

WORKFORCE RETENTION

Columbus Chamber of Commerce Thought Leadership Series

Should I Stay or Should I Go?

By Kelly Fuller, Workforce Director
Columbus Chamber of Commerce



In the day-to-day operations of leading a successful business, it can be easy to lose focus on the retention of our most valuable asset: our workforce - the people who create our products, provide our services and bring customers to our door. Without a commitment to creating retention strategies, a business can find itself losing key contributors. Turnover can be very costly, often equal to twice an associate's salary, and it can be time-consuming to recoup production, efficiencies and corporate knowledge when an employee departs. How can today's business leaders create a workplace where people feel connected and valued? We will take a deeper look at lessons learned over a year like no other.

VOLUME 4

TOPICS TO EXPECT IN FUTURE VOLUMES?

MOVEMENT & MINDFULNESS
TEAM BONDING
BE POSITIVE

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REACH OUT TO KELLY FULLER
TODAY TO LEARN MORE ABOUT
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AT
THE COLUMBUS CHAMBER.
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We know that people leave jobs for a multitude of reasons. They may find themselves dissatisfied with the role, or possibly not as it was described in their recruitment and onboarding.

Perhaps, a negative experience with a co-worker, client or supervisor has made them feel compelled to seek employment elsewhere. Employees with highly coveted skill sets may seek employment with companies that offer higher pay, benefits and growth potential.

It is a gross understatement to say that the last 12 months have proved challenging to everyone. However, during this time, we have also been presented opportunities for evaluation of all aspects of our work. Many of us asked ourselves: “are we being honest about the work?”; “where/when/how can the work be done?”; “what support for our team is required to achieve the workplace goals?”. All of these questions unearth many of the sentiments an employee experiences as they are determining whether they will stay or leave an organization.

The Chamber presents a quarterly educational event called The Experience Series, dedicated to the workforce issues that are most important to our members. Recently, we convened a panel of experts to speak on engagement and retention during our March 24th event Building Loyalty and Reducing Turnover. I was joined by Sarah Cygan, Chief Experience Officer, Ologie; Ashley Futrell, Attorney at Law, Shumaker; Kathy Polster, Total Rewards Associate Manager, Accenture.



Starting Now

The Columbus Chamber of Commerce counts many small to mid-size businesses among our valued members. In fact, 81% of our members employ 50 or fewer associates. What can a smaller company do to improve retention without impacting its bottom line? If possible, flex time can be one of the best ways to keep your team members. In fact, offering flexible working enables a business to greatly expand their talent pool, and increase their geographic reach.

From an employee's point of view, more than a third of people report that flexible working is so important, they would prioritize it over having a more prestigious role or a bump in pay. Flexible workers may be able to work whatever hours suit their work and lifestyle; however, you may require that employees work certain "core hours" to ensure everyone can attend the weekly team meeting or be available during a peak production period.

"With Ologie transitioning into a hybrid working model moving forward, it gives us the opportunity to recruit nationally. We do regular check-ins with our newer hires at 30 and 90 days to ensure they feel supported and set up for success."

SARAH CYGAN, OLOGIE

Communicate. Communicate. Communicate. When employees feel like they understand what and why things are happening at work, they become more invested in the overall health and vitality of your business. Internal newsletters are a great way to recap a big announcement or spotlight important industry trends. This not only reinforces a message; the written newsletter can appeal to your employees who are more visual learners. You can make the information brief and concise. Just be consistent with the frequency of publication.

If a newsletter is not your style and you prefer to personally make announcements with your team, consider a "State of the Organization" address geared to your workforce. Share news, celebrations and milestones through a virtual or in-person presentation.

We have missed out on in-person gatherings for over a year. The opportunity to socialize with coworkers has been limited to virtual meet-ups, but many organizations have found ways to make the best of the situation AND increase employee engagement. To bridge the communication gap, carve out 15 to 30 minutes for virtual coffee breaks or lunches with your team. You can keep it strictly business, or allow some time for personal sharing.

To encourage a healthier lifestyle for your associates, consider instituting a wellness initiative or a team health challenge.

Whether it is losing weight, building strength or boosting mental health through meditation, this effort can be an incredible benefit for your employees. The Columbus Chamber recently launched A Better US, an internal initiative to help Chamber staffers stay healthy, informed and connected to one another.

From monthly Lunch and Learns on better health practices and friendly conversations, to a partnership with Yoga on High to encourage movement and mindfulness, the Chamber is seeking ways to support our internal team.

“Town Halls and State of the Organization addresses can be an excellent way for leadership to engage your associates. It allows employees to see themselves as the stakeholders in the work and the overall organization.”

Ashley Futrell, Shumaker

“Social gatherings that allow leaders to share their own career pathways and career advice help build strong relationships with associates. It can help them know who to approach for guidance.”

Kathy Polster, Accenture

Meditation Resources

Free Meditation Apps

- **The Mindfulness App:** [ios](#) [Android](#)
- **Headspace:** [ios](#) [Android](#) *
- **Calm:** [ios](#) [Android](#)
- **buddhify:** [ios](#) [Android](#)
- **Breathe+:** [ios](#)

Links to Guided Meditations & Stretches

[Guided Meditation For Calming The Mind \(5 Minutes\)](#)

[5 Minute Guided Morning Mindfulness Meditation](#)

[20 min Full Body STRETCH/YOGA for Stress & Anxiety](#)

[15-Minute Neck-and-Shoulder Stretch Relieves Tension](#)

[Stressed? These simple meditations will calm your mind in 60 seconds](#)

*Example of **A Better Us** content*



A healthy culture of mutual respect and improved engagement can be achieved by implementing the suggestions we have shared. It is essential to empower your team with the resources and support they need to be successful on the job. Please reach out to kellyfuller@columbus.org for a one-on-one consultation.



Contact Kelly Fuller Today

*Kelly Fuller, Workforce Director
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Reach out to Kelly today to discuss the workforce development efforts of the Columbus Chamber of Commerce.

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