

# ATTRACT, RETAIN AND PROMOTE HEALTHCARE TALENT IN AN AGE OF DISRUPTION

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The healthcare industry is constantly evolving and as it evolves organizations need employees with different skills for success. At the same time, dynamics within employee populations are changing. Employees are burnt out, they don't spend their entire career at one organization, they expect more than a paycheck from their employer and they feel uncertain about their future employment due to increasing amounts of technology within the industry. As a result, healthcare organizations seeking to attract, retain and develop talent must develop a differentiated employee value proposition.

## Personalize Your Employee Experience

Personalization has become the norm for consumers. From personalized emails and digital advertisements to personalized experiences, they've become accustomed to purchasing a product because it's precisely what meets their needs. These consumers are also employees, and they expect the same kind of personalization in their workplace. Most healthcare organizations do not have this type of environment today.

## Know your employees

Creating a personalized experience does not mean that you should recreate the employee value proposition of other organizations. It requires you to know your employees, their needs and what their goals are for the future, and marry that with the goals and culture of the organization. Then you can work to create a personalized experience for your employees at your organization. Employees' needs change over time based on personal and professional circumstances, while one individual may value a more flexible schedule, another may be looking for robust career development opportunities.

## Personalize career paths

Some nurses want to be a bedside nurse, others want to become a manager and others want to try a different career path altogether. With such a wide variety of career goals, empowering staff to create their own career path is a unique proposition. LinkedIn developed a concept known as a "[tour of duty](#)" to attract entrepreneurs to their organization. With this concept, employees "sign up" for a role for a set amount of time and if they achieve their mission that's aligned to this role, their role advances and they take on another tour. With this perspective, employees gain the skills needed to advance their career and LinkedIn has engaged and motivated employees.

Apply a similar concept to your healthcare organization with internal short-term rotations between various roles where employees learn

new skills, or develop hybrid roles where time is split between the current position and a new opportunity. If organizations align these kinds of career experiences to where you see emerging roles will be needed in the future, you can fill your talent pipeline, without always having to hire from the external market. For example, technology jobs are going to be increasingly important as healthcare becomes more digital, but many organizations don't have people with these skillsets. With hybrid roles and short-term rotations, you can develop this expertise within your existing employee population while encouraging them to progress in their career, many refer to this as future proofing.

## Seek feedback

Seek out employee feedback and listen, really listen. Leverage the Internet of Things to connect the data you have on employee behaviors, survey feedback and reviews from colleagues to begin correlating data with attrition and performance. Then you can proactively work to address the reasons they're dissatisfied and areas of opportunity. After gathering feedback and survey data, engage with employees to develop specific actions to address their challenges and leverage their strengths. For instance, if you can track that an employee is clocking in late to work and can connect that data point to the fact that their employee feedback that shows they're satisfaction score is only average as well as feedback from other employees stating that they appear to be disengaged, you get a holistic picture that the employee is not just late for work, but not happy in their job. Then, you work to address reason their dissatisfied rather than just focusing on their tardiness.

## Empower employees

Create an environment where employees feel empowered to own their career path. Ensure that they know what resources are available within your organization but give them the ability to use those resources for their advantage. If they're unhappy

in a current role, they should feel comfortable seeking out someone to help them make a career switch or ask for the opportunity to gain new skills. By giving employees this sense of ownership, you offer them the resources they want, but don't have to make assumptions around what their career desires are.

# Build the Future With Today's Talent

As the industry changes, healthcare organizations are rethinking what care delivery will look like in the future. [65 percent of children entering middle school today will end up working in jobs that don't exist](#), so it's fair to assume that many healthcare offerings for the future don't currently exist. Data, analytics and automation are not widely used today, but they're critical for better outcomes and lower costs. Many organizations want to use them, but they recognize that their existing talent pool does not have the skills to implement these concepts. As a result, it's important to look to the future as you staff your organization today.

## Hire and train for the future

As you look to fill positions today, consider what those roles are going to look like in three, five or even 10 years. If a role may become obsolete in the near future, think about staffing it with a contract worker rather than filling it with a full-time employee who you will not need long term. You can also develop learning programs to build the skills that will allow employees to learn new skills and take on new responsibilities that align to emerging roles in your organization.

## Align people with your strategy

Look at your strategic priorities and ensure that you have the right people in place to realize results. Consider the types of new roles that will be needed to execute your strategy and the skillsets you will need. Many organizations are increasing their footprint in the outpatient setting, offering telemedicine services and preventive services.

Look at how you can align your organization's existing resources through training to staff these areas. For instance, night nurses face a high burnout rate, so look for opportunities to move these individuals into new roles by ensuring that employees are informed of your strategy and the new opportunities. For roles that will need skills that few employees currently have, train interested, high-performers for these roles so they're able to step in when you need them. Also recognize where you'll need to backfill roles and train interested individuals to step in.

## Differentiate Your Employee Experience With Culture

Culture is intangible, but it's also a differentiator. A toxic culture creates high rates of attrition, while a high performing culture is hard to leave. Culture starts with the way in which leaders behave. It requires clearly defined expectations and accountability to these expectations. Accountability is critical for creating the kind of culture that gets people to focus on what matters and moves the needle on strategic priorities.

This kind of culture also inspires employees to be committed to the organization and creates a sense of pride and accountability. As a result, they want to do more and exceed expectations. A high performing culture is the foundation of ensuring that your employee value proposition is realized. Without it, employees will not feel valued or that their needs are being met.

Attracting and retaining talent is not a new challenge, and it's not unique to healthcare. It's an issue that organizations large and small must continuously address as they and their staff evolve. However, by knowing your employees and demonstrating that you're creating a workplace that is meeting their needs, you can attract new employees while retaining and promoting your high performing people. This puts your organization on a path for future success.

### Key Takeaways

To attract, retain and promote talent at your healthcare organization:

#### Think differently.

Put the employee at the center of decisions that you make around hiring, retaining and engaging talent.

#### Plan differently.

Align your strategic priorities to hiring and professional development but it can't be a one size fits all model.

#### Act differently.

Create a culture of accountability so that employees' work makes a positive impact and delivers results.



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