

A photograph of three diverse employees smiling. In the foreground, a woman with brown hair and a white patterned sleeveless top has her arms crossed. Behind her, a man with a beard and a blue button-down shirt is smiling. In the background, another woman with dark hair and an orange top is also smiling. The image is partially covered by a dark blue vertical bar on the left side.

# Employee Experience: *Increasing Employee Retention*

Replacing an employee is suggested to cost anywhere from one-third to double their annual salary. This will be different for each business and depends on the role.

However, the effects of employee turnover go far beyond costs and short-term disruptions.

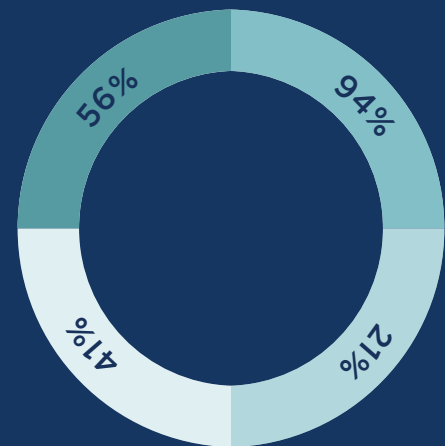
### **Employee Experience: Increasing Employee Retention**

Employee engagement is the heartbeat of a thriving workplace. When employees feel **valued, connected and motivated**, they bring their best selves to work, leading to higher productivity, stronger collaboration, and increased innovation. Engaged employees are not just more committed to their roles but also contribute to a **positive company culture**, which can reduce turnover and boost overall morale. Prioritising employee engagement isn't just good for the workforce; it's essential for achieving long-term organisational success.



### **Why is employee retention important?**

Today's job market is more competitive than ever, and with employees on the move in their 1000s and job vacancies higher than we have seen in a long time, retaining your **'A' players** has never been more important to businesses.



- When employees feel recognized for their work, they are **56%** less likely to look for new opportunities.
- **94%** of employees would stay with their company longer if it invested in their career development.
- Highly engaged teams show **21%** greater profitability.
- Engaged employees experience a **41%** reduction in absenteeism.

”

**People are the driving force behind your business. Successful businesses focus on their workforce and make sure they feel engaged and empowered so their people can be as productive as possible.**

”



## Employee turnover also impacts:

- > **Employee morale**
- > **Productivity and business knowledge base**
- > **Customer experience**

We know that employees who feel valued and believe their employer is invested in their success will be happier, more productive, and more loyal - a win for everyone!

Therefore, the aim is to create a **flexible, supportive and productive** work environment where people thrive.



## Leadership Drives Culture, and Culture Drives Retention

Your culture is shaped most strongly by what leaders say and do day to day — not what's written on the wall. How managers recognise good work, respond to mistakes, give feedback, and support growth sends a powerful message about what the organisation values.

When leaders set clear expectations, communicate openly, and lead with respect and fairness, employees feel more **confident, motivated, and committed** to their work.

### The Secret?

Test, learn, repeat. Retention is a journey, not a policy.



## Lead Like It Matters – Because It Does

### Retention isn't just an HR function — it's a leadership responsibility.

People don't leave companies; they leave managers. It's a cliché for a reason. A poor relationship with a direct leader is one of the most common reasons employees disengage, underperform, or resign. On the flip side, supportive, skilled, and emotionally intelligent leaders create the kind of work environment people want to stay in.

## Effective employee retention strategies

Before we unpack some of the strategies businesses can adopt to retain their valuable employees, consideration should be given to the fact that retention will look different from business to business and employee to employee.

Every employee's buy-in will be as individual as they are. So how do you know what will work for your business and your employees?



## Soft Skills Are the Hard Advantage

We often promote people for their technical expertise but forget to equip them for the people side of leadership. The result? Good staff leave because their managers were never trained to lead.

### **Leadership development is essential for retention. That means training leaders in:**

- > **Emotional intelligence** – so they understand their team's needs and manage their own reactions constructively.
- > **Coaching skills** – to help staff grow, solve problems, and take ownership.
- > **Feedback and conflict resolution** – to keep conversations productive, not personal.

### **The good news?**

These are learnable skills — and they make an immediate impact on team dynamics, culture, and employee satisfaction.



## Stay Interviews

Stay interviews (or retention interviews), are 1-on-1 conversations with current employees about:

- > Why they like working at your company; and
- > What they would change about the business, team, or role if they could.

The main goal is to determine how to improve the employee experience for this specific employee and keep them in your workplace.



## Address Onboarding & Exit Insights

Retention isn't just about what happens in the middle — it starts before day one and continues after the final goodbye.

Two of the most overlooked, yet powerful, touchpoints in the employee experience are onboarding and exit feedback. When done well, these stages create clarity, connection, and continuous improvement. When ignored, they quietly erode trust, increase churn, and rob your business of critical insight.



### Onboarding: Don't Just Orient — Integrate

First impressions stick. In fact, companies with a strong onboarding process improve new hire retention by **69%** and productivity by over **50%** (SHRM & Glassdoor).

Effective onboarding isn't about handing someone a laptop and a policy manual. It's about making them feel:

- **Connected to the culture and people**
- **Clear on expectations and how their role contributes to the bigger picture**
- **Confident in their tools, training, and support**

From welcome emails and buddy systems to structured check-ins during the first 90 days, onboarding should feel like a warm welcome — not a test of survival.

**Pro tip: Don't stop onboarding after week one. Build a roadmap that guides new employees through their first 3-6 months.**

### Exit Feedback: Don't Waste the Goodbye

Every resignation is a chance to learn. Exit interviews, if done with care and consistency, can reveal:

- Patterns in leadership or culture that lead to turnover
- Pay, flexibility, or growth concerns that aren't being addressed

Insights about competitors and how your employer brand is perceived. But here's the kicker: the real value comes from what you do with the data.

Make sure there's a clear process for:

- Collating and reviewing feedback
- Identifying common themes
- Taking action and closing the loop internally

**Even if someone leaves, the feedback they offer can help you retain the next great hire.**

## Employee Retention Health Check (Checklist)

Use this checklist to identify potential risks and opportunities in your employee experience:

### Retention Focus Area

- > We conduct regular stay interviews with staff
- > Our compensation strategy is reviewed annually
- > Employees understand their career pathways
- > Managers recognise contributions regularly
- > Flexible work options are available
- > We track internal promotion rates
- > Leaders are trained in managing people effectively
- > Our onboarding process is structured and engaging
- > Exit feedback is reviewed and acted upon
- > Our benefits reflect what employees actually value
- > Wellbeing is part of our day-to-day culture
- > We review workloads and adjust when needed

### Yes/No Action Required

yes

no

yes

no

yes

no

yes

no

yes

no

yes

no

yes

no

yes

no

yes

no

yes

no

yes

no

yes

no





## 1. Focus on being an employer of choice! Invest in your employees and create pathways for growth

Career pathing is a process through which employees and their managers work together to identify goals and create a learning and growth action plan to achieve them.

### Career path planning:

- can help increase employee engagement; and
- provide reassurance regarding the longevity of their career with your business.

## 2. Recognise employees' contributions

Everyone likes to feel valued, and that's especially true in the workplace. When employees feel recognised for their work, they are less likely to look for new opportunities.



### Reward performance! It's that simple!

Recognition doesn't always have to have a \$ value attached to it. A shout out at a staff meeting or a thank you is also often appreciated by employees.

## 3. Reassess compensation

In today's competitive marketplace, compensation is an essential piece of any company's retention strategy.

No matter how valued an employee may feel, they are likely to look outside their current company if they feel inadequately compensated for their work.

Regular reassessment of industry compensation standards should be a part of your retention strategy.

## 4. Consider your benefits package 6 out of 10 employees say a company's benefits package is the most important non-salary factor they consider when assessing a job.



### The top 10 most appealing perks and benefits companies can offer employees (Seek 2020):

- Flexible working arrangements (59%)
- Extra superannuation (35%)
- Unlimited leave (37%)
- Professional development (26%)
- Insurance/finance discounts (79%)
- Lease car (79%)
- Additional paid parental leave (77%)
- Purchase extra annual leave (75%)
- Health I Wellness programs (74%)
- Free food & coffee machines (72%)

## 5. Prioritise work-life balance

Companies should be working towards creating a work environment where there is balance and boundaries.



Encourage breaks - lunch breaks or breaking if employees need to clear their head



Encourage organisation - workshops on managing workflow, and implementing tools to create efficiencies & track tasks



Review workloads regularly



Lead by example

# Ready to strengthen retention in your business?

Let's talk about how EWS can help you keep your best people.

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