

GRADE YOUR WORKFORCE RETENTION READINESS



In today's business climate, nothing is more important than hiring and retaining excellent teams to care for our clients and our businesses. But how do you know if you're doing everything you should to increase staff retention and improve workplace productivity?

The best way to improve team member retention is to improve job satisfaction and cultivate a positive environment. That means facilitating and nurturing the development of positive work relationships and team member engagement. Camaraderie creates a common sense of purpose. Team members are more likely to stay in jobs if they believe in the organization's mission and have friends at work. Gallup has consistently found that close work friendships boost people's sense of recognition, increase commitment to quality, and help staff feel that their job is important. And employees who work with purpose report better outcomes at work, and at life, than their less-satisfied peers.

THE FIVE CORE PRINCIPLES OF TEAM MEMBER ENGAGEMENT



THE READINESS ASSESSMENT

To test your readiness across these five principles, use the assessments on the following pages to discover what your organization is doing right, and gain a better understanding of the areas you should focus on next.



THE SCALE

The Readiness Assessment should be completed by team members or leaders who are familiar with the organization's onboarding and training processes. The leaders should give your organization an honest grade using a scale from 1-5.

1

YIKES. WE NEED HELP!

We have no defined policies, procedures, controls, owner, or plan.

2

OKAY, WE NEED A LITTLE GUIDANCE.

Policies and procedures exist but need updating; quality controls aren't well defined; and monitoring is haphazard.

3

WORKING ON IT!

Existing policies and procedures are being updated; controls are partially defined; a rhythm for monitoring and reporting is established; and owners are identified.

4

HEY, WE'RE PRETTY GOOD AT THIS.

Policies and procedures exist but may need updating; controls are in place; metrics are monitored and reported; owners are identified. Resources and funding might be unclear or inadequate.

5

YAY! WE'RE ON TARGET!

Policies and procedures are set and regularly updated; controls are defined; operational consistency is established; quality testing and monitoring is in place; owners are identified; and planning is complete and funded.

Okay, let's get started...

WELCOMING A TEAM MEMBER TO THE ORGANIZATION

Introducing new hires to current team members, residents, and family members as soon as possible will help facilitate the development of positive working relationships, and potentially friendships. Welcoming a new team member only takes a little bit of time, but the investment in the welcome will bring great returns in increasing team member satisfaction and improving team member engagement and retention levels.

	1	2	3	4	5
We provide applicants with information on what makes our organization unique.					
We share information or stories with our new hires about how team members have made a difference in the lives of older adults.					
We dedicate time to introduce interviewees to our mission, vision and values.					
We provide interviewees with a tour of the community.					
We thank all applicants for their interest in working with our organization.					
We inform all individuals who have interviewed with us about the status of their application.					
At the time of offer, we send information about our organization and the pre-employment process to the potential new hire.					
We stay in touch with the new team member between the time they accept the job offer and their first day of employment and communicate how excited we are to have them join our team.					
We make an effort to help new hires build relationships with other team members.					
Every member is provided with a welcome packet and resources needed to complete their job on Day 1.					

Your average score is: _____

PRO TIP: Connecting each new employee to a more seasoned mentor is a great way to initiate and foster positive connections within your team.



INTRODUCING THE ORGANIZATION'S CULTURE

Simply put, culture is how we respond, react, and behave. Simon Sinek, author and speaker, argues that people don't buy what you do; they buy why you do it. How well does your organization perform when it comes to teaching and training team members based on your unique culture—why you do things, and how you do them in a way that supports the “why”? A proper understanding of organizational culture fosters a sense of job satisfaction.

	1	2	3	4	5
We train our team members about the importance of showing gratitude to one another.					
We provide opportunities for new hires to learn how our culture impacts how we approach situations.					
We take time to teach team members how to respond to questions, concerns and scenarios that occur regularly within our community.					
We evaluate how staff responds to questions, concerns, scenarios and how responses align with our mission, vision, and values.					
We teach our staff how their attitudes and behaviors impact the overall quality of care provided.					
We provide our staff knowledge on how to request additional tools and resources to improve their working environment.					
We inform new members how continuous improvement requires ongoing evaluation of processes to identify areas for improvement.					
We train our staff how to deliver feedback to one another.					
We teach our staff about the many sources of feedback and how feedback influences our behaviors.					
We teach our staff strategies for being positive.					

Your average score is: _____

PRO TIP: Role playing challenging situations team members can expect to experience, and modeling ideal behaviors when stressful situations arise, is a good way to arm your team to embrace your culture and align their behavior with your values.



LEVERAGING THE ORGANIZATION'S MISSION, VISION, & VALUES

Your mission, vision, and values statements drive loyalty across generations, provide strategic alignment, and add clarity to work. Incorporating these statements into your onboarding experience adds perspective to what a team member is doing—and why they are doing it—by explaining an organization's history, clarifying where the organization is going, and describing how the organization aims to accomplish its goals.

	1	2	3	4	5
Looking at job descriptions, team members can see how their role contributes to the organization vision.					
We solicit feedback from team members about their new team member orientation experience.					
We solicit feedback from team members about their new team member's stage of development.					
The feedback that we solicit assesses team members' comfort in their work environment and level of confidence in doing their job.					
We have a tool in place that helps measure a leader's approachability with staff.					
We offer structured activities that help team members understand the presence of organizational values in their everyday work.					
We offer structured activities that help team members understand how our mission and vision guide their everyday work					
We have resources available that team members can review to learn more about nomenclature/jargon/facility and industry terms.					
Team members are provided structured opportunities to meet and learn from their next level leader.					
We allow team members an opportunity to customize their training and development experience.					

Your average score is: _____

PRO TIP: Assessment meetings with new team members at days 30, 60 and 90 can help you assess how well team members are acclimating and identify problems early so you can address them before they escalate.



ADDRESSING CAREER PATHWAYS & ROLE SPECIFIC CHALLENGES

Training that encourages short and long-term career goals promotes increased job satisfaction. Satisfied team members are more likely to be more productive and stay longer. Development plans are the best way to help team members truly see that your organization is invested in their career goals while outreach and preparation around pathways and challenges will go a long way in helping team members feel seen and appreciated.

	1	2	3	4	5
We take time to understand team member's short and long-term career goals.					
We track short/long-term career goals and offer training and development opportunities to help team members achieve goals.					
We have set the expectation with leadership (managers) that the development of their team is a priority.					
We provide time and resources for our leadership to have developmental conversations with staff.					
We have a tool/resource/mechanism that helps team members visually see the many career opportunities within long term care.					
We offer a structured opportunity for team members to learn more about other roles or departments in the organization.					
We dedicate time to learn about organization, department and role-specific challenges.					
We make an effort to provide staff helpful information on the aging process, the passing of residents, and its impact.					
We track organization, department, and role-specific challenges, and communicate learnings and solutions.					
When crafting organization, department, and individual goals, effort is made to have the goals be SMART.					

Your average score is: _____

PRO TIP: Build comfort with challenges specific to working with elderly people, such as long, difficult shifts and resident death. Don't avoid difficult topics. Rather, offer solutions, tools, and resources to remedy or mitigate challenges.



FOSTERING TEAMWORK & BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

Teamwork is a must for delivering high-quality care to residents and families. Because of the scope of daily work caretaking entails, one team member cannot take all the responsibilities of caring for a resident. Leadership must recognize the impact relationships have on creating high functioning teams. Offering trainings, tools, and resources to help team members understand and navigate relationships builds teamwork, engagement, and job satisfaction

	1	2	3	4	5
We offer opportunities for team members to learn how they best learn.					
We modify our orientation and onboarding programs to help team members learn in the way that is best for them.					
We have defined the qualities of leadership in our organization.					
We offer training and development opportunities to help team members build their leadership competence.					
We support working together to develop solutions. Solutions (system/process changes) are documented, expectations clear.					
Organization meetings have a clearly defined purpose.					
We have a process to facilitate the flow of communication and track meeting action items that considers the needs of absent invitees.					
We have a talent management process that identifies strong performers and those in need of further development.					
We have training that teaches team members about diversity and its impact on the daily operations of the organization.					
We offer team members training on how to deal with workplace conflict.					

Your average score is: _____

PRO TIP: Include team building exercises focused on intercultural competence, cultural intelligence, and diversity's impact on one-to-one connections and overall work processes.



NOW WHAT?

Congratulations on finishing the team member engagement readiness assessment. Now what?

First, review your scores for clarity on potential priorities. If you scored high on principles 1, 2 and 5 but low on 3 and 4, it's time to focus on policies and procedures that can help you better introduce new team members to your organization's culture and leverage your mission, vision, and values. If you notice you have many fours but few fives, pat yourself on the back, then consider establishing iterative systems that support regular improvements and identifying funding resources that can support your efforts.

If you're not sure how to get started on these lofty goals, don't worry—you're not alone. LeadingAge Illinois has resources to help. We'll highlight resources related to each of these five principles in the months to come. And as always, feel free to [reach out](mailto:info@leadingageil.org) (info@leadingageil.org) for help, advice, or a friendly chat—we're always happy to hear from you.



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