



1. Foster Open Communication

- Create safe channels for feedback, such as anonymous surveys, suggestion boxes, or regular 'town hall meetings'.
- Encourage transparency from leadership about company goals, challenges, and decisions.
- Train managers in active listening and emotional intelligence to ensure employees feel heard.
- Tip: Weekly one-on-ones can dramatically increase trust and alignment.



2. Personalize Recognition and Rewards

- Tailor recognition to individual preferences—some might love public praise, others prefer private acknowledgment.
- Implement peer recognition platforms to encourage team-wide appreciation.
- Link rewards to personal achievements and company values.
- Example: Let employees choose from a menu of rewards (extra PTO, gift cards, learning grant/sponsorship).



3. Encourage Collaboration

- Break down silos with cross-functional projects and knowledge-sharing sessions.
- Use collaboration tools like Slack, Trello, or Notion to support teamwork.
- Celebrate team successes to reinforce the value of collective effort.
- Idea: Host regular “collaboration jams” to work through real problems across departments.



4. Empower Autonomy and Innovation

- Give employees ownership over projects and decisions in their area of expertise.
- Support experimentation—treat failures as learning opportunities.
- Offer flexible work arrangements to build trust and responsibility.
- Initiative: Launch a quarterly “Innovation Day” where teams pitch and test new ideas.



5. Invest in Well-Being

- Promote work-life balance with flexible hours and mental health days.
- Provide wellness programs, such as mindfulness sessions, gym memberships, or counseling support.
- Foster a supportive culture where checking in on colleagues is the norm.
- Tool: Use pulse surveys to monitor employee stress levels and morale.



6. Provide Purpose and Meaning

- Connect individual roles to the company's mission and values.
- Share stories of how the company's work positively impacts customers or communities.
- Encourage volunteer opportunities or purpose-driven initiatives.
- Example: Add a “mission moment” to team meetings that highlights meaningful work.



7. Create Opportunities for Growth

- Offer continuous learning through courses, certifications, or mentoring.
- Set clear career paths and development goals during performance reviews.
- Promote internally whenever possible to show growth is achievable.
- Framework: Build Individual Development Plans (IDPs) tailored to career aspirations.



8. Tailor Benefits and Perks

- Survey employees to understand what benefits they value most. Offer flexible perks, such as customizable benefits packages, remote work stipends, or family support.
- Review offerings regularly to adapt to evolving employee needs.
- Perk: Create a “choose your perk” program allowing employees to pick what matters most to them.



• Practical Application

Case Study: Prime Direct Bank

- **Background:**
- Prime Direct is a mid-sized Bank with 500 employees.
- Over the past 18 months, the company has faced a rising attrition rate—especially among junior and mid-level staff.
- Despite competitive salaries and benefits, internal surveys show that employees feel disconnected, underappreciated, and uncertain about growth opportunities.
- Leadership is seeking ways to enhance engagement and satisfaction to retain talent and build a more loyal workforce.



- **Key Issues Identified:**

- Declining morale and motivation.
- Poor communication between management and staff.
- Limited career development and upskilling opportunities.
- Weak recognition and feedback culture.
- Lack of work-life balance initiatives.



- **Recommend strategies to Enhance Engagement, Satisfaction, and Retention. *In an aim - action - impact format.***

- **Example:**

1. Aim: Foster Transparent Communication

- **Action:** Implement regular town hall meetings and anonymous feedback tools.
- **Impact:** Builds trust, ensures employees feel heard, and promotes transparency in company goals.



2. Aim: Career Development and Learning Paths

- **Action:** Offer skill-building workshops, mentorship programmes, and personalized development plans.
- **Impact:** Encourages long-term commitment by showing employees a future within the company.

3. Aim: Recognition and Reward Programs

- **Action:** Establish monthly peer-nominated awards and manager-led shout-outs for achievements.
- **Impact:** Increases motivation and morale by valuing employee contributions.



4. Aim: Enhance Work-Life Balance

- **Action:** Introduce flexible work hours, remote work options, and mental health support (e.g., EAPs).
- **Impact:** Reduces burnout and makes employees feel supported beyond just their job roles.

5. Aim: Strengthen Leadership and Management Training

- **Action:** Train managers in empathetic leadership, communication, and conflict resolution.
- **Impact:** Creates a more supportive, human-centered management style that improves team cohesion.



6. Aim: Define and Reinforce Company Culture

- **Action:** Clarify core values and integrate them into hiring, onboarding, and performance reviews.
- **Impact:** Aligns employees around a shared purpose and cultivates belonging.

7. Aim: Conduct Regular Engagement Surveys

- **Action:** Use quarterly pulse surveys to track employee sentiment and make data-driven improvements.
- **Impact:** Helps identify problems early and respond proactively to shifting needs.



Expected Outcomes

Metric	Before Intervention	Target After 12 Months
Employee Engagement Score	58%	75%
Annual Turnover Rate	24%	< 12%
Internal Promotion Rate	15%	30%
Satisfaction with Managers	61%	80%



Conclusion:

- To combat high attrition and improve employee loyalty, Prime Bank must prioritize holistic engagement strategies. By enhancing communication, recognizing contributions, supporting personal growth, and building a meaningful workplace culture, the company can transform employee experience and improve retention in a sustainable way.

Evaluate the effectiveness of retention strategies through metrics and feedback.

- *Some steps using metrics and feedback include - Employee Turnover Rate; Retention Rate; Exit Interview Data; Engagement Scores; Internal Mobility Rates; Conduct Feedback Loops; Employee Surveys; Focus Groups.*

- Evaluating the effectiveness of retention strategies is essential to ensure they are delivering value and meeting your goals. Here are some steps you can take to assess them using metrics and feedback:

1. Identify Key Metrics:

- Employee Turnover Rate: Measure how many employees leave within a specific timeframe.
- Retention Rate: Track the percentage of employees staying over a given period.
- Exit Interview Data: Look for common themes in reasons for departure.
- Engagement Scores: Use employee engagement surveys to assess satisfaction and connection.
- Internal Mobility Rates: Check if employees are progressing within the organization



- Top HR KPIs to Track in 2026
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kXFh23earV4>



2. Conduct Feedback Loops:

- Employee Surveys: Gather input on job satisfaction, benefits, and company culture.
- Stay Interviews: Understand why current employees continue to work at the organization and what could make them leave.
- Focus Groups: Dive deeper into employee perspectives through group discussions.



Feedback loop: creating healthy conflict through critiques | Lianne Wappett | TEDxUSU

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H2wvCpXMx4>



3. Analyze Program-Specific Data:

- Assess participation rates in initiatives like mentoring, wellness programmes, or training sessions.
- Review the impact of perks and benefits (e.g., flexible working hours, bonuses) on retention.

4. Benchmark Against Industry Standards:

- Compare your retention rates and engagement scores with industry averages to identify gaps.



5. Action Planning:

- Use the insights from data and feedback to refine or redesign strategies.
- Consider pilot programmes and incremental changes to gauge effectiveness.



- Retention strategies are diverse, designed to address various organisational goals and workforce dynamics. Critically evaluating and comparing them involves analysing their strengths, weaknesses, and appropriateness for different contexts.
- Let's delve in:



Evaluation of Retention Strategies

1. Employee Engagement Programmes:

- Strengths: Improves morale, loyalty, and productivity by actively involving employees in organisational goals.
- Weaknesses: May require significant investment of time and resources to sustain long-term engagement.
- Appropriate Systems: Regular surveys, suggestion scheme system, and tools like Slack or Microsoft Teams for fostering communication.



2. Professional Development Initiatives:

- Strengths: Attracts ambitious employees by promoting skill enhancement and career progression.
- Weaknesses: Risk of employees leaving after acquiring skills for better opportunities elsewhere.
- Appropriate Systems: Learning Management Systems (LMS) like SAP Litmos or Cornerstone.



3. Flexible Work Arrangements:

- Strengths: Appeals to employees seeking work-life balance, especially post-pandemic.
- Weaknesses: May lead to challenges in team collaboration and monitoring productivity.
- Appropriate Systems: Software like Zoom for remote work, project management tools like Trello or Asana.



4. Recognition and Reward Systems:

- Strengths: Motivates employees through acknowledgment of contributions, fostering loyalty.
- Weaknesses: Overemphasis on rewards may create competition among employees.
- Appropriate Systems: Platforms like Bonusly or Achievers for real-time recognition.



5. Wellness Programmes:

- Strengths: Reduces stress-related attrition by promoting physical and mental well-being.
- Weaknesses: May face resistance due to stigma around mental health discussions or insufficient participation.
- Appropriate Systems: Health apps like Headspace or wellness platforms like Virgin Pulse.

6. Succession Planning:

- Strengths: Ensures organisational stability by preparing future leaders internally.
- Weaknesses: May restrict new perspectives or lead to a stagnant culture.
- Appropriate Systems: Succession tools like PeopleFluent or Workday.



Comparison and Appropriateness

- Scalability: Flexible work arrangements and wellness programmes often scale well across industries, whereas succession planning is more beneficial for organisations with hierarchical structures.
- Cost Efficiency: Recognition programs are low-cost yet impactful, while professional development may require higher upfront investment.
- Industry Fit: Tech companies may prefer engagement programs, while manufacturing firms might focus on wellness due to physical job demands.
- When selecting strategies, organisations must weigh their workforce's unique needs, budget constraints, and long-term goals.



- **Top Strategies to Boost Employee Engagement and Retention**
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=krzT26rdB8Q>



- **Case Study: Retaining Talent at Meridian Health Group**

- **Background**

Meridian Health Group (MHG) is a mid-sized healthcare organisation employing 1,200 staff across three hospitals and several outpatient clinics. Over the past two years, MHG has experienced a **17% annual turnover rate**, significantly higher than the sector average of 11%.

- Exit interviews reveal three recurring themes:
 - **Workload and burnout** among clinical staff
 - **Limited career progression** for administrative and support roles
 - **Perceived lack of recognition** across all departments
- At the same time, MHG is pursuing three strategic goals:
 - **Goal 1:** Improve patient experience scores by 15%
 - **Goal 2:** Reduce recruitment costs by 20%
 - **Goal 3:** Build a pipeline of future clinical leaders



- The HR Director has been tasked with developing a **retention strategy** that aligns with these organisational goals while addressing the diverse needs of the workforce. A cross-functional working group has proposed the following initiatives:
- **Proposed Retention Initiatives:**
 - **Flexible scheduling options** for clinical staff
 - **A structured career development framework** for administrative and support employees
 - **A recognition programme** combining peer-to-peer appreciation and quarterly awards
 - **Leadership development pathways** for high-potential clinicians
 - **Wellbeing initiatives**, including counselling access and resilience workshops
- The executive team wants an evidence-based recommendation on which initiatives to prioritise and how they should be implemented.



Questions

1. Which organisational goals are most directly supported by the proposed retention initiatives?
2. How do workforce dynamics influence which retention strategies should be prioritised?
3. If MHG can only implement two initiatives in the first year, which would you recommend and why?
4. What metrics should MHG use to evaluate the success of its retention strategy?
5. How could MHG ensure that the retention strategy remains adaptable over time?



References

- Armstrong, M. with Taylor, S. (2014), Armstrong's Handbook of Human Resource Management Practice, 13th edn. London: Kogan Page.
- Taylor, S. (2014), People Resourcing, 6th edn. London: CIPD.



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