

IS IT JUST ABOUT MONEY?

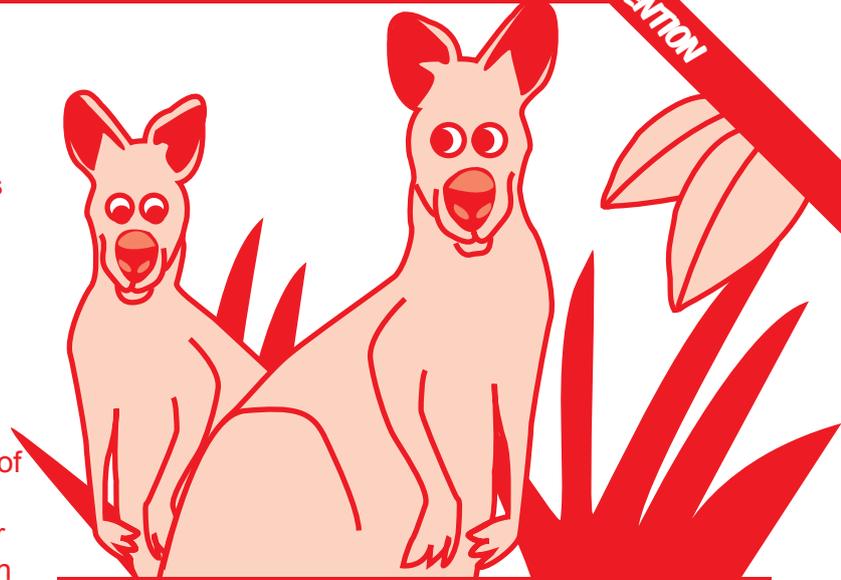
WHAT WE CAN DO ABOUT RETAINING EFFECTIVE STAFF!

RETENTION

Tackling staff retention is vital in a market where unemployment is relatively low and therefore competition for employees is high. Additionally, high staff turnover is a very costly situation and has serious effects on the remaining employees and can badly affect client services. But there are no magical solutions or 'one-size-fits-all' plans: each organisation needs to assess its own situation and develop a retention strategy that addresses its own specific needs.

Employees resign from their positions for a variety of reasons, many of which are truthfully shared with a supervisor at the time the employee tenders his/her resignation. In the Community Sector reasons such as better pay, better job, or the transfer of a spouse or partner are frequently given. But there may be other more complex reasons, such as:

- ★ The job or workplace not living up to expectations.
- ★ The mismatch between job and person.
- ★ Too little coaching and feedback.
- ★ Too few growth and advancement opportunities.
- ★ Feeling devalued and unrecognized.
- ★ Stress from overwork and work-life imbalance.
- ★ Loss of trust and confidence in senior leaders.



DID YOU KNOW?

10.5% of respondents to the NT Community Sector Staff survey are intending to leave the sector within the next 5 years. An additional and surprising 41% of respondents are "NOT SURE" if they will continue working in the Sector.

Source: NT Community Sector Staff Survey 2007

WHAT'S YOUR TURNOVER RISK?

Ask yourself these eight questions about your key staff members. The more times you can answer "yes," the more likely it is staff will remain with your organisation.

- ★ Do you know why this staff member works for your organisation and not someplace else?
- ★ Do you know this staff member's No. 1 career concern, and are you working with him/her to address it?
- ★ Does the staff member believe he/she is fairly compensated?
- ★ Do this staff member's values align with the organisations culture?
- ★ Does this staff member have enthusiasm and passion for the work he or she does?
- ★ Is this staff member able to achieve and maintain a balance between personal and professional responsibilities?
- ★ Does this staff member know you will actively promote his or her development via training, development and challenging projects?
- ★ Have you asked the staff member what the organisation can do to help him/her benefit from greater job satisfaction and be more successful?
- ★ Do you know what will motivate potential "leavers" to stay?

A RETENTION CHECKLIST: HOW DO YOU RATE?

Retention refers to the ability of an organisation to keep its most precious resource – its people. All organisations experience some level of staff turnover; however, retention is about keeping those members of staff that are critical to the sustained success and service delivery of the organisation.

- ★ While funding issues may limit the ability of individual workplaces to address salary levels, you should regularly review pay levels and salary packaging available to make sure it is as competitive and flexible as possible. You should also make sure that your compensation and packaging system is understood and considered fair by your staff.
- ★ Ensure that salary ranges are commensurate with the job. Flexibility when establishing salary ranges can make the difference.
- ★ Maintain good supervisor-worker relationships which allow for open communication - nothing says respect more than managers who actively listen to their staff.
- ★ Provide professional development opportunities to give workers the chance to develop their knowledge, skills and abilities.
- ★ Provide a career path where possible – remember career paths aren't just vertical, they can be horizontal and provide staff with opportunities for more diverse experience and career enrichment.
- ★ Actively promote activities to express appreciation and recognition of staff efforts. These can be as simple as:
 - ★ providing morning and afternoon tea for staff
 - ★ bonuses for successes and achievements
 - ★ aromatherapy and massage gift certificates to show appreciation to staff.
- ★ Ensure adequate clinical supervision or mentoring – this also allows workers to develop professionally under the guidance of more experienced practitioners.
- ★ Support workers' capacity to balance work and family life – offer flexible working hours, working from home (where possible), greater access to part time work, extended unpaid or purchased leave arrangements.
- ★ Make sure the workplace is safe, friendly, fair and frustration free.
- ★ Value fun and laughter in your work environment - ultimately, workers want to enjoy their jobs.

...ANOTHER TAKE

The most common reasons cited by respondents to the NT Community Sector Staff survey for leaving the sector were:

1. "better pay elsewhere"
2. "work is hard & exhausting"
3. "bullying in the workplace"

Source: NT Community Sector Staff Survey 2007

PEOPLE WILL FORGET WHAT YOU SAID, PEOPLE WILL FORGET WHAT YOU DID, BUT PEOPLE WILL NEVER FORGET HOW YOU MADE THEM FEEL.

Maya Angelou