

Leadership and Management

Retention



Finding the right staff for your team can feel like a long and arduous task. So, when we find the right person for the post, we want to keep them! Staff turn over impacts on the time and focus of leaders, can result in strain on existing team members, can lead to potential shift in dynamics, uncertainty for parents and the loss of meaningful relationships fostered between adults and children.

It is therefore essential that we invest time and energy in retaining quality practitioners.

TASK 1

Give every member of the team a piece of paper. Ask them to write down 3 things about working for the provision, that would keep them from looking for alternative employment.

Encourage them to think about both personal and professional reasons e.g., they get along with colleagues, they are able to contribute to decision making, there are clear expectations of their role, they have time to discuss concerns with management etc.

Underneath, ask them to write anything else that you could do as an employer to retain staff. It is important to set the tone of this exercise. Whilst the cost-of-living crisis is a driving factor for securing positions that pay well, this activity is an opportunity to explore what more you could do within your capabilities.

Offer some examples such as;

- more opportunities to engage in CPD
- more flexibility in working hours
- better emotional support
- opportunities for career progression
- reward/recognition for hard work
- more regular/impactful supervisions and appraisals
- support to acquire common core skills
- opportunities to develop leadership and management skills
- improved morale
- clearer vision/expectations
- better terms and conditions
- better management of business/staff need balance

This is not an exhaustive list, but could be used to prompt thinking and discussion.

The feedback from your existing team will not only enable you to capture meaningful feedback about how content your workforce is, but it will also provide you with some incite as to what you already do well to retain staff. It is important to communicate to your staff team how this information will be used moving forward, to ensure they feel heard and that their opinions are valued.

‘Effective team leaders display genuine empathy and understand the concerns of those in the team’ Jones & Pound 2009

See also Q card Recruitment 3 and Appraisals 1

Further reading:

[The early years workforce: recruitment, retention, and business planning - April 2022](#)
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