

7 actionable strategies

to boost
employee
retention.

introduction.

Great employees drive progress. When talented workers stay put, teams get stronger, profits increase and brands gain traction in the marketplace. In other words, employee retention is a crucial part of success.

Unfortunately, employee turnover in blue collar industries — especially logistics, transportation, automotive and manufacturing — remains very high on a global basis. Turnover in Chinese factories hovers around **28.9%**, for instance, and rises to **300%** in some locations. In India, logistics industry staff turnover is **13.7%** — better, but still higher than an ideal 10% attrition rate. Additionally, recent studies show that 43% of US-based manufacturers are struggling with a **20%** turnover rate or higher. Whereas in the EU, turnover rates for the trades and manufacturing industries range from **5.1% to 9.7%**.

In this guide, we'll examine several actionable ways to reduce turnover and boost your retention percentage.



unpack your company culture.

The first step to reducing employee turnover is to better understand your current company culture. The best way to conduct this assessment is to gather key data points using several methods, including:

- [conduct engagement interviews](#)

Exit interviews provide final opportunities to find out why employees leave. In contrast, ongoing engagement interviews represent a preemptive strike against turnover because they help you collect information before workers decide to leave.

- [create a survey](#)

Employees aren't always comfortable speaking to higher-ups face to face. Many people feel more at ease responding to anonymous surveys; if initial uptake isn't good, you can always add a response incentive.

- [approach influential employees](#)

Popular employees usually know what's up on the factory floor. Ask informal leaders about morale in the general workforce, and find out if they have ideas for improvement.

- [appraise your culture](#)

To determine how your business stacks up against the competition from a culture perspective, consider hiring an independent consultant to assess policies, procedures and morale.

With your company climate sorted out, you can move on to the next phase: determining a retention program. The following seven strategies can help you encourage, communicate with and retain your workers in the long term.



1. flexible scheduling.

The coronavirus pandemic forced many businesses into flexworking frameworks almost overnight. Employers were initially keen to ‘get back to normal’ as quickly as possible; over time, however, many settled into remote and flexible working routines. Now, [most experts](#) agree that hybrid work is here to stay — and that isn’t necessarily a bad thing.

According to a [recent Deloitte survey](#), 57% of employees who love what they do say that their employers offer ‘very good’ or ‘world class’ flexwork options. In the logistics industry, cloud-based collaborative platforms make working from home both possible and highly productive. In factory settings, additional shifts provide flexible freedom. If you’re concerned about a drop in output, you needn’t be: with the right oversight in place, remote work and flexible scheduling doesn’t affect productivity.

Start by developing a comprehensive company policy for remote and flexwork opportunities. Even if you already have a policy in place, it’s a good idea to review these guidelines and update as needed to bring them into alignment with a post-pandemic workplace environment.

Secondly, consider working with a workforce management company. This type of dedicated, on-site support can help alleviate some of the pressure on your in-house team by handling the day-to-day workforce management, such as ensuring all shifts are filled.



2. meaningful work.

Job satisfaction is a major retention driver, and meaningful work contributes to job satisfaction. In fact, the Deloitte survey we mentioned earlier found that 72% of respondents who planned to stay with their employers felt that their talents were appreciated. Conversely, 42% of participants who planned to switch jobs said that their skills weren't utilised properly by their employers.

When employees feel engaged, they perform well independently and contribute readily to teams. When companies share overarching goals with their workers — short-term productivity targets and long-term corporate plans, for instance — and invite feedback, employee engagement improves.

Meaningful work depends on communication. When employers communicate transparently and treat employees as individuals, they nurture a sense of purpose in the workplace. If you're not sure what 'meaningful work' looks like, ask your employees directly. Some staff members relish a little extra responsibility, for instance; others find skill-building opportunities energising.



3. better training.

Workers appreciate clear opportunities to progress within the organisations they work for — and great training begins with solid onboarding. [A survey](#) by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) found that nearly 70% of people stay with their employers for more than three years after going through great onboarding programs.

Training, in itself, represents a pathway to continued growth. Very few people dream of repeating the same tasks day in, day out, ad infinitum. Instead, they envision being given more responsibility within their departments, getting promoted and one day, working their 'dream jobs'.

Most training plans begin with a combination of orientation and onboarding, and then progress to a tech and soft skills curriculum. In manufacturing, logistics and automotive sectors, safety and quality control training are also vital.

Don't, however, make the mistake of creating a build-it and forget-it training program. It's crucial that all employees know how the training program works and what options are available. In fact, frequent announcements should be made about training opportunities to entice employees to seek out more information.



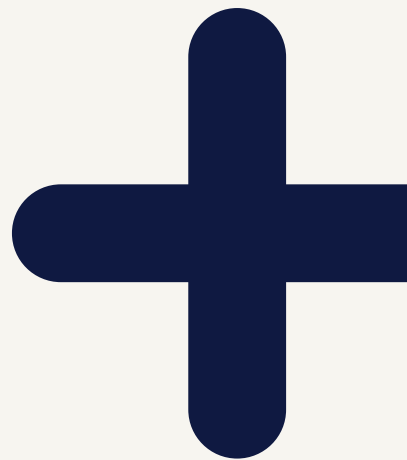
4. tackle bad bosses.

Bosses boss people around; leaders lead. Bad bosses — managers who dominate the people they supervise, or who invite feedback only to respond with criticism if they receive it — directly cause employee turnover.

A recent [Florida State University study](#) found that 39% of respondents said that their bosses didn't keep promises. A further 37% said that their managers never gave them credit for a job well done. Shockingly, 31% of participants said that their supervisors routinely gave them the 'silent treatment'.

Never ignore signs of leadership failure in your organisation. If one of your departments has a consistently high attrition rate, for example, speak to your employees to find out what's going wrong. If workers fear retaliation, create an anonymous survey and use incentives to encourage participation.

If you do find evidence of bad management, confront the issue directly. Some supervisors improve after soft skills retraining — communication or leadership, for instance. Others habitually fall short or commit misconduct; in that case, a managerial reshuffle might save the day.





5. employee recognition programs.

Employee recognition programs make people happy. Factory workers often feel like faceless drones, and delivery drivers work long hours in relative isolation. Well-conceived recognition programs improve morale because they make employees feel valued, which is key to improved retention.

While slightly cliché, 'Employee of the Month' programs still work well. Goal-based recognition programs, such as those listed below, are also effective:

- employee work anniversary recognition
- quarterly awards showcasing outstanding individual or team performance
- bespoke staff incentive programs where employees are rewarded for going above and beyond

6. great pay, better benefits.

If your company has a higher-than-average employee turnover, examine your pay and benefits structure. It's vital to keep pace with other companies in your industry, so do ensure that your hourly rates and your salaries are competitive. If you offer workers less than your peers, you'll lose employees left and right.

You can use a regionally optimised salary calculator to check how your business stacks up. If you offer lower-than-average pay, consider increasing wages until they're in line with your industry baseline.

Employee benefits are equally important. Consider offering numerous prime benefits, such as:

- flexworking
- health insurance, including medical, dental and vision
- company-matched pension plans
- paid time off
- gym membership benefits

The bottom line is that workers who feel well taken care of from a financial perspective generally stay put.

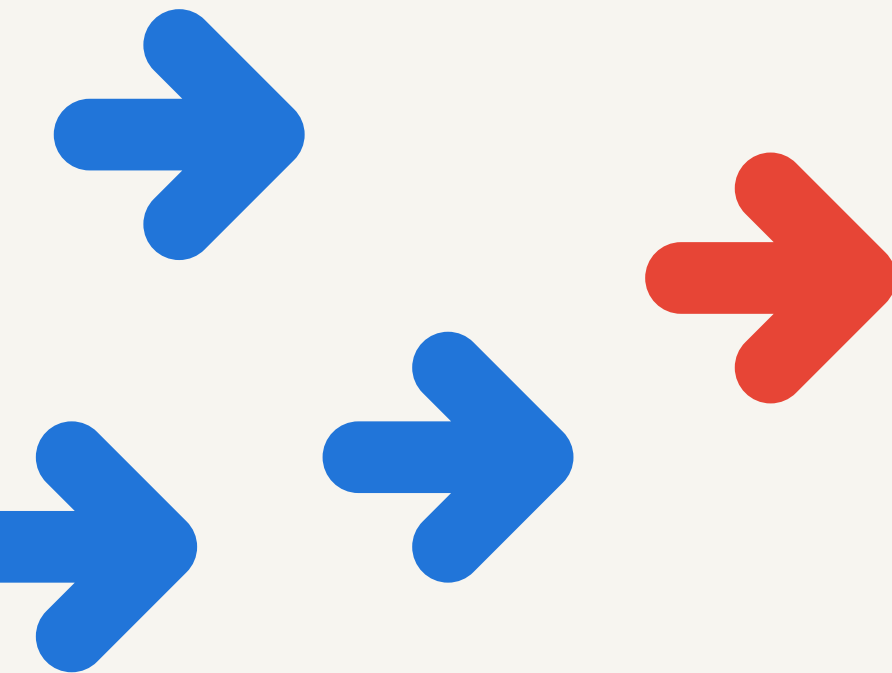


7. work with an HR partner.

Working with a human resources partner can help you reduce attrition from the onset. Why? Because the right HR partner can help you find the right candidates. Employees whose goals and core beliefs align with your company culture tend to stick around; contrastingly, people who don't fit in usually leave.

Candidates who look good on paper but don't perform well after they're hired present a recruitment conundrum. Staffing companies recruit all day, every day. The sheer number of employees and candidates these companies work with on a daily basis provides them with invaluable insights into the hiring process and candidate needs. They'll work in tandem with your HR department, by sharing resources, insights and the know-how to analyse your current hiring practices and to strengthen your overall recruitment process from start to finish.

The best global HR partners keep thousands — or tens of thousands — of pre-vetted candidates in a centralised database. When you contract with them, they draw on their existing talent pool to fill vacancies quickly and efficiently.



Contact us to partner with randstad.

Employee retention is a tricky subject. Gathering the right data isn't easy, and formulating a workable retention plan can be tough without external input — and that's where Randstad comes in. With six decades of staffing and recruitment as well as workplace management skills under our belts, we know how to find, hire and motivate the right staff for you.

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