MINUTES OF THE NEENAH WATER WORKS COMMISSION
AND
STORM WATER CITIZEN ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
Regular Meeting – December 16, 2024
Hauser Room – City Hall, 211 Walnut Street, Neenah, WI

Present: President Schmeichel; Commissioners: Lang, Bauman, Hemes, and Steiner; and Director Mach.

Also Present: Water Treatment Manager Gorges, and Mr. Frank Cuthbert

President Schmeichel called the meeting to order at 4:31 p.m.

<u>Approve Regular Meeting Minutes for November 18, 2024</u> – Following discussion, **M.S.C. Hemes/Steiner to approve the November 18, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes**. All voting aye.

<u>Approve the Invoices for November 2024</u> – Director Mach reported back to the Commission regarding the refund for Gloria Dei Church. They had paid their utility bill twice and a refund was due back to them. Commissioners asked about invoices and charges from Don Hietpas & Sons, Inc. and Midwest Meter. Director Mach explained that the invoice from Hietpas was for a water main repair in an easement area. The area was overgrown with trees and the main was deep. Our staff could not access the main with our equipment. The charge from Midwest Meter was for 6" Turbo Meter gaskets.

Following discussion, **M.S.C. Schmeichel/Bauman to approve the November 2024 invoices**. All voting aye.

<u>Appearances</u> – None.

<u>Old Business/New Business</u>

<u>Salary Plan Update</u> – There was no update available.

<u>Discussion and Possible Action to Create an Employee Recognition and Retention Program</u> – Director Mach distributed some information on retention strategies along with peer utility tuition reimbursement programs. Commissioners discussed the aspects of several programs and their experiences. They also discussed what other departments are doing with regards to retention and how the city is currently handling longevity rewards. The distributed tuition reimbursement program information was discussed as well. The Commission was very interested in exploring this further as a tool to help employees develop within their roles.

Following discussion, **M.S.C. Bauman/Hemes to have Director Mach develop a model tuition reimbursement policy for the Water Utility and engage with Director Fairchild and other Department Heads in determining what longevity rewards and retention policies exist for each department in order to develop a consistent program for the Water Utility**. All voting aye.

<u>Award Chemical Bids for 2025</u> – Director Mach presented the Chemical Bids for next year. The Utility participated in the Chemical Bidding Consortium along with the cities of Appleton and Menasha. Director Mach noted that some of the chemical prices decreased year over year.

The following low bids for supplied water treatment chemicals were received:
1. Powdered Activated Carbon, Donau Carbon US, LLC, for $0.79 / lb. 500 Grade and $1.04 / lb. 800 Grade.
2. Ferric Sulfate 60%, Chemtrade Logistics, Inc., for $0.1725 / lb.
3. Sodium Hypochlorite: Hydrite Chemical Co., for $0.1749 / lb.
4. Hydrated Lime: Graymont Western Lime, Inc., for $0.1285 / lb.

5. Hydrofluorosilicic Acid 23%, Hawkins, Inc., for $0.4594 / lb.
6. Liquid Carbon Dioxide, Airgas, Inc., for $0.089 / lb.
7. Clarifloc C-308P, Polydyne, Inc., for $0.75 / lb.

Following discussion, **M.S.C. Schmeichel/Hemes to award the 2025 Chemical Bids to: Powdered Activated Carbon, Donau Carbon US, LLC, for $0.79 / lb. 500 Grade and $1.04 / lb. 800 Grade, Ferric Sulfate 60%, Chemtrade Logistics, Inc., for $0.1725 / lb., Sodium Hypochlorite: Hydrite Chemical Co., for $0.1749 / lb., Hydrated Lime: Graymont Western Lime, Inc., for $0.1285 / lb., Hydrofluorosilicic Acid 23%, Hawkins, Inc., for $0.4594 / lb., Liquid Carbon Dioxide, Airgas, Inc., for $0.089 / lb., and Clarifloc C-308P, Polydyne, Inc., for $0.75 / lb.** All voting aye.

Award Bid for Dump Truck – Director Mach presented the bids for replacing the 2012 Dump Truck. Five bids were received along with alternative bids to include trade-in value for the existing Dump Truck. The low bid was from Packer City International Truck for a 2026 International HV607 Dump Truck along with the trade-in of the existing Dump Truck for a total bid of $158,684.00. Staff were satisfied that the truck will meet the needs of the Utility.

Following discussion, **M.S.C. Steiner/Schmeichel to award the alternate bid for a total of $158,684.00 to Packer City International Truck for a 2026 International HV607 Dump Truck, which includes the trade-in of the 2012 Dump Truck**. All voting aye.

Approve Final 2025 Budget and CIP – Director Mach presented a memo detailing the approval process of the operating and capital budgets. He noted that recent developments necessitated the replacement of the Plant Uninterruptable Power Supply (UPS) and this line item was added to the CIP for 2025.

Following discussion, **M.S.C. Hemes/Schmeichel to approve the Final 2025 Operating and Capital Budget as presented**. All voting aye.

Director's Report –

1. Water Loss Report – Distribution staff discovered and repaired leaks over the last week.

2. The following items were approved at the November 14, 2024 Board of Public Works meeting:
   - Pay Request No. 2, Contract 2-24W Booster Station Contract B - Process, Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing Construction, to Sabel Mechanical LLC., in the amount of $98,701.91.

3. Booster Station Update – There has been a significant amount of progress since the last report. Currently, piping is being installed, the generator has been installed, lighting is complete, and electrical is substantially complete.

4. AMI Update – The Landis+Gyr System has been working well.

5. Solar Installation Update – The array has been working well.

6. The next regular Waterworks Commission Meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 20, 2025.

Any Other Business That May Legally Come Before the Commission – None

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by President Schmeichel at 5:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Anthony L. Mach
Director, Neenah Water Utility

GALLUP®

JULY 10, 2024

42% of Employee Turnover Is Preventable but Often Ignored

With more employees now eyeing the job market, organizations must intervene

BY COREY TATEL, PH.D. AND **BEN WIGERT, PH.D.**

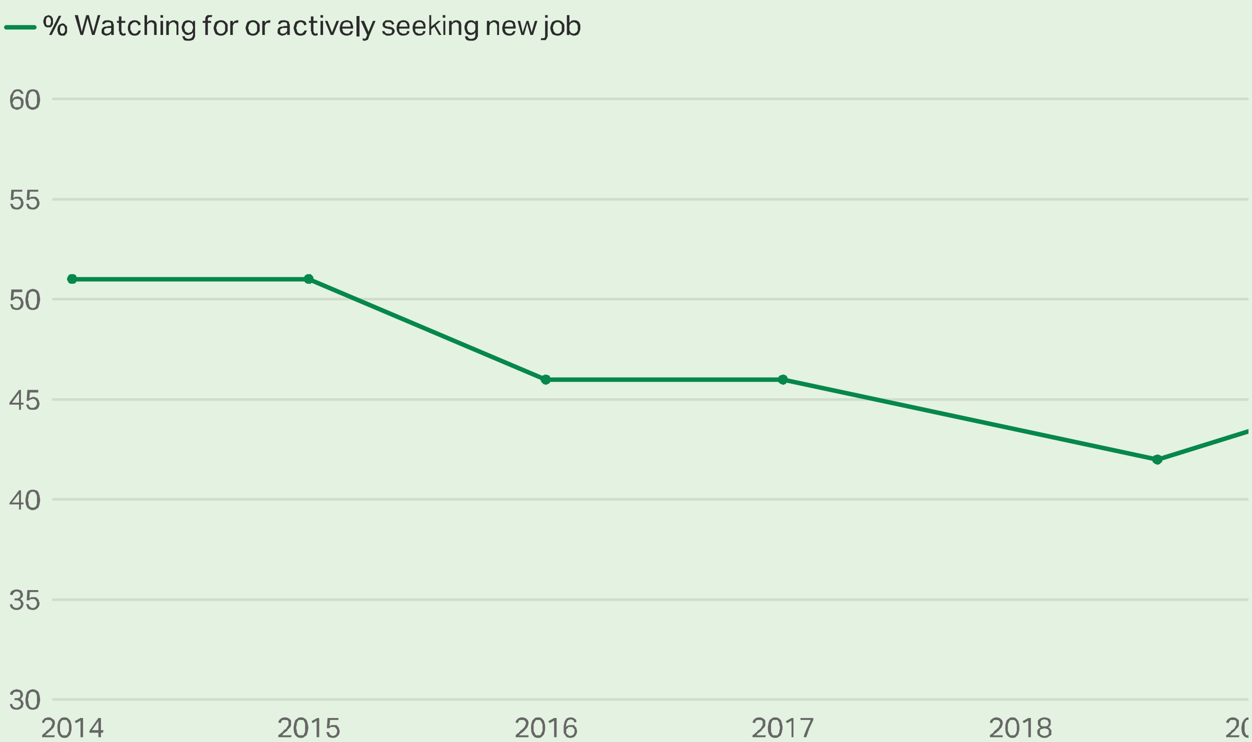
Self-reported employee turnover risk is at its highest point since 2015.

Gallup's latest measure in May shows half of U.S. employees (51%) are watching or actively seeking a new job, continuing a recent upward trend. While voluntary employee turnover rates have stabilized since the Great Resignation due to cooling economic and job markets, employees' long-term commitment to their organizations is currently the lowest it has been in nine years.

Employee retention challenges are emerging, and failing to act could lead to costly replacements in the future. Gallup estimates that the replacement of leaders and managers costs around 200% of their salary, the replacement of professionals in technical roles is 80% of their salary, and frontline employees 40% of their salary.

One in Two U.S. Employees Are Open to Leaving Their Organization

To what extent are you currently looking for a different job than the one you have now?



U.S. Employees MOE: ±1 point (Annualized data from 2014 to 2020)

The good news? Employee discontent and voluntary exits are highly preventable, at least from the employee perspective.

An astounding 42% of employees who voluntarily left their organization in the past year report that their manager or organization could have done something to prevent them from leaving their job.

To help leaders re-engage valuable employees before they leave, Gallup conducted a nationally representative study of 717 individuals who voluntarily left an employer in the past 12 months and asked them to share details about their exit experience.

The findings highlight the need for managers to regularly initiate the right conversations with their employees to retain them rather than waiting for them to express discontent and the possibility of leaving.

How Employees Decide to Exit

When employees decide to voluntarily leave their job, the decision often happens quickly. More than three in four (77%) voluntary leavers either left within three months of searching for a new job or did not actively search for new employment in the first place.

Employees often make exit decisions without proactive communication. Thirty-six percent of voluntary leavers report that they did not talk to anyone before they made the decision to resign.

Even when employees *did* talk to someone while deliberating, their managers were frequently left in the dark. Four in 10 (44%) of those who discussed their intention to leave did not talk to their direct supervisor or manager before deciding to leave. It was more likely that employees had such discussions with their coworkers than their managers.

This means that if managers want to prevent employee turnover, they cannot wait for employees to express their intentions to leave. The manager is responsible for initiating the right conversations *before* their employees make the decision to leave their jobs.

Lost Opportunities to Intervene

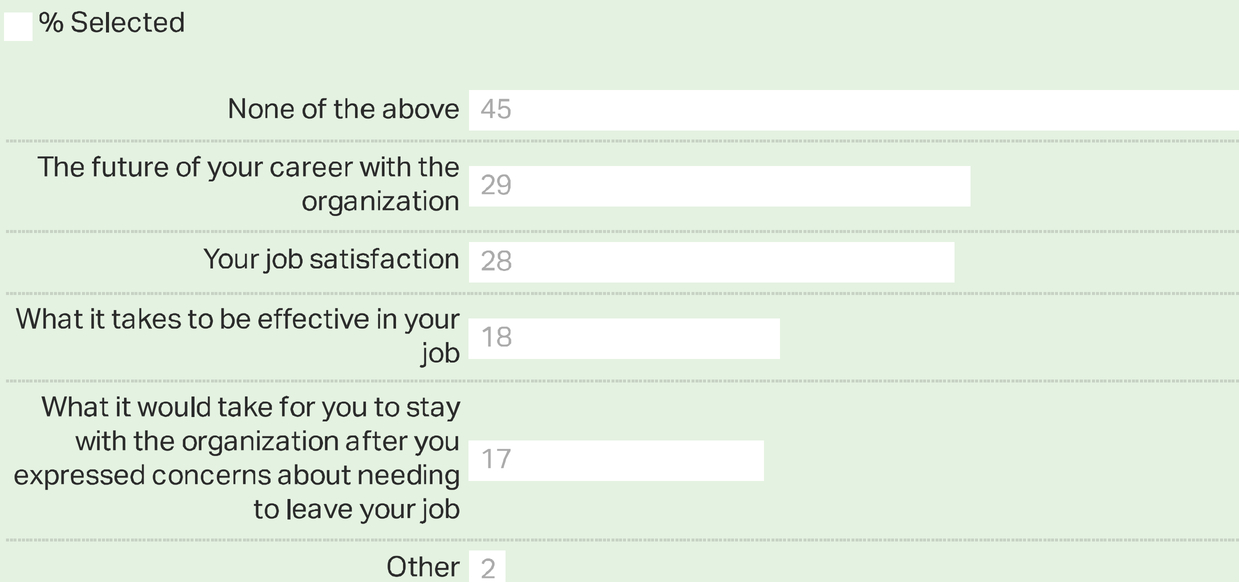
Given that employees are unlikely to approach managers when they consider leaving, what do voluntary leavers report about their managers' communication in their final months?

Nearly half (45%) of voluntary leavers report that *neither* a manager nor another leader proactively discussed their job satisfaction, performance or future with the organization with them in the three months before leaving.

Of those whose manager or leader *did* engage with them in the three months before leaving, fewer than three in 10 had a conversation about the future of their career with the organization (29%) or their job satisfaction (28%). They were even less likely to report that they discussed what it takes to be effective in their job (18%) or what it would take for them to stay with the organization (17%).

The Exit Journey: What Did the Organization Do to Intervene?

In the three months before leaving, did your manager or another leader talk to you about **any** of the following topics?



In other words, while 42% of voluntary leavers say their departure could have been prevented, 45% of voluntary leavers also report that in the three months prior to their departure little was done by a manager or leader to proactively discuss how their job was going.

This evidence underscores a potential opportunity to cut preventable turnover nearly in half with targeted coaching conversations that help employees see a meaningful future with their organization.

How to Reduce Employee Turnover: Have the Right Conversations

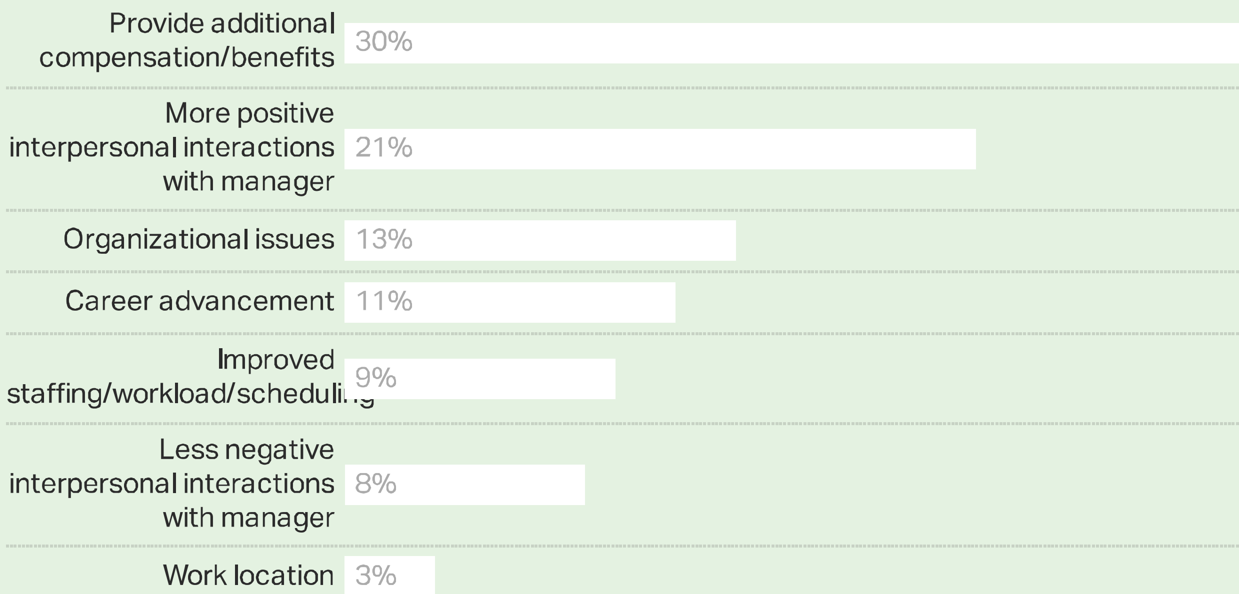
What issues should managers discuss to prevent surprise exits?

When asked an open-ended question about what their manager or organization could have done to prevent them from leaving, the most common response among leavers who said their exit could have been prevented was to provide additional compensation or benefits.

Compensation and benefits are known to be critical employee retention factors across previous studies and comprise 30% of the actions that could have been taken in the current study. Yet, 70% of preventable leavers reported actions more directly related to how they are managed daily such as creating more positive personal interactions with their manager (21%), addressing frustrating organizational issues (13%), creating opportunities for career advancement (11%) or improving staffing or workload concerns (9%).

The Exit Journey: What Could Have Retained Employees?

What could your manager or organization have done to prevent you from leaving your job?



The below quotes illustrate the variety of actions that could have prevented voluntary departures.

> "Recognized my contributions to the team by matching my salary and title with those of my coworkers doing the same work."
>
> "Treated me with respect and shown concern for my wellbeing and its employees' happiness."
>
> "Allowed me autonomy to do my job, helped me in a path to advance my career, taken an active role in helping me feel vested in my future."

If the actions of managers and organizations do not address these needs, employees are likely to find a different employer to fulfill them.

Managers can improve talent retention by including the following topics in their routine conversations with employees:

1. Compensation and Career Advancement

Managers can easily say their hands are tied with compensation issues. However, *compensation and career advancement* (30%) are closely intertwined markers of how employees are *valued and progressing at an organization* (11%). Together, they account for two in five self-reported ways voluntary leavers could have been retained.

Compensation tends to be a baseline requirement for retaining talent and a top source of dissatisfaction among leavers. Managers should regularly assess fair market value for jobs and adjust for employees' performance. Annual conversations with employees about their pay trajectory are equally important to helping them feel valued and understand how to progress.

A plan for career development and advancement shows employees they have a bright future to work toward. Clearly outlining an individual development plan increases employee engagement and addresses one of the main reasons employees leave. This type of plan also directly affects compensation, as the largest pay raises often result from job promotions.

2. Relationship Building

Another top opportunity for preventing employee turnover is strengthening manager-employee relationships. Collectively, about three in 10 changes former employees say could have prevented their departure were related to either *increasing positive interactions* (21%), such as listening and communication, or having *fewer negative interactions* (8%) with their manager such as less rudeness or micromanaging.

When a manager has one meaningful conversation a week with each direct report, employees are four times as likely to be highly engaged, regardless of whether they are a frontline, hybrid or fully remote worker. Gallup research shows these conversations are more meaningful when they focus on goals and priorities, recognition for recent work, collaboration, and using employees' strengths. When done routinely, they can even be as short as 15 to 30 minutes.

3. Removal of Barriers

Nearly a quarter of preventable turnover could be avoided if managers addressed *organizational issues* (13%) or *problems with staffing, workload, or scheduling* (9%).

When managers don't deal with problems, they become barriers to both organizational performance and employee retention. It's vital to quickly identify points of friction, discuss how issues affect people and clarify their role in addressing them. Left unaddressed, the persistence of these frustrations and workflow issues leads to burnout.

Create a New Coaching Habit

Three months without a meaningful conversation with your manager is far too long.

Managers play a pivotal role in re-engaging employees and preventing turnover. Ongoing, meaningful conversations about issues most influencing people's job satisfaction, performance, and future with the organization are essential to developing and retaining top talent.

If managers wait for their employees to initiate these discussions, it may be too late. Managers should take the lead to foster a proactive dialogue that simultaneously prevents turnover and boosts team engagement.

Enhance the employee retention strategies at your organization:

- Track employee retention and attraction to monitor trends and see how your organization compares.

In This Article

What Is Employee Retention?
Employee Retention Strategies Explained
Why Are Employees Leaving?
Why Employee Retention Matters
25 Employee Retention Strategies
How to Calculate Employee Retention Rate
Personalize Employee Experiences with Oracle ME
Employee Retention Strategies FAQs

Globally, 93% of organizations worry about employee retention, according to a 2023 LinkedIn survey of more than 2,200 HR and learning development professionals and employees who use learning services. Organizations regularly struggle to find and hold on to talent with the skills, expertise, and knowledge vital to business success. Recognizing the significant impact of employee turnover on the business, more HR leaders are examining employee retention strategies to give employees more compelling reasons to stay with their companies.

What Is Employee Retention?

Employee retention is an organization's ability to keep workers at the company and reduce ur
Often there's an emphasis on retaining top talent, meaning individuals considered knowledge

highly productive. Retention also focuses on keeping people in the roles that are essential to delivering a product or service, such as production line workers in a factory, certified nursing assistants at a long-term care center, or servers and chefs at a restaurant. Employee retention has long been an area of focus for human resources teams, but it's increasingly important as it becomes more challenging to fill positions.

A 2023 ManpowerGroup survey of more than 40,000 employers globally found that 75% struggle to find people who have the skills the company needs. Sometimes this is because only a small segment of the talent pool has those skills, which is a common challenge when hiring for roles that work with emerging technologies. Sometimes, it's because the skill takes time and training to learn and is in consistently high demand—think nurses, welders, truck drivers, and accountants. And sometimes it's because an organization is essentially seeking a needle in a haystack—a person with a unique combination of skills and experience.

Additionally, in a challenging hiring market, finding suitable candidates is only half the battle—they also have to accept the job offer. If a company doesn't provide competitive incentives and an appealing work environment and culture, not only will it have trouble retaining employees, but it will also have difficulty hiring them in the first place. And ultimately, the more time a company spends dealing with employee turnover—including finding and onboarding people, then getting them acclimated and productive in their roles—the less time its workforce has to spend on more innovative and strategic endeavors.

Key Takeaways

- Employee retention is a company's ability to keep workers, often with a particular focus on retaining high performers and employees in critical, hard-to-fill roles.
- Employee retention impacts the business in many ways, including affecting output, morale, productivity, customer sentiment, and the bottom line, because replacing workers is expensive.
- Effective employee retention strategies include offering career development programs, improving the culture, training managers to retain staff, investing in diversity programs, and offering fair compensation and benefits.

Employee Retention Strategies Explained

Employee retention strategies are exactly what they sound like: ways your organization can entice employees to stay with the company. Employee retention is influenced by everything a person could like or dislike about a job, such as pay, benefits, company culture, managers, time off policies, remote work opportunities, and much more. Companies must craft policies around these areas with an eye toward how they'll hurt or help employee retention.

One popular way to think about retention is in terms of Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, originally published in 1959. Herzberg, a psychologist, conducted workforce research with his colleagues, and they proposed that job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are affected by two sets of factors: hygiene factors and motivation factors. Hygiene, or external, factors include working conditions, salary, and company policies. Motivation factors include growth potential, meaningful work, recognition, and other aspects related to the work itself. I
have positive experiences with both sets of factors, creating an engaged, productive workfor
sometimes workers have mixed feelings. An employee who's happy with their working condit
factor) but who doesn't feel appreciated (a motivation factor), may be less likely to do more t
minimum. The theory also suggests that even if someone loves their job, they're more likely
organization if they're unhappy with their salary or company policies. The research conclude
workforces that have poor experiences with both sets of factors likely suffer from high turnover.

While there's been criticism of Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory—for example, some people say it assumes everyone values the same things—it's still a helpful framework for HR leaders to consider as they approach employee retention. By identifying factors that detract from the employee experience, they can help their organizations find solutions or, at least, ways to make those aspects less dissatisfying. Further, HR leaders can help amplify meaningful job aspects to increase employee satisfaction and retention.

Why Are Employees Leaving?

Employees leave their organizations for many reasons, which is why most HR professionals conduct exit interviews when someone resigns. They want to understand if the company should address a chronic problem that's hurting retention. Some common motives are well understood, starting with compensation. 82% of the 4,000 US and UK employees surveyed by Korn Ferry in 2023 said they would leave their current job for a higher salary or better benefits.

Of course, money isn't everything. When Boston Consulting Group asked more than 11,000 employees what they wanted in a job, they did list better pay and benefits. However, emotional factors were the most important when they reframed the question to ask: What attributes make you want to stay with an employer? Being treated fairly and being respected, doing enjoyable work, having job security, feeling valued and appreciated, and feeling supported all ranked higher than compensation. The same survey found that more than a quarter of employees see themselves leaving their employer within a year.

Other factors influencing employee attrition include bad managers, burnout, a lack of professional development opportunities, low autonomy, and boredom. But negative experiences aren't the only reasons employees leave. Sometimes an incredible opportunity comes along that a worker can't pass up. As odd as it sounds, that's the best-case scenario regarding attrition—the employee was happy and wasn't looking. However, an organization can still consider whether they can do more to create similar opportunities and whether they need to look at new opportunities and advancement more actively for high-performing employees in the future.

Why Employee Retention Matters

Today it's common for employees to switch employers, with the median tenure being 4.1 years, according to research released by the US Department of Labor in September 2022. The stigma attached to job hopping is mostly gone, putting more pressure on HR professionals to effectively manage the workforce by analyzing and addressing causes of attrition to strengthen retention. This process is vital because employee attrition negatively impacts the business in several ways.

- **Recruiting and hiring is expensive**. There's much debate and research on how much it costs to backfill a position, but there's no denying HR spends lots of their own time and budget on third-party recruiters and services to fill open roles. Edie Goldberg, founder of talent management firm E.L. Goldberg & Associates, puts the cash and noncash costs at three to four times a position's salary. The Society for Management puts the average cost per hire at nearly US$4,700. While the specific cost m debate, the bottom line is that recruiting takes up money, time, and expertise that could be strategically if employee retention rates were higher.
- **Retention affects morale**. Poor retention rates cause a sense of instability in the workfor employees to question if they should be looking for a new job. If one person leaves a team,

another will, damaging morale. Likewise, strong retention suggests people consider the company a place to stay and build a career

- **Productivity suffers**. As employees temporarily take on more to pick up the slack and resources are diverted from projects to focus on backfilling a position, productivity suffers, especially when a high performer leaves
- **Output wanes**. Poor retention can threaten a company's core ability to deliver its products and services. There's a reason US trucking companies emblazon their vehicles with pitches to come drive for them amid a national shortage of commercial truck drivers. And if you're suffering declining morale and productivity due to poor retention, output will inevitably suffer even more. Additionally, when the organization loses an employee with extensive industry knowledge, it loses invaluable insights, so teams may not have access to relevant knowledge, resulting in subpar decisions.
- **The customer experience suffers**. Unsurprisingly, the factors listed above negatively affect the customer experience. Unhappy workers, or people distracted by changes in the department or additional work they've taken on, aren't as motivated to help others. Employee retention correlates with customer service satisfaction scores.

25 Employee Retention Strategies

HR teams can use many different employee retention strategies that touch different areas of human capital management to boost the employee experience and business value. Here are 25 of the most effective.

1. Offer fair pay

Workers who believe they're underpaid are more likely to look for another job, so employee retention starts with paying competitive rates. Companies should regularly review salaries from a market analysis and a diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I) perspective to ensure people are paid fairly. Inflation has added to the challenge. Workers who don't receive cost-of-living increases feel like they're getting a pay cut and are more likely to be dissatisfied with their employer.

2. Recruit competitively

Finding the right people to fill open roles is critical to employee retention, since those people are more likely to be happy, productive, and successful. But skills gaps have left more companies competing to find the right candidates in a smaller talent pool. On average, 75% of employers have trouble filling open roles, according to a 2023 ManpowerGroup survey of more than 40,000 employers across 41 countries. Companies should assess the marketplace and review their pay, benefits, and other offerings to ensure competitiveness and increase the likelihood of attracting and hiring the best candidates. They also need to be aware of their reputation as an employer and take action to ensure skilled candidates are aware of both the brand and specific job openings.

3. Hire smarter

Candidates who have a positive experience during the talent acquisition stage are more likely
and have a good impression of the company, making it more likely they'll stay longer. HR can
by eliminating the hassle of creating profiles, making sure applications are easy to fill out, act
relevant information at each step, and speeding up the hiring process. Additionally, HR can use automation to

send candidates personalized emails and texts at various stages and automate workflows, such as offer approvals, to improve the recruiting experience. Hiring managers can make sure applicants understand the role, the people they'll work with, and the company culture they're joining.

4. Improve onboarding

Onboarding is vital to a new employee's success. Organizations can increase their retention rates by helping each new worker make essential connections with stakeholders, answering their questions, helping them understand the company culture, and giving them the tools they need to thrive and quickly be effective in their role. Some HR software guides employees through the onboarding process, continually giving them relevant information over the initial months to help them acclimate. In addition, some companies have an extended onboarding period that begins with preboarding, helping new hires become familiar with the workplace culture before their first day.

5. Provide benefits people want

Companies regularly provide their workforce with health, dental, and vision insurance, but most employees want and expect more. Some organizations offer expanded benefits such as fertility support, elder care, tuition reimbursement, and mental health support. Consider surveying your workforce to find out what type of support matters most. A Gallup poll found that pay/benefits was the most common reason employees quit in 2023.

6. Invest in professional development

Employee and employer needs align when it comes to career development. Most people want and expect their organization to help them learn new skills to stay relevant in their roles and potentially move into new ones. Tailoring learning opportunities to employees is a great incentive for them to stay with an organization, and it helps companies prepare for the future. Six in ten workers will require training before 2027 due to growing skills gaps, reports the World Economic Forum after surveying 803 organizations (collectively employing more than 11.3 million workers) in 2022 and 2023. Providing relevant training requires business leaders and HR teams to work together to make sure the company offers the right training content and does so in the most effective way. To do this, they need to understand their employees' skills and career aspirations. Companies that don't help employees adapt risk having an underskilled workforce and losing some of their most motivated employees—the ones who are eager to learn.

7. Create pathways for growth

Many employees want to upskill to remain employable in the long term, and some want to move up the career ladder, requiring them to learn new skills. Organizations can give workers access to learning development programs that are tailored to their unique needs. Internal mobility is also vital. A 2023 Pew Research Center study of 5,188 US adults found that only 33% are extremely or very satisfied with their opportunities for promotion at work. If an organization doesn't promote from within, it's more likely to lose employees who believe they must leave to move to a higher level.

8. Offer mentorship programs

Mentorship programs are one way to help eager employees learn new skills, navigate their ca
strengthen their bonds with the organization. The company benefits when more seasoned e
others and pass on their institutional and industry knowledge. Otherwise, these valuable insig

when workers retire. Many mentors get satisfaction from teaching emerging leaders as well, giving them added motivation to stay on the job.

9. Train managers to retain

Great managers are linked with a 72% reduction in attrition risk and a 3.2X increase in employee retention, according to a Boston Consulting Group survey. The key is for managers to have the training, tools, insights, and incentives to support their teams. In terms of training, managers may benefit from improving their communication, listening, empathy, conflict resolution, and leadership skills. Organizations can also encourage managers to look internally first when filling open roles. It's also beneficial to give them tools and insights, such as learning materials they can share and data that shows employee sentiment over time, to help them guide their teams more effectively and build stronger relationships.

10. Build employee engagement

It's well known that engaged employees have higher retention rates and increased productivity due to reduced absenteeism, better overall well-being, and a sense of psychological safety that lets them freely share their ideas. Creating an environment where workers feel respected and have a sense of belonging is critical to engagement and therefore retention. Strong employee engagement can also offer companies a competitive edge. In 2023, on average, 23% of employees were engaged globally, according to a Gallup survey of more than 120,000 employees. But at companies that follow HR best practices, 72% of employees were engaged.

11. Communicate transparently

Clear and honest communication is a key factor in building trust with your workforce. When employees don't understand why the business makes certain decisions, it makes them uneasy. It also increases the likelihood that they won't see how their contributions help the organization, which is problematic because, without that knowledge, they can't find meaning in their work. Companies can keep employees and managers on the same page and help the workforce feel valued and respected by communicating openly and often about company strategy, culture, and policies. It's also vital to ensure communications are relevant and meaningful or else they become background noise that employees start to ignore.

12. Offer incentives

Incentives encourage employees to perform at the highest level and stay with an organization. They may include a formal employee recognition program with small gifts, bonuses for workers who meet certain quotas or thresholds, or extra paid time off awarded for a job well done. Workers who feel recognized and appreciated are more likely to stay with their employer. Incentives can also be perks the company offers all employees, such as tuition reimbursement, profit sharing, or discount programs.

13. Value DE&I

Feeling accepted for who you are, being treated fairly, and having the same opportunities as e
to employee retention, highlighting the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I) i
their DE&I efforts, many companies track metrics such as salaries, promotions, and attrition
to identify bias and correct disparities. Companies can also take steps to build a diverse work
hiring process by posting jobs in a wide variety of places to reach people of different backgro
the results.

14. Provide continuous feedback

Too often employees aren't sure how they're performing. 51% of the more than 5,100 US workers included in a 2023 Pew Research Center study said they aren't satisfied with the amount of feedback from their supervisor. Workers want guidance to help them improve and encouragement and recognition when they're doing well. Some companies recognize that peers can provide helpful feedback too, especially when it comes to acknowledging great performance, and encourage employees to submit feedback for colleagues during annual reviews. Without feedback, employees may feel their contributions don't matter or the company doesn't care, making them more likely to leave.

15. Work on culture continuously

Workplace culture comprises the shared beliefs, acceptable behaviors, and general attitude of the workforce. Cultures vary by company, and there's no one "right" kind of culture. When it comes to retention, leaders must be consistent about the culture they nurture and the actions they take and reward. And they need to listen and watch to see whether employees buy into that culture. Organizations that build a sense of community among the workforce enhance the employee experience and retention.

16. Engaging in CSR programs

65% of millennials told Korn Ferry they'd feel more inspired at a company with a good environmental, social, and governance (ESG) policy—and that they'd be more loyal. That's according to a 2023 survey of 4,000 professionals in the US and UK. Employees generally expect their organizations to have corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs and take ESG seriously.

17. Provide autonomy and choice

No one likes being micromanaged. 73% of workers say it's the #1 sign of a toxic workplace, according to a 2023 Monster poll of more than 6,000 employees. Empowering your workforce to make decisions and giving them the freedom to complete tasks in a way that makes sense to them are practices likely to boost employee retention. It's also essential to ensure the workforce can get the help they need when they need it. Many companies use chatbots and knowledgebase articles to help employees quickly find answers to questions, eliminating frustrating roadblocks.

18. Consider work-life balance

Long hours spent in the office or online answering emails late into the night negatively affect the employee experience, especially when this behavior is habitual. It'll likely lead to burnout and higher attrition rates. Organizations can take steps to ensure their culture doesn't promote this lifestyle by encouraging workers to have a healthy work-life balance, offering flexibility, and respecting employees who take care of themselves. Leaders shouldn't only praise employees who "go the extra mile." If leaders normalize taking employees will be encouraged to recharge and less likely to burn out.

19. Emphasize teamwork

Teamwork is a great way to foster a sense of community and solve problems better. It can als productivity and tap into people's unique perspectives, helping them feel valued. People who like their teams are more motivated to stay with a company. Coworkers may be scattered across the globe or operating in a hybrid workplace, so giving your workforce collaborative communication tools is vital to effective teamwork. Companies can also encourage teamwork by acknowledging its importance in company communications, highlighting team successes, and helping managers build collaborative teams.

20. Create employee stock ownership plans

Employee stock ownership plans help workers feel more connected to the business's success. Employee ownership can be achieved by making stock grants and options part of the compensation package, with vesting periods that provide an incentive to stay with the company, or by offering discounts for employees to purchase stock. Employee ownership strengthens the employee-employer connection by making the workforce feel like they're part of something bigger, and they benefit financially if the company's stock rises. Companies can also set up a more formal employee stock ownership program, or ESOP, where employees own all or part of the company. Since employees must sell their share of an ESOP if they leave, they're less likely to do so if the company performs well.

21. Invest in change management

Change is constant and can grind on employees, leading to change fatigue, burnout, and higher attrition rates. Companies can invest in change management programs to ease the impact on employees. They can also consider using technology embedded with AI that can help support communication efforts, increase productivity, and uncover insights to help their workforce navigate the transition more successfully. In addition, companies should equip their managers to deal with change, explain why it's happening, and inspire their teams. Helping employees navigate these changes well can improve retention.

22. Support employee well-being

Boston Consulting Group surveyed 11,000 workers globally in 2023 and found the biggest employee retention factors weren't pay and benefits. Emotional needs that affect a worker's overall well-being topped the list. People are more likely to stay with their employer if they feel valued, appreciated, supported, and respected. They also want to be treated fairly, have a sense of job security, and enjoy their work. Organizations should think about well-being holistically. Wellness programs and mental health support are essential, but other workplace factors affect employee welfare.

23. Acknowledge hard work and milestones

Employees want to be seen and recognized for their contributions to the organization. While HR often leads formal recognition programs and handles employee milestone anniversaries, companies can help managers with workforce appreciation. Some HR platforms have tools for managers to help them build better relationships with their direct reports through recognition. Notifications can be automatically sent to remind them to thank an employee for their years of service and to check in with their direct reports if it's been a while. If managers don't regularly talk to each direct report, well-deserved thanks will go unexpressed. Additionally, org significant individual and team accomplishments companywide, fostering a culture of apprec recognition.

24. Be aware of burnout

Stress is common at work. Low stress levels can motivate employees, but the World Health Organization says chronic workplace stress that's not successfully managed leads to burnout. Burned-out employees are exhausted, have negative feelings toward their job, and often leave. Organizations should train leaders at all levels to spot early signs of burnout and step in to help employees before it's too late. It's vital to create a company culture where self-care is promoted and workers are encouraged to take vacations and days off before their energy is depleted.

25. Know when to let employees go

If a company tolerates poor performance or violations of the company culture, its best employees are more likely to leave in frustration. It's important for organizations to support employees, have plans in place to help them improve when they're not meeting expectations, and give managers tools to help them progress. Sometimes the extra attention and support pay off, putting the employee on a better path; sometimes they don't. Organizations should carefully consider when it's time to let an employee go.

How to Calculate Employee Retention Rate

Calculating your employee retention rate is a straightforward process. First, decide what time period you want to assess. Divide the number of employees the organization had on the last day of that period, minus any new hires, by the number it had on the first day. Next, multiply that number by 100. That's your employee retention rate.

> Employee retention = (number of employees who stayed during the time period / number of employees at the start of the time period) x 100

For example, if you're measuring retention year to date, take the number of employees today, subtract the number of new hires made this year, and divide the result by the number of employees the organization had on January 1. Multiply the result by 100 to find your employee retention rate.

Personalize Employee Experiences with Oracle ME

Oracle ME, part of Oracle Fusion Cloud Human Capital Management (HCM), is a complete employee experience platform that helps organizations deliver an exceptional workforce experience so employees can grow and thrive. The embedded features and tools in Oracle ME enhance different aspects of work. For example, Oracle HR Help Desk, a self-service knowledgebase, and Oracle Digital Assistant, a conversational AI chatbot, let workers find answers quickly and get support when they need it. Additional assistance comes from Oracle Journeys, which provides contextual guidance to help employees compete HR-related tasks, and Oracle Grow, which offers a personalized learning experience that unifies learning, skills development, and talent mobility opportunities. Managers receive support, too, with Oracle Touchpoints. It lets them track employee sentime team insights and encourages continuous engagement with direct reports. Oracle ME furthe belonging and community with Oracle Connections, an interactive workforce directory, and C which lets peers recognize each other's efforts. HR benefits from the ability to communicate workforce and measure the impact of communications with Oracle HCM Communicate.

Employee Retention Strategies FAQs

What’s the difference between employee retention and employee turnover?
Employee retention is when an organization keeps workers in the company, and employee turnover is when they leave voluntarily.

What is a KPI for employee retention?
The most common employee retention KPI is the employee retention rate. To calculate it, take the number of employees your company has at the end of a given time period, subtract the number of new hires made during that time period, divide the result by the number of employees at the start of the time period, and then multiply by 100. A company may also consider other metrics, such as involuntary turnover rate and employee satisfaction scores.

Why are workers leaving?
Employees quit for many reasons, including low pay, burnout, bad managers, lack of career development opportunities, and feeling disrespected or undervalued. HR should conduct exit interviews and track why workers leave to see if a widespread problem should be addressed.

306 Education Assistance Program

Menasha Utilities will pay the dues of an employee in a professional society or association that is important to the employee maintaining recognition, knowledge, and access within the employee's professional field. Payment of membership dues in more than one such association shall be subject to approval by the General Manager.

In addition, Menasha Utilities will pay the cost of an employee to maintain the employee's professional credentials that Menasha Utilities defines as important and relevant to the employee's work responsibilities. Such expenses may include continuing education required for maintaining licensed certification. Implementation of this benefit in particular instance shall be subject to approval in advance by the General Manager.

In addition, on a limited basis, and subject to approval of the employee's supervisor/manager and the General Manager, work hours may be adjusted for an employee for approved education that is job-related. All such approvals will be subject to the Utilities' work requirements.

A. For employee-initiated courses Menasha Utilities will pay 50% of the stated fee schedule and books for the course taken which meets the following conditions upon proof of successful completion of the course.
B. The course studied must be taken through an accredited correspondence or extension service, such as University of California, Hornet Foundation, Inc. Office of Water Programs, FVTC, University of Wisconsin, etc.
C. Courses are generally taken on nonscheduled hours.
D. The course must be related to the employee's job and must be approved by his Department Manager and the General Manager.
E. Menasha Utilities will pay the costs provided the employee signs a Tuition Reimbursement Agreement.

The employee must present proof of the successful completion of the course from the institution which gives the training. If the employee fails to successfully complete a course for any reason other than one beyond the employee's control, the employee shall become liable for the entire cost of the program.

Employer initiated Courses –Special short courses or seminar training that is taken by the employee at the request of the Department Manager will be fully paid by Menasha Utilities.

Employees who are currently employed by Menasha Utilities as an apprentice will attend an indentured program with the goal of becoming a journeyman. This program will take approximately four years to complete and will require the payment of a number of costs of the program, including but not limited to tuition, materials and texts, equipment, travel expenses and meals. Menasha Utilities will pay for the cost provided the Employee signs a Tuition Reimbursement Agreement.

Section 19 ADA COMPLIANCE. Upon review of the Utility's compensation and benefit practices the City Human Resources Department warrants that the Green Bay Water Utility is in compliance with Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 as it relates to compensation and benefits.

Section 20 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE. The Utility, may reimburse full-time regular employees up to 75% of the tuition cost for approved degree programs or courses or non-degree courses. Programs and courses subject to consideration or approval must improve an understanding of the utility industry, develop critical job skills, or contribute to the enhancement of on-the-job performance and productivity. The Utility may reimburse up to 100% for the cost of books. The employee must successfully complete the course with a “C” or better to receive reimbursement.

Full-time regular employees will receive 100% reimbursement of tuition and book costs for courses, which are directly initiated or required by the Utility.

Employees interested in tuition reimbursement must complete the Educational Assistance form and receive authorization from the General Manager. Final approval for tuition and book reimbursement is subject to budget authorization. In the event that the employee’s employment is terminated, either voluntarily or involuntarily, within two years after completion of a course, any tuition reimbursement and/or book reimbursement money must be repaid to the Utility through the employee’s last paycheck and/or be repaid by the severed employee.

Section 21 CLOTHING ALLOWANCE.

A. Safety Glasses. When required by the Utility, employees required to wear safety glasses may be provided with up to 1 pair of safety glasses per year, including prescription safety glasses. This does not include the cost of the examination which is the responsibility of the employee. Glasses will be in "regular frames." The Utility will replace or repair required Utility-provided safety glasses broken or damaged on the job.

B. Safety Shoes. For employees required to wear safety shoes by the Utility for field work, the Utility may pay up to $200.00 toward the purchase of safety shoes. It is the intent that this is an annual allowance. If it is shown to the Manager that safety shoes are unusable due to a result from Utility work or where there is a documented medical condition that requires an individual to require

A. ELIGIBLITY.

1. Regular full-time employees are eligible for the tuition aid program after passing their initial probationary period.

2. Employees on an approved leave of absence as provided under federal or State law, or those unable to work due to an injury or illness that is covered under worker's compensation law(s) shall remain eligible for the program.

3. If an employee is laid off for reasons beyond their control, subsequent to the approved enrollment, eligibility for the tuition aid program will continue through satisfactory completion of the course(s) currently enrolled in.

B. REIMBURSEMENT CRITERIA.

1. Effective January 1, 2016, the Utility will reimburse up to 80% of educational costs to a maximum of $3,000.00 per calendar year for all eligible employees.

2. Educational costs are defined as the following costs incurred in the process of taking and completing covered coursework: tuition, registration fees (excluding late fees) and lab fees associated with the course. This program does not provide reimbursement for books* *(see section 9.05-D-8)*, travel (mileage, lodging, parking, meals, etc.) or those items which may be necessary to complete the approved coursework but can also be of personal use (i.e., calculator, computer, office equipment and/or supplies).

C. COVERED COURSEWORK.

1. Coursework must have a relationship to the employee's current job assignment or as approved by the General Manager. This program is not intended to fund education that will qualify an employee for a new career or secondary employment.

2. Coursework must be taken in the pursuance of an Associate, Bachelor or Graduate degree. Doctoral level coursework is not reimbursable.

3. Seminars, workshops, professional conferences, certifications and courses taken through a Continuing Education Program (i.e. adult education) do not qualify for reimbursement under this program.

4. Audited courses do not qualify for reimbursement under this program.

5. Coursework must be taken through an educational institution that is accredited by the Distance Education and Training Council Accrediting Commission and/or the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (as recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation) or as otherwise approved by the General Manager and Director of Personnel & Administration.

D. STIPULATIONS.

1. All courses must be taken outside of the employee's regular work hours unless vacation leave, compensatory time or flex time is used and approval has been provided by the Division Director.

2. Employees must remain an active employee for at least two (2) years after the completion of approved courses. An employee who resigns or retires from Utility employment (under the provisions of the Wisconsin Retirement System) before the completion of the two-year service obligation shall be required to reimburse the Utility, on a prorated basis, for any benefit paid under this program within the last 24 months of Utility employment. Reimbursement may be obtained through personal payment by the employee, payroll deduction from the employee's last paycheck or deducting an equivalent amount from any accrued leave balances due to the employee.

3. Reimbursement will not be made to an employee who was discharged or voluntarily terminates employment with the Utility before completion of enrolled course(s).

4. Reimbursement will not be made to an employee who transfers to another City department before completion of enrolled course(s). The employee's *Tuition Aid Request* form and related documentation will be forwarded to the City's Human Resources Department for review and approval/disapproval under the City's Tuition Aid Program.

5. Reimbursement will not be made to an employee who withdraws from enrolled course(s) due to personal reasons.

6. Employees will not receive reimbursement for any portion of associated fees that are eligible for reimbursement through a scholarship program.

7. Employees who receive educational assistance through the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs or the State of Wisconsin due to military service will receive 100% of the net difference between the grant benefit and the yearly maximum benefit. *For example, the employee is approved for a course that will incur fees of $5,000. The employee receives $2,000 towards tuition from the GI Bill. The employee is eligible for $3,000 of Utility tuition reimbursement if he/she meets all program guidelines.*

8. Employees who receive full tuition paid through other resources (i.e., GI Bill, grants, scholarships, etc.) will be allowed reimbursement at 80% for the cost of books related to their coursework, not to exceed $1,000 per calendar year.

E. PROCEDURES.

1. All requests for tuition reimbursement must be submitted to the employee's supervisor or Division Director for approval using the *Tuition Aid Request* form.

2. Requests must be submitted before course registration and before the commencement of the class. Requests received after this timeframe may not be eligible for tuition reimbursement.

3. After initial approval, the Division Director shall forward request to the General Manager for final authorization.

4. Upon completion of the course(s), a copy of the grade report with a grade “C” or above, along with all receipts for eligible costs associated with completing the course, should be submitted to HR for processing and refund. This must be done by the employee within 30 calendar days of satisfactory completion of the course(s).

5. Audited courses or those which only provide a “pass/fail” marking are not eligible for reimbursement under this program.

F. **TUITION AID PROGRAM DISPUTES.** Any disputes relating to the interpretation and administration of this program will be decided upon by a committee comprised of the General Manager, Director of Personnel & Administration and the employee’s Division Director. Disputes must be presented in writing to the Director of Personnel & Administration within 30 days of denial of reimbursement.