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**“BOLD”  
RECRUITMENT AND  
RETENTION ACTIONS FOR  
PUBLIC AGENCIES**

WAPELRA conference 9/18/19

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## **A little bit about me**

- FastCompany called me the Michael Jordan of hiring.
- I have worked for state government for over 40 years.
- I have advised numerous government agencies at the global, federal, state and local levels.
- I have advised over 200 companies on 6 continents from Google, Microsoft, Starbucks, Facebook and Apple... down to start ups.



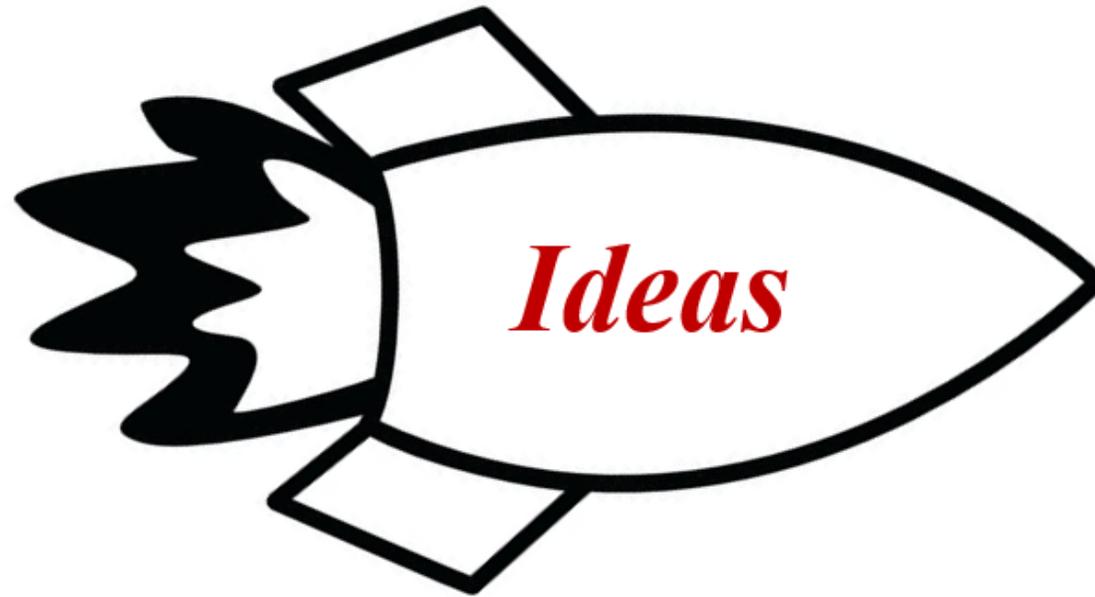
## **They asked me to...**

- 1. Shake up** your thinking.
- 2. Provide 6 takeaways** on unique recruiting & retention tools.
- Encourage everyone to **share their best practices**.
- 4. Find a way around roadblocks** and avoid “We tried that once and it didn’t work” answers (all great solutions have roadblocks).

***I will move fast today...***



**Because this is a “snap data” presentation...  
that quickly shows disruptive data points... that force you to think!**



**But please interrupt with questions at any time**

# Do me a favor - Make a list of your takeaways

## *Actions I'll consider*

- 1. Survey our employees to identify our best attraction factors.*
- 2. Hold stay interviews with my top talent.*
- 3.*
- 4.*
- 5.*
- 6.*

# The content of today's workshop

## **Part I - Recruiting Topics**

1. Understanding what bold recruiting looks like
2. A snapshot of the most effective recruiting sources
3. Using data to identify the best prospect convincing actions
4. Some additional effective convincing tools

## **Part II - Retention tools**

Let's get started with...



**Critical recruiting**

**Success factor #1**

**In a war for talent...**

***bold* is the only successful path**



## Grow a pair... and prepare to accept criticism of any bold approach

- **Can we all agree that...** we are all involved in a “war for talent” where the **competition** is extremely aggressive?
- And a “war footing” requires... **you to utilize bold and aggressive approaches... that will startle many.**
- BTW – Bold recruiting **may help you build your image** as a modern agency.

A few quick examples >



**Would you consider this  
to be *bold* !**

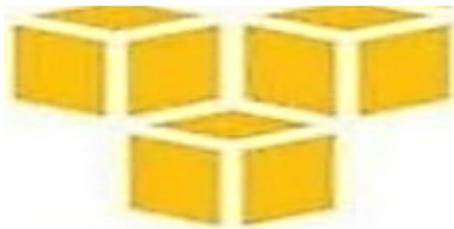
# Bold means – Using unusual popular media



tinder



**We are hiring engineers!**



**amazon  
web services™**



**This is not a Scam, we are actually from AWS Recruiting trying out this method  
To find top Engineering Talent. Please swipe right if you are open to learning  
more about Engineer positions at AWS!**

**You can also E-mail us at [SeattleJobs@amazon.com](mailto:SeattleJobs@amazon.com) with your resume and  
contact info for consideration! Thank you and Happy Tindering!**

# **Bold means – Directly poaching from other agencies on the right day**



## Bold means... clever but effective approaches



A full-page ad with a picture of a nurse hugging a child

Has a nurse made a difference in your life?

Tell us about it

NY Times - Job Market

# Sometimes simple is bold





# **Critical Success factor #2**

**As part of your business case...**

**You must know / prove with data**

**the costs of under-staffing**

# Data means you know... rather than you guess

## Which individual HR programs have the highest impact on results?

### HR function or process

### Revenue Growth

Firms that excelled in this HR area produced \_ times higher revenue growth

<b>1. Recruiting</b>	<b>3.5</b> times
<b>2. Onboarding and Retention</b>	2.5x
<b>3. Employer branding</b>	2.4x
4. Managing talent (Day to day productivity)	2.2x
5. Performance management and rewards	2.1x
6. Developing leadership	2.1x
7. Global people management / global expansion	1.8x
8. Mastering HR processes	1.8x

# Which HR programs have a minimal impact on results?

## HR function or process

## Revenue Growth

Firms that excelled in this HR area produced \_ times higher revenue growth

14. Strategic workforce planning	1.4
15. Delivering critical learning programs	1.5
16. Managing corporate social responsibility	1.5
17. Transforming HR into a strategic partner	1.4
18. Health and security management	1.2
19. Managing flexibility and labor costs (Contingent)	1.2
20. Restructuring the organization	1.2
21. Managing work/life balance	1.1
22. Managing an aging workforce	0.08

How about an example of...

## **A snapshot business case**

When the fire department is under - staffed by 15%...

1. **Citizen / Business fire insurance** goes up by \$3.6 million
2. **Added fire damage** due to longer wait time - \$13.5 million
3. There will be two additional **citizen deaths**
4. Fire department **overtime** will increase by \$700,000
5. Firefighter **stress and injury costs** up \$125,000
6. Fire department **negative publicity** will increase by 16%
7. Fire department **turnover** will increase by 10%
8. **Council re-election rates** will decrease by 22%

**Any questions?**

### **Why public-sector understaffing costs are much higher**

- **As a sole source service provider...** vacancies mean that people that need services **literally have no alternative...** raising the damages.
- Much of our work... has a **“high cost of an error”** associated with it. **For example - weak dam maintenance** will increase losses dramatically.
- **We get lower quality replacements...** because our **lengthy hiring process** means private firms have already taken the best.
- And **vacancies are open much longer**, further increasing the poor service and errors resulting from understaffing.
- In fact one study found... the cost of replacing an officer with 3 years of experience **to be more than twice his or her annual salary.**



### Make a powerful business case (continued)

➤ Also the cost of a **weak hire** –

**What is the cost of the resulting lower on-the-job performance...**

**After not hiring a top-tier police candidate... and “settling” for a second tier hire? (20%)**

## Calculate each of these business case cost factors

- Service levels decrease
- **No new program offerings**
- Citizen satisfaction
- Wait time
- Service error rates and costs
- Injuries / deaths
- Property values
- Agency image
- Future funding
- Crime / fire rates
- Health costs (stress and injuries)
- **Innovation rates**
- OT and temp replacement costs
- Department morale
- Recruiting impacts
- Increased grievances
- Increased union demands
- Employee / mgmt. turnover
- **Insurance costs**
- Absenteeism
- Team conflicts
- Property taxes and collections



# **Critical Success factor #3**

**Forget your gut and antiquated past practices...**

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**Use data-driven sourcing approaches**

# The best sources for finding prospects

**For a competitive advantage...**

**minimize copycat sourcing approaches**

- Career fairs
- Newspaper ads
- Large job boards
- Recruiting posters
- College placement centers (on-campus ambassador)



**Instead...**

**try these data proven  
sourcing approaches**

# What are the best sources for finding quality not-active prospects?

1. **Referrals** from top performers
2. **Boomerangs** (SJPD 72% return, 23% regret)
3. **Silver medalists** (former top applicants)
4. **Finding their work / writing**
5. **Ask new-hires at onboarding**
6. **Ask a top new-hire's references**
7. **Talent pipeline members**
8. **Service award winners**
9. **Ex-employee referrals (+vendors)**
10. **Temp to permanent (+Interns)**
11. **At professional events**
12. **Find during benchmarking**
13. **LinkedIn**



**Any questions at this point?**



# **Critical Success factor #4**

**Your greatest success will come from**

**using data-driven prospect  
convincing / selling approaches**

## Prospect convincing factor #1 – Is making a difference

### Emphasize meaningful jobs... and stop using the excuse of low pay

- What is the #1 candidate motivator?
- Wanting a job that makes a difference and **“connecting with those who benefit from your work”**
- Because 69% are motivated by **“highly meaningful jobs.”**
- **And stop blaming compensation.** Because that same Harvard study found that workers would sacrifice a whopping **“23% of their lifetime earnings** to work in a job that is always meaningful.”
- Incidentally, if **compensation is tight**. Ask each applicant to **force rank a list of job features...** and avoid those that rank money first.

## Selling factor #2

### Emphasize “the attraction factors” that top applicants care about

- Like fishing, **great attraction requires the most effective bait.**
- Start by **surveying a target group of applicants** to identify their ranked attraction factors.
- Also **survey your own top employees** to identify “**why they stay.**”
- Then “**boast about**” your most powerful attraction factors in job postings and on the agency’s websites.
- **In a small agency...** sell the opportunity to grow, have an impact, no bureaucracy and a great community life.

## Case study – The city of San Francisco

### How does San Francisco compete directly against tech giants?

- By showing each prospect **how their job “makes a difference.”**
- By **communicating the important things that the city does.**
- By appealing to their **sense of civic pride.**
- By promising an **easier less stressful lifestyle** than what they’ll have in a hard-driving, ultra-competitive Silicon Valley job.
- By putting in **face time** with local talent to build trust.
- By making each **individual candidate feel valued** (personalization).
- By staying in sync with hiring managers **to speed up hiring** (A Brown).

## Selling factor #3

### Make it easy to feel the excitement at your agency

- Your colleagues clearly love working at your agency **but it's hard for an outsider to feel that excitement.**
- Unfortunately **the written word seldom reveals the excitement.**
- So try these >

## Use these excitement approaches

### “Feel the excitement” approaches

- **“How to videos”** by top employees on YouTube
- **Day in the life** profiles on your Internet sites.
- Create **podcasts** prospects can listen to during commute / idle hours.
- Employee **blogs about best practices.**
- Ask staff to make **positive comments on online functional forums.**
- Post powerful stories **on social media.**
- Encourage **press coverage** about agency programs and successes.
- Place **compelling photos** on Instagram. >

# Feel the excitement



Does this picture reveal a culture of making a difference?



**OUR TEAM MEMBERS ARE ABSOLUTELY, POSITIVELY  
THE REASON WE'VE HAD 35 GREAT YEARS.**

Like FedEx team member Jay McMullin, we strive to go above and beyond in any situation. It's that desire to make every customer experience outstanding that makes our network of companies great. We salute our team for helping us build this network over the past 35 years. To learn more about Jay and other "absolutely, positively" moments, go to [fedexstories.com](http://fedexstories.com).

**FedEx.**

**35**  
FEDEX  
35 YEARS

# Are your job descriptions dull?

A video job description can reveal the excitement behind a job



## Use these excitement approaches

### Another “feel the excitement” approach

**Employee worn pins** – “Ask me what it’s like to work at DMV.”



## Selling factor #4

Once you get their attention... convince them to actually apply

- Make the application process less painful because SmashFly research revealed that 74% of potential applicants who start the application process drop out before completing it.
- Many that already like your agency... will be quickly discouraged if they have a bad candidate experience which might include a slow or painful application process.
- So, make it easy for a prospect to initially apply by just posting their resume or initially, simply by supplying a LinkedIn profile.

## Selling factor #4

### Convincing them to actually apply (continued)

- **Referring employees** are very convincing (do it for the team).
- Make a compelling **welcoming videos** by their manager and team (a welcome video makes prospects **46% more likely to consider the job** (*Lighthouse Research*)).
- **Presentations at professional conferences** covering your agency.
- **Sell their family** on your community.
- Side-by-side **opportunity comparison sheets** **an example** >

# An opportunity sell sheet for managers

Legend - + slightly better, = equivalent, - not as good

Attraction factors that our agency has... compared to 3 others (Legend – a + means the agency has a superior offering, an = means they are equivalent and - means an interior offering)	Agency 1	Agency 2	Agency 3
Above average compensation	+	-	=
Superior benefits	-	-	-
Superior development opportunities	-	=	-
Superior opportunities for growth and security	-	-	-
An exciting community	-	-	-
Superior managers and leaders	=	-	-
Exciting work and products	=	-	-
Work-life balance and flexible schedules	-	=	+
Concern for employee well-being	=	=	-
Above average retirement support	+	-	+
High growth rates	-	-	-

## Selling factor #5 – Avoid prospect ghosting

**After identifying prospects... use the best communications channels**

**Data reveals the most opened prospect communications channels!**

- Text - **98% of texts are seen** by the recipient
- LinkedIn messaging - **85% of in-mails are opened**
- Phone calls – **but 70% of calls go to voicemail**
- E-mail - **and 80% of emails go unopened**

**The timing of the contact matters**

- **Calling** – the best day to call is **Thursday** and then **Wednesday**  
And the best time of day is **4-5 followed by 5-6 PM**
- **Email** – the best day to get an email opened is **Wednesday**

## Selling factor #6

### Continually compare to ensure that your selling approach is superior to your competitor's

To maintain a competitive advantage... you must periodically **make a side-by-side comparison** with the recruiting approaches used by your competitors.

- Compare and **“blind test”** your **job postings**.
- Employer **branding messages**.
- Web and **social media sites**.
- **And even your job's features** must appear to be clearly superior.

## And the last selling factor (#7)

### **Extend your selling time... by building a “someday you may like to work here” talent community / pipeline**

- Less glamorous agencies & those in less popular communities **often need more time and opportunities to sell** the best prospects.
- **With the talent pipeline...** prospects that “someday might want to work at your agency” **are invited to join your online community.**
- A pipeline gives you... **more time to communicate, build trust, relationships and to convince members.**
- Members are **sent a monthly newsletter**, recruiting materials and notices of relevant job openings (Microsoft).



**Any questions at this point?**



**A snapshot view of...**

**19 additional selling tools to  
consider**

## Additional selling tools

1. **Hold a “what it’s like to work here” film festival** – if a picture is worth 1000 words, then a video must be worth a million. Challenge your employees and teams to **make short authentic videos revealing “the excitement” within your firm** and post them on YouTube or your own site. (Deloitte made this approach famous).
2. **Emphasize stability and security** – if you’re competing against corporations for top talent. When there is a **possibility of a turbulent economy, the relative stability and job security of the public sector** may be an increasingly effective selling point.

### 3. Show them that “people like you” already work here

- Many people are reluctant to apply for a job is that they are afraid that they won't "fit in."
- Partially alleviate those fears by **providing information on your website that demonstrates that "people like you" already work here.**
- This information can be provided in statistics or with employee profiles that demonstrate that employees from their current agency already work and are happy here.

### 4. Highlight your community

- If you want a prospect's family to support a move, it's critical that you **highlight the strong educational, recreational, cost-of-living, civility and quality-of-life aspects of your community.**
- Start by working with business groups to **get your city or state placed on "best places to live" lists.**
- Also, seek out recruiting **prospects that reveal on social media** that they like what your community has to offer.
- **For public safety personnel**, also highlight your employee safety record and community support for first responders.

- 5. Create a story inventory - stories are literally the most effective way to convince a prospect.** Make sure that you capture and provide your recruiters and managers with access to a wide range of stories about your agency that have proven to impress prospects.
- 6. Target new residents - work with local "welcome wagon" services, banks and Realtors.** Remind those that have recently moved or expressed an interest in moving into the area about your public sector opportunities. **If your region is frequented by tourists,** find a way to encourage them to stay permanently and work at your agency.

## Additional selling tools

- 7. Executive calls can excite** – there is literally nothing more powerful than having an executive call a prospect directly to encourage them to apply. **Future coworkers** can also be effective in selling their future peers.
- 8. Make employees brand ambassadors** – your employees likely continually interact with people in their own profession. **So, encourage your current and former employees to become your 24/7 “brand ambassadors” to talk up the agency and to make referrals.** Ask them to talk up the agency at monthly professional meetings and relevant civic/hobby clubs (nurses and teddy bears).<sub>48</sub>

## Additional selling tools

- 9. Job postings can contain no biases** – if you want diversity... it's important that you use data to sculpt your job postings... **so that they don't contain biased words and unconscious biases...**  
(Textio)
- 10. Show them where they are likely to be in three years** - all top candidates want an opportunity to grow and learn. Be able to **show them, under normal progression, where others have ended up** in terms of rank, pay, and skills.

## Additional selling tools

**11. Personalized recruiting excites** – if you want to land top talent. Realize that the **most effective recruiting is personalized because it fits the unique needs of top applicants**. Take the time to make your messages to your key prospects appear **personalized and targeted specifically to them and their needs**.

**12. Become an agency of choice** - many potential applicants use on-line sites like **Glassdoor.com or Indeed ratings** to choose their next employer.

So encourage your employees **to post positive things** and to counter negative things.

## Additional selling tools

- 13. Show them your agency is a talent launching pad** – if your agency isn't large or it is not in a big city. Show how **others were successful in the past** when they **wanted to move on** to a bigger agency where there was more room for promotions.
- 14. Emphasize your diversity** – having a diverse thinking workforce is compelling for almost all prospects. **Be sure and include data and employee comments to show that diverse thinkers are welcomed.**
- 15. Credentials?** – over relying on **experience in the job and academic credentials** can be problematic (transferable skills).

## Additional selling tools

**16. Right day recruiting** – if you're trying to draw employees from the private sector. It is important to realize that **your chances improve dramatically if you contact your targeted prospects on the "right day."** Which might be **around the time when there are dramatic budget cuts, ethical issue or layoffs.** Or, when a merger is announced or when a key executive or colleague leaves their firm.

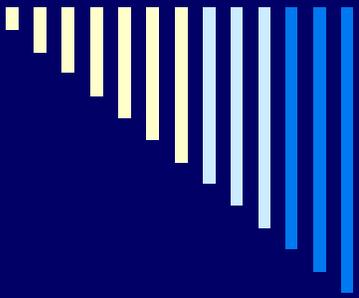
**17. Emphasize progressive leadership** – working under great managers is a key selling point for top talent. Make sure that you highlight your best managers and **show that the entire department is open to new ideas, freedom, innovation, and change.**

**18. Develop a recruiting / selling sub-process for critical jobs** – with limited recruiting resources, it makes sense to **focus the most resources and your best recruiters on the jobs that have the highest impact within your agency**. Typically, prioritized areas include leadership positions, cybersecurity, AI, data, finance and technology positions.

**19. Speed makes a difference** – because today the very best candidates are quickly off the job market. It's essential that you design your recruiting process so that it can be completed as fast as the recruiting process at your best talent competitor.



**Any final questions  
on recruiting?**



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**“BOLD”**

**RETENTION ACTIONS**

**FOR PUBLIC AGENCIES**

56 . 106

# The content of today's workshop

## Part II - Retention Topics

1. Reasons why public sector retention is different
2. Most turnover is preventable
3. Managers influence most turnover causes
4. Most Individual turnover is predictable
5. Retention must be data-driven
6. The most effective retention levers / tools



# **Retention**

## **Critical Success factor #1**

**Realize that...**

**Retention is different and more expensive in the public sector**

# Retention is different and expensive in the public sector

## Reasons why retention in the public sector is different

- Private-sector turnover rate is 30% , but **state and local government's is at 10.8 %**, and the federal workforce is at 6%.
- Unfortunately, higher turnover rates will continue to increase because **when employees are approached by a recruiter, up to 85% will respond positively** (Source: [LinkedIn](#)).
- The turnover rate is so low in the public sector that **managers are not well-versed in retention**.
- Their **bureaucratic recruiting processes** makes it much harder to find replacements (especially if there is a negative attitude towards government work).
- Their **cost of understaffing is much greater** (See the business case).

# A powerful retention business case is essential

## A snap shot business case

When the environmental department is understaffed by 25%...

1. **Construction permits** take 4 months longer
2. **Departmental revenue** is down \$405,000
3. **Active construction** goes down by 15%
4. **Construction jobs** decrease by 12%
5. The growth of **property tax collection** decreases by \$1.2 mil.
6. **Population growth** shrinks by 2%
7. **Environmental lawsuits** increase by 30%



# **Retention**

## **Critical Success factor #2**

**A majority of**

**turnover is preventable**

# Retention is preventable

## Managers must be made aware that most turnover is preventable

- Once executives learn the real cost of turnover, their next surprise is to learn that nearly 77 % of turnover could have been prevented by employers, without major action.
- Although most think the primary driver of turnover is money, a Gallup survey states “only 22% mentioned money” as the reason for their exit.
- You must measure preventable turnover



# **Retention**

## **Critical Success factor #3**

**Managers influence**

**75% of turnover causes**

# Managers influence turnover

## Managers impact turnover causes

- At least 75 percent of the reasons for costly voluntary turnover **come down to things that managers can influence** ([Gallup](#)).

### **Gallup causes of turnover**

- Career advancement opps: 32%
- Pay/benefits: 22%
- Lack of fit to job: 20.2%
- Management/work environ.: 17%
- Flexibility/scheduling: 8%
- Job security: 2%

### **Work Institute turnover causes**

- Career development
- Opportunities for growth
- Achievement & security
- A bad work environment
- Management behavior
- Job characteristics



# **Retention**

## **Critical Success factor #4**

**Almost all Individual turnover  
is predictable**

# Retention is predictable



## Managers must know that most individual turnover is predictable

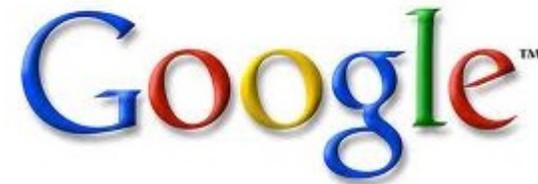
- **Flight risk identification** – firms like **Google, Hershey, and IBM** all have processes for precisely predicting individual employee “flight risk.”
- In fact, **IBM’s** AI-assisted “predictive attrition program,” has a **95%** **success rate** for predicting who will quit within 6 months.
- Measure the accuracy of your... **predictable turnover**

# Identifying who will quit



## Google uses an algorithm to identify who might quit

- Employee reviews
- Promotion history
- Pay history
- Employee surveys
- Peer reviews (360 degree)
- Employee training
- Leadership meetings



# Identifying which employees are likely to leave

## External approaches for identifying who might leave

1. **LinkedIn “open to new opportunities”** search.
2. A **search of internet job boards** for active resumes.
3. **Blind recruiter** calls... to see who responds positively.
4. A **dry search** by a headhunter to see who is desirable.
5. **Run blind ads** to identify who is applying.
6. They extensively update their **LinkedIn profile**.
7. Suddenly **speaking at conferences** and increased visibility.

# Identifying who is at risk of leaving

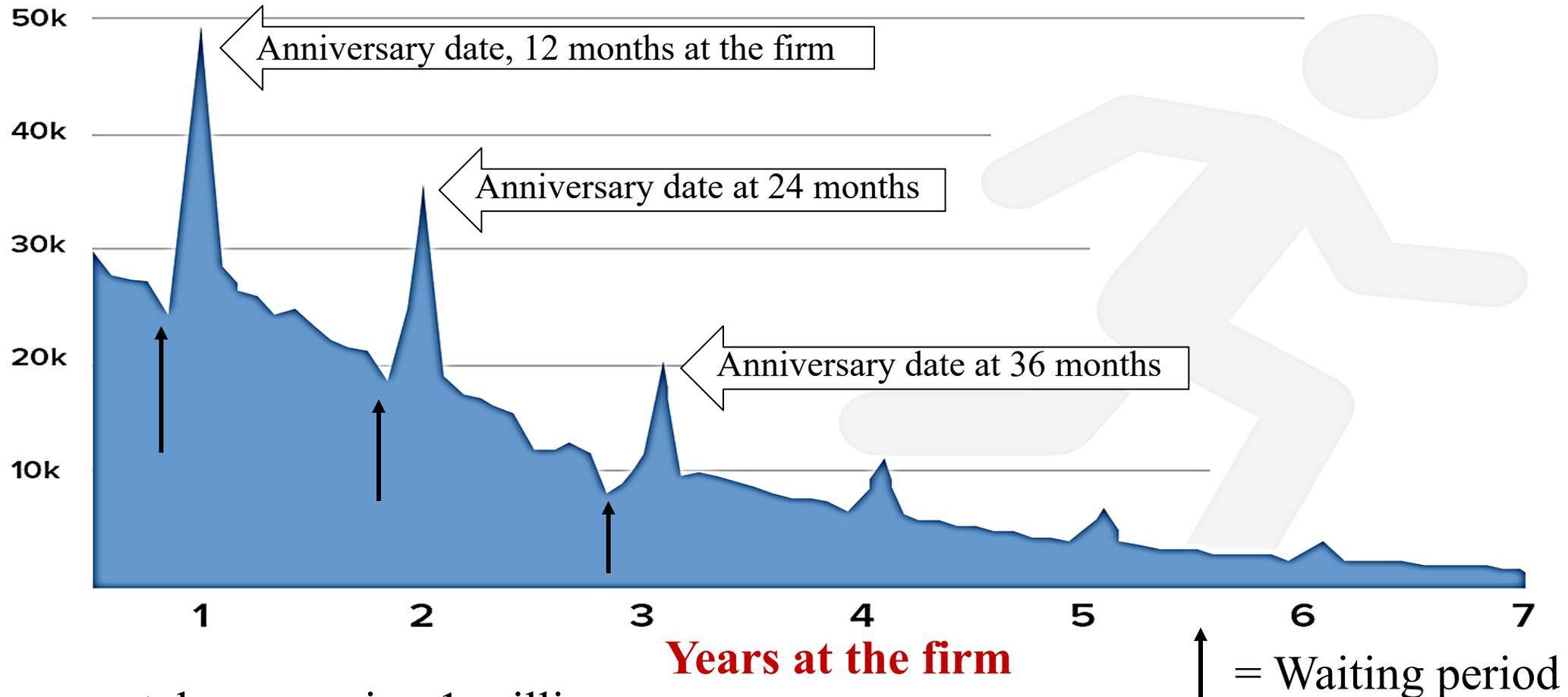
## Internal approaches for identifying who might leave

- **Track time in previous jobs** before leaving (from their resume)
- **Ask “superknowers” on your team to warn you**
- They utilize our agency’s **resume template**
- They **feel underutilized** (Google)
- **More negative behaviors** like no OT, error rates, Friday absences
- **On their anniversary date** or after a negative performance review >

# Data can remind everyone when people look for a new job

## When do most employees quit?

The number of recently hired employees that quit



Source: entelo.com using 1 million resumes

# Predicting when top performers might quit

**Learn who is unhappy by...  
asking your “regrettable employees” this simple question**

*How many nights during the last month...*

*within 10 minutes of your head hitting the pillow...*

***“Did the excitement of going to work the next day enter your mind?”***



# **Retention**

## **Critical Success factor #5**

**Retention requires  
a data-driven approach**

# Forget your gut

**Realize that your approach to retention must be data-driven**

- Retention efforts fail because **most retention efforts operate on intuition and generalizations.**

**Use data to find**

- **Which jobs** have the highest cost of turnover.
- **Who** is at risk of leaving.
- **Why** people are leaving.
- **Where** they're going (i.e. Track them on LinkedIn).
- **What recruiters** are successfully poaching.
- **Which retention tools work** for each cause of turnover.



# **Retention**

## **Critical Success factor #6**

**success requires a  
personalized approach**

## Personalized don't generalize

### **Realize that your approach to retention must be personalized**

- **Regrettable individuals leave for specific personal reasons.**
- **So for each targeted individual “flight risk”... you must identify their own personal turnover causes and sticky factors.**
- **The turnover prevention levers (actions) must precisely match the causes of turnover for each individual.**
- **A personalized retention plan is required for each high-value retention target. >**

## Example – A personalized retention plan

### Typical elements of a personalized retention plan

1. ID the reasons why they **quit their last jobs** (and avoid them).
2. ID the elements of their **dream job**.
3. List and target their top **excitement, challenge & frustration** factors
4. ID and list **desirable new projects** and new work/skill areas.
5. Create an individualized **learning plan** (with their own budget).
6. ID **where would they like to be** in two years.
7. ID and list how do they **prefer to be managed**.
8. ID and list **who do they want to work with**.
9. Set dates for “**stay interviews**” to reinforce the reasons that they stay.
10. Set no cancel **two-way communications meeting dates**.



# **Retention**

## **Critical Success factor #7**

**success requires a**

**Retention toolkit for managers**

# Personalized don't generalize

## **Managers need a retention toolkit**

- **Don't rely on a centralized approach** based in HR.
- Because **turnover varies so widely between functional units** (e.g. EMS and janitorial services)... HR should instead **develop a retention toolkit.**
- Which allows **each individual manager to pick and choose** the retention tools or “levers” that they find will have the greatest impact on their team.
- Giving them choices **also makes it more likely that managers will “own”** the retention problem.



**Any questions at this point?**



**A snapshot view of...**

**The top 10 retention tools  
for your toolkit**

# The #1 most powerful retention tool... “a why do you stay” interview

## 1. Elements of a “stay interview” (a 38% reduction at LinkedIn)

- **Send a thank you note** – just to let your top performers know that you appreciate them.

### **During an in person interview, their manager covers these areas**

- **You’re on our radar** - explain to them that **their commitment to excellence is getting noticed.**
- **Express gratitude** – show **gratitude for their key contributions.**
- **You’re critical to us** – convey **their importance** to the organization.
- **My door’s open** – remind them that **questions or concerns** are always welcome.
- **Tell me why you stay** – ask what “**sticky factors**” keep them here... and then **proactively reinforce those factors.**

## Deciding to leave usually requires a triggering event

**2. Failing to have a great job will not by itself make most leave...  
It also takes another triggering event or “career wound” like...**

- A rejected **major project** or a project ending.
- A major **budget cut**.
- A favorite friend / colleague / **boss left**.
- A **missed promotion**.
- A **perception of unfairness**.
- A functional department **merger**.
- Turning 30 / 40 / 50.
- A **family event** (i.e. 1st child entering school).

**Make a list of these triggers and watch for them**

# Not all turnover is bad



## 3. Maximize your impact by prioritizing employees/jobs

“Positive turnover”



versus...

“Regrettable turnover”



## Target retention efforts... on high impact employees

### Criteria for prioritizing employees that are flight risks (20% is the target)

- **Top performers / innovators** (metric – top performer turnover).
- **Current and potential leaders and your trained successor.**
- Those that **generate the most revenue** (revenue generator turnover).
- **High customer impact employees.**
- Those that have key **current or future skills.**
- Those with **important functional contacts or large networks** (*SKORR*).
- Employees that **can not be easily replaced**
- Those that are **diverse** (metric – diversity turnover)
- Any **key employee** (metric – regrettable turnover)

# Target retention efforts... on high impact jobs

## Criteria for prioritizing your firm's jobs (15% is the target)

- **Mission critical jobs** (work stops with this vacancy).
- **Revenue generating** and revenue impact jobs.
- High **customer** and **diverse customer impact jobs**
- **Key manager** and executive jobs.
- **Hard to fill jobs** through succession or recruiting jobs.
- Cybersecurity, tech, finance, police/fire/EMS.
- Most **jobs with a high turnover rate**.
- **All jobs in your key SBU's** (high growth, high profit or high margin business units).

A tool for deciding... who you should retain?

## “The Keeper Test”

(Used by Netflix)

Ask yourself...

“Which of my people, if they told me they were leaving in two months for a similar job at a peer organization...

Would I fight hard to keep?”

## Walk them downstream

### 4. Seeing their impact excites, so walk them downstream

- **The #1 employee motivator is “connecting employees to those that benefit from their work.”**
- **Meaningful jobs have longer tenure because... “employees with “highly meaningful jobs were 69% less likely to plan on quitting their jobs within the next 6 months” (Source: [Harvard Business School](#)).**
- **Proactively let targeted employees meet users / customers and to actually see the impact of their work for the firm, their profession and on the world in general.**



### **5. Post-exit interviews identify the real causes of turnover**

- **Standard exit interviews usually produce misleading causes of turnover because they occur on an employee's final day, when they are most likely to need a positive reference.**
- **In fact, departing employees give false answers 40% of the time.**
- **Instead use a post-exit interview (PEI). Where the exit interview is delayed until 3-6 months after the employee has departed.**
- **Delaying the process will also make it more likely that the former employee will reveal troubling events like sexual harassment.**

## Show the grass over there is not green

### 6. Browngrassers can educate flight risks about life outside

- Many leave because **they mistakenly think that the grass will be greener** and the environment would be better at other organizations.
- **So use your current employees that have recently worked at the organization** that your target employee is considering (they are known as Browngrassers).
- Simply ask them to informally **educate the potential flight risk** about the bad features and the false promises made by recruiters at that agency.

# Highly motivated employees stay longer

## 7. Identify what motivates each key targeted employee

- Excited employees are not only productive, **but they stay longer.**
- So rather than guessing about individual employee motivators...  
develop a yearly **survey asking them to “please list and then rank the nonmonetary factors that increase your motivation?”**
- The manager should then develop a plan to ensure that **when a targeted employee is asked to judge their level of motivation, they put it at 9 or 10 out of ten.**

# Motivation case study



## Example of a personalized excitement survey

Ask key employees in an annual survey to rank...

- The types of **economic rewards** that motivate.
- The types of **non-monetary rewards** that excite.
- **The types of recognition** that have the most impact.
- **The types of work / projects** that really excite them.



**Action** – use the list to customize rewards, recognition and to increase employee excitement.

## Showing appreciation reduces turnover

### 8. Systematically show your appreciation to each flight risk

- If they feel unappreciated... 66% are likely to leave their job
- So make managers aware that something as inexpensive as periodically showing your **appreciation for excellent work** can have a major impact on turnover.
- Make sure that your appreciation effort appears to **be authentic and individualized.**

## Request a heads up

### 9. Ask targeted employees “to alert you” when they begin to look

- **Once employees start looking... it's hard to stop turnover** because there is little time to act.
- Let them know how important it is that they stay.
- And during a one-on-one meeting... **ask them to agree to a "professional understanding"** where they agree to immediately let you know whenever they are seriously frustrated, have returned any recruiter's phone call or when they have begun a job search.
- **Over half** of your employees will generally agree to alert you.



### 10. Make their work more compelling with a simple job redesign

- For top performers... **having compelling work and doing “the best work of their life”** is often the #1 retention factor.
- For example, **Facebook found that “crafting motivating, meaningful jobs... is what really matters”** (Source: [LinkedIn](#)).
- So when you have the authority to modify jobs. Identify aspects of the job that would make it more compelling by asking employee retention targets **which job duties could be added or taken away.**
- So that the employee would now **spend more of their time doing what they like and “what they do best”**. >

## Job duty shifting tool

**A job design tool is... a “more or less a list” to shift their work**

- Make their current job more exciting by shifting an individual’s job duties, so they spend... **more time doing what they do best**

**I would like to do more of**

- 1. Duty #1 - sales**
- 2. Working with people - Sue**
- 3. Using this tool – Excel**
- 4. Choice of – projects**
- 5. Opportunity – job rotation**
- 6. Learning – AI on the job**

**I would like to do less of**

- 1. Duty #4 – handling returns**
- 2. Working with - accountants**
- 3. Using - the credit card machine**
- 4. Choice of – less overtime**
- 5. Opportunity – writing reports**
- 6. Learning – taking classes**



**Any questions at this point?**



**A quick view of...**

**11 additional retention tools**



### 11. Executive calls and visits can be powerful

- Top performers **love having top executives aware of their work.**
- Impress a few top retention targets by asking your agency's top executive or a key elected official **to personally call or visit them to thank them for their contribution.**
- It is important during this contact that the executive **thoroughly knows the employee's past and current work.**
- And that they express **authentic excitement** about working closely with the employee in the future.

### 12. Develop an individualized learning plan

- A primary indicator of a top performer is continuous learning.
- And because **learning is one of their key motivators**, rather than leaving it to chance, why not work with key employees to **develop individualized learning plans**.
- When possible, start by giving some control over their own learning and development budget.
- Next stretch their learning through a series of part-time projects in advanced areas.
- Similar personalized “growth plans” can also be developed to increase an employee’s **level of challenge and internal exposure**.

### 13. Offer them dial down work options

- **Employee burnout** can be major causes of turnover.
- So it make sense to provide the targeted employee with “**dial down**” options.
- Which might include purposely **reducing stressful aspects of their job** including responsibilities, work hours, leadership roles, travel and overtime (those that take have 2x lower turnover @ Deloitte).



### 14. Management By Walking Around

- Expanding daily **face-to-face contact builds employee loyalty.**
- It will also likely **make employees more open** to sharing their issues.
- So, **develop an MBWA schedule** and keep to it. In order to make sure that no retention target feels isolated.



### 15. Realize that retention factors change

- An employee's excitement and turnover factors will change over time...
- **So continually update your information on them.**

### 16. Realize that a key employee leaving may cause others to follow

- Once a key employee leaves, **that can immediately increase the chances that others will follow.**
- So be aware of this likely delayed damage and **focus your retention efforts on those that are likely to follow.**



### **17. Compile an “overdue list” for targeted employees**

Employees get frustrated and jealous when they feel “overdue” for things that others are getting.

**Keep track so that employees are not overdue for:**

1. Needed **training**
2. **Praise** from their manager
3. Updated **equipment/technology**
4. Special **assignments** or rotations
5. A **bonus** or raise
6. Formal **recognition**
7. A **promotion or transfer**
8. **Exposure** to execs/key clients
9. A strategic **planning day**
10. **Time off**



### 18. Develop a diversity retention plan

- **The impact of diversity recruiting efforts will be limited if your agency doesn't have a corresponding diversity retention plan.**
- **So periodically hold “stay interviews” with your diverse employees.**
- **And reinforce their sticky factors and minimize most of their frustration factors.**



### 19. Include retention as a team goal

- **Teammates are often the first to know** when a key member is considering leaving **and they are also most persuasive** in convincing them to stay.
- **So set a team goal** not to lose a single member until a major project is completed.
- And then **encourage teammates** to help each other work through barriers and other factors that might cause turnover.



### 20. Proactively reinforce your agency's image & build pride

- **Pride increases retention rates.** (pride of their work, their agency and their community).
- **So proactively educate and build pride** on the factors that make their job attractive.
- HR can help by providing managers with a “**story inventory**” covering agency accomplishments, awards, innovations and other notable factors that make it stand out.
- Proactively getting the agency “**talked about**” in the press builds pride and retention.



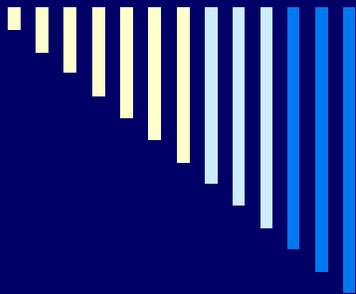
### 21. Toxic employees are a major cause of turnover

- Toxic employees make others 54% more likely to quit (Source: Cornerstone Selection)
- So **failing to move, isolate or terminate** toxic employees can create unavoidable retention problem.
- Learn more about the range of damage done by toxic employees, see my recently published “[Toxic Employee Handbook](#)”.



**Any final questions on retention**

**Or any other topic?**



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**Did this workshop  
make you think?**

**Did you get 6 takeaways?**

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