

# 8 TIPS FOR BETTER EMPLOYEE RETENTION



**If employee retention isn't on your mind today, it should be. Now that the economy has bounced back, businesses are hiring and employees are ready and willing to seek new opportunities.**

All of a sudden, keeping your employees is more important than it was during the recession. To keep employees happy, there are a number of factors to consider. This includes a culture of transparency, engagement and development, and all of that contributes to somebody wanting to stay with you. It's not all dollars.

Still, the bottom line is all about the bottom line: It's cheaper to retain employees than to continually recruit and train new people.

The good news is you can use the following tips to help increase retention at your organization.

# 1 OFFER COMPETITIVE WAGES AND BENEFITS

This is the basic building block of keeping employees. While it's not mandatory to offer the top salary, the wage must at least measure up to what competing businesses provide. Walmart is the perfect example. The discount store recently raised its hourly wage to \$10 an hour, and, within weeks, a slew of competitors followed suit.



## MAKE CAREER PLANNING TOOLS AVAILABLE (AND VISIBLE)

Most companies have an Excel document tucked away somewhere that stipulates what it takes to climb the career ladder. The problem is, nobody knows this document exists, much less how to use it. Create a career planning tool that illustrates what it takes to move from A to B to C, and communicate that with employees so they can steer their career forward. The process of creating this tool doesn't have to be an expensive or resource-heavy endeavor. It can be as simple as making a PowerPoint or a YouTube video that talks about what's ahead (or you can work with an organization, like CAEL, that specializes in career maps). Keep in mind that most employees don't leave jobs because of money. They leave jobs when they can't see a viable path to move forward.



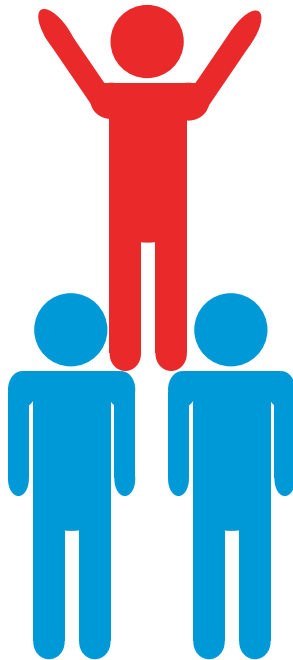
## 3 BE TRANSPARENT

CAEL recently spoke with employees at a large, international business about retention challenges. One of the people interviewed stated, “They post a job and that’s the first time we know that a job is going to come up. That’s the first time we’ve seen what’s required to do that job. They fill it and then nobody knows what’s coming up or what’s required.” Just as people want to know the steps to move to the next position, they need to know about openings in other parts of the company, whether it’s a lateral or vertical move. If you want to retain employees, you need to inform them about career opportunities within the company.



# 4 PROVIDE SUPPORT

When an employee knows the steps it takes to advance, it's important for the employer to support him or her in that process. At CAEL, we frequently work with clients who provide tuition assistance and higher education access to employees. But there are many other resources a company can provide, such as mentoring, job shadowing, informational interviews, free massive open online courses (MOOCs), YouTube trainings, micro-credentials, badges and more. By retaining employees, you're working to grow your own workforce in a way that benefits the business as well as each person on staff.



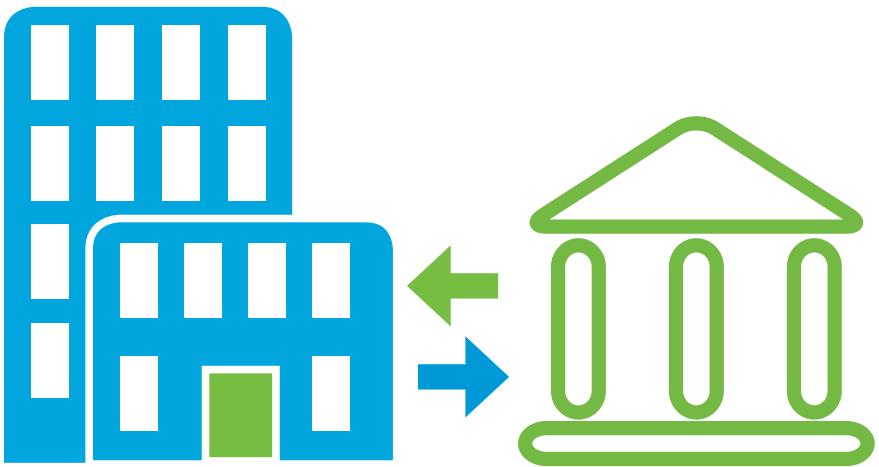
## PROVIDE SUPPORT TO THOSE WHO PROVIDE SUPPORT

While a supervisor or manager is teeming with knowledge about the business, he or she often lacks knowhow when it comes to career development and career advice. Fortunately, that's something you can work around by either training the manager to be a better advisor or hiring an internal or external resource to help employees make smart choices and find and maintain the right path.



## 6 CONNECT WITH COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Colleges are usually willing to go to great lengths to help an employer, but they often don't know how to begin. Reach out to your local community college—which is the best bargain around in terms of education—and see if you can strike up a partnership to create a customized curriculum and/or onsite classes at your business that will help employees further their career.





## CREATE AN ACCOMMODATING CULTURE

If you're going to offer all of the above—support, training, career tools, etc.—it's also important to help your employees access those benefits. Offer things like flex time and regular, predictable schedules an employee can count on.



## ENGAGE EMPLOYEES

Employee engagement is a big buzzword among employers, and for good reason. If employees think they're valued and you show them ways to advance with the company, they're engaged. Many large companies participate in employee engagement surveys to determine whether or not they're successful in this arena, because employee engagement and employee retention tend to go hand in hand.



# CAEL CAN HELP

The Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) is widely recognized as the national best practices leader in connecting learning to work through consulting, employee advising, career mapping, research, dissemination and more.

CAEL is a 501(c) non-profit, international organization with 40 years of experience in workforce learning, including 30 years of experience working directly with employers to create and deliver effective talent management solutions.

Please contact:

Nicole Brahms, Director of Client Services  
nbrahms@cael.org 312-499-2624



**CAEL National Headquarters**  
55 E. Monroe, Suite 2710  
Chicago, IL 60603 | 312-499-2600

cael@cael.org | [www.cael.org](http://www.cael.org)