

Blood: Water Technical eUpdate Vol. 23 – Tips for Tackling Staff Turnover

Dear Partners,

This month's eUpdate is dedicated to a topic that sparks a great deal of stress to leaders of mission-driven organizations like yours. It is an issue we all face and navigate with a great deal of concern and sometimes frustration: Staff turnover.

There are many reasons why employees transition to other jobs. Sometimes, it's the natural progression of career growth (more often than not experienced after a few years of employment in a specific role). Other times, being called to civil servant openings or to organizations with enumeration packages that our organizations simply cannot compete with. And sometimes it could simply be a mismatch of skills, values or expectations with the position or organization itself. The most out-of-our-control scenarios also include economic downturns which result in funding cuts directly affecting your ability to remain competitive with market salaries or even maintain positions altogether. The reasons can go on and on.

No matter the cause, retaining staff and minimizing turn-over has become a challenge all resource constrained organizations want and need to master. We all know the time and resources it takes to recruit and onboard a staff person, that once a person is fully oriented with their role, we breathe a sigh of relief and hope that they are with us for the long-haul. However, the harsh reality is that this is not always the case. Not to mention the impact on programs and other staff when positions remain unfilled for periods of time during the recruitment process.

Whether for reasons within our control or not and knowing the impact turnover has on our operations, it has become absolutely critical for organizations to develop internal strategies that support keeping your employees motivated, competitive and and willing to walk with you during difficult times.

Reducing employee turnover is dependent on the **total** work environment you offer for employees. Below are some of the most recommended approaches to proactively addressing high turn-over. In place of the traditional attached resources please see the links highlighted the tips to access articles for more in depth reading:

- Select the right people in the first place through behavior-based testing and competency screening. The right person, in the right seat, on the right bus is the starting point.
- At the same time, don't neglect to hire people with the innate talent, ability, and smarts to work in almost any position even if you don't currently have the "best" match available. Hire the smartest people you can find.
- Offer an attractive, competitive, benefits package Better benefits = reduced employee turnover. Competitive may not always translate into money: but a clear career progression and other benefits which promote healthy work-life balance. Allow flexible starting times, core business hours and flexible ending times.

- Provide opportunities for people to share their knowledge via training sessions, presentations, mentoring others and team assignments. Employees like to share what they know; the act of teaching others [ensures the employee's own learning](#).
- [Demonstrate respect](#) for employees at all times.
- [Listen to them deeply](#); use their ideas; never ridicule or shame them. Via your communication, share that you value them.
- Offer performance feedback and praise good efforts and results.
- People want to enjoy their work. [Make work fun](#). Engage and employ the special talents of each individual.
- Involve employees in decisions that affect their jobs and the overall direction of the company whenever possible. Involve them in the discussion about company vision, mission, values, and goals. This [strategic framework](#) will never "live" for them or become "owned" by them if they merely read it in email or hanging on the wall.
- Recognize excellent performance.
- Recognize and celebrate success. Mark their passage as important goals are achieved.
- Staff adequately so overtime is minimized for those who don't want it and people don't wear themselves out.
- Nurture and celebrate [organization traditions](#).
- Build a community within your workplace through activities and events that connect people over non-work related issues. Celebrate staff life events. Have an annual company dinner or Christmas party. Provide a team lunch once a month. Conduct team building days periodically.
- Provide opportunities within the company for cross-training and career progression. People like to know that they have room for career movement.
- Provide the opportunity for career and personal growth through training and education, challenging assignments and more responsibility.
- Communicate goals, roles and responsibilities so people know what is expected and feel like [part of the in-crowd](#).

More to Come!

Source: <https://www.thebalancecareers.com/tips-to-reduce-employee-turnover-1919039>