

The Retention Index



1. Retention:

Because business does better when those who positively contribute to its outcomes choose to stay, **a top business priority must be** a continuous investment of time and resources in retention. Moreover, employers need to recognize that employees consider many factors (position, manager, comp/benefits, brand connection, etc.) when determining their intentions to stay or leave a company. While companies rightly focus on retaining “top talent,” creating a workplace that enables the development opportunities for all employees to become top talent is critical. The following metrics provide guidance to inform a more equitable retention strategy for all.

1.a Dependent and family policies

Practice/Policy	Foundational	Progressive	Aspirational
Family (maternity/paternity) leave policy.	Company complies with Federal FMLA.	Company provides time off over and beyond FMLA requirements, and policy applies to newborn or newly adopted child.	Company provides fully paid time off beyond FMLA requirements, and policy applies to newborn or newly adopted child.
Child care policy (for dependents under 5 years old)	Company has a childcare policy that applies to everyone and is universally accessible.	Company provides benefits to lower the financial impact of childcare on employees.	Company provides benefits that increase convenience and access of childcare services (e.g., preferred enrollment status, onsite childcare, etc.)
Travel support policy (for workers who must travel and who have dependents under 1 year old)	Company has a policy intended to make traveling workers' childcare responsibilities easier.	Company provides financial benefit to employees to hire the time of caregivers while employee travels.	Company considerably subsidizes caregivers' time while employee travels for work.
Flexible work policy	Company permits workers flexible start/end times to provide care to children	Company eliminates "tardiness" due to child caregiving from performance reviews	Company organizes teams and staffing to encourage/enable caregiving responsibilities.
Workforce re-entry policy	The company provides assistance/support for caregiver's re-entry into the workforce.	The company guarantees comparable work assignment to employees returning to work.	Company has a policy guaranteeing employees the same job upon returning to work (with appropriate restrictions)

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1.b. Career Development Policies and Practices

Practice/Policy	Foundational	Progressive	Aspirational
Standards of job performance	Clear descriptions of each job function		
Management involvement in career trajectory	Individual development plans	Access to coaching and mentoring	Adaptive career development framework
Access to Senior Leadership	Senior leaders annually identify high potential women and people of color and create sponsorship plans for their development.		

1.c. Promotion Policies and Practices

Practice/Policy	Foundational	Progressive	Aspirational
Promotion policy	EEOC Guidelines	The company has clear criteria for advancement for each position and level that does not create barriers or adverse impact for any group or class.	
Management involvement in promotions		The company trains managers and hiring decision-makers on hiring and promotions, including legal requirements.	
Gathering data on promotions	Company tracks demographic data of those being promoted		

1.d. Employer/Employee Relationship Policies and Practices

Practice/Policy	Foundational	Progressive	Aspirational
Building trust among employees	The company has regular relationship-strengthening activities for teams, departments, and/or the whole company.	The company normalizes giving and receiving feedback as a way to build trust, work towards outcomes and build stronger workplace relationships	

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Gathering data on employer/employee relationship strength		The company gathers workplace satisfaction data and can analyze by demographic group	The company uses employee satisfaction data as a driver of workplace equity strategy
Creating greater understanding and awareness	The company provides appropriate training to understand bias in the workplace.		The company ensures leaders are developed and manage teams in a way that is in line with it's mission and values.

1.e. Create Connections to Meaningful Work

Practice/Policy	Foundational	Progressive	Aspirational
Mission and vision	The mission of the company is clear, inclusive, purpose-driven, and relevant.		
Opportunities to create connections	The company provides challenging and rewarding work and support along the way	The company provides opportunities for employees to build internal networks	
Psychological safety in the workplace	Company enforces a zero-tolerance policy regarding biased comments around gender, race, ability, sexual identity and expression, and religion and "humor."		

1.f. Fair and Inclusive Recognition Policies

Practice/Policy	Foundational	Progressive	Aspirational
Informal recognition practices	Managers are trained to recognize outstanding contributions of all direct reports		
Formal recognition policies		The company ensures underrepresented groups participate at all levels of formal	

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		recognition and rewards programs.	
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Key Questions to Consider:

- Is the language and format consistent across the document?
- Are the indicators clear enough for a company to answer “yes” or “no”. If not, how would a company know if they’re squarely within one of the levels (e.g., foundational vs. progressive)
- Are the indicators written with an equity lens?
- Are you looking at this document from the perspective of the industry? Your organization? It’d be helpful to use both perspectives as a check on this work.