

Develop Your Talent *Stay-Strategy* for 2022 and Beyond

A practical set of recommendations for HR Leaders
Presented by Lead Above Noise
Generated by HR Leaders

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Exec Summary: We gathered to talk Retention Strategy...

Call it the Great Resignation, the Big Quit, the Great Reshuffle – whatever name rolls of your tongue, we're in a moment of reckoning. The Covid-19 pandemic has triggered, for many, a great re-evaluation of their career choices. Many have resigned. And predictions say more will follow suit in 2022.

So, we at Lead Above Noise began with the question of how should we strive to retain talent in 2022?

We invited a collective of Talent leaders from across industries – from tech, finance, professional service, healthcare and retail – to begin to answer this question. You'll find a summary of their responses and recommendations in the following pages.

But while we began with a question of how to build a **Retention** Strategy...we evolved to a better question: How do we craft an effective **Stay** strategy? We decided that semantics really matter here. "Retention" reflects one's employment status. It is simply the avoidance of resignation. But we want more than talent not choosing to leave. We want them actively choosing to stay – to commit, to be present, to want to be a part of.

Therefore, what follows is the outputs of a discussion of what we believe it will take to prompt our greatest talent to truly and wholly stay in 2022.

...and we landed on the need for a **Stay Strategy**

We pulled some headlines from the research

What's driving the "stay" choice?



Factors driving people's choice to stay are grounded largely in the human experience of work – not the content.

Key to intent to stay are:

- A feeling of Inclusion
- Psychological Safety
- Personal Well-Being
- Burnout management

Talent wants to co-create their experience



Talent wants to be asked what matters most. They want to sit on a team to design solutions. They want real updates (not PR) around what's working. And they want the journey to be long-term – not one-and-done.

Companies are missing the investment mark



Talent is telling us what matters. Companies are investing in what they *believe* matters.

But there are a few areas whose importance companies are underestimating (and thereby underinvesting in):

- Trust at work
- Feeling of belonging
- Feeling valued

A positive experience is not just a nice-to-have



Absent a sense of being engaged, of knowing their well-being matters, of feeling valued for their strengths, talent reports an intent-to-leave. A positive experience is non-negotiable.

Sources: Gartner Inclusion Initiatives Employee Survey, 2021; McKinsey Quarterly, September 2021; Gallup, [How to Eliminate Burnout and Retain Top Talent](#), Aug 2021; [HR Predictions for 2022](#) | Copyright © 2021 The Josh Bersin Company

And we asked our collective selves a big question...



“What are the most critical, relevant, and impactful actions HR can take in 2022 to quickly deliver a Stay Strategy to our organizations?”

Some baseline assumptions:

- ▶ Our hygiene factors – compensation, PTO, basic physical safety, etc. MUST be in place. Their presence doesn't drive retention, but their absence will certainly trigger attrition.
- ▶ We acknowledge – but won't focus today – on longer-term plays like AI, platforms and systems, people analytics, etc. - these are all critical, but our focus today will be on ideas we can execute in the near-term without significant capital investment.

We began with a general discussion

And here are some verbatim comments that emerged.



Then we moved into action-planning! (1 of 3)

What wins should HR focus on delivering in 2022 in service of building a Stay Strategy? Here's a summary of the group's collective recommendations.

Be the shepherd and the shaper of experience. But create clear accountability for leaders to own and drive it

Build a clear and simple "songbook" for all of HR to sing from – brief but compelling compilation of facts, data, stories that demonstrate clear causality between EX and talent intent to stay – and sing often from it

Define guardrails and guidelines – not rules and policies – to help talent and leaders have better conversations with talent around flexibility, boundaries, etc. to ensure people and results can be well

Open the aperture from "anti-bias training" and Diversity scorecards to start to define behaviorally – in simple terms for leaders + teams – what Inclusion and Belonging truly feel like, and how to practice them

While research and data should inform our point of view, the voice of our talent should define our focus and solutions

In addition to annual surveys, turn the dial way up on regular, informal experience pulse-checking dialog with talent – what's working, what's not, and what do we still need to know?

Conduct "stay interviews" with critical, high-potential, or at-risk talent (+ use Employee Resource Groups!) to understand their state of mind, key drivers to stay, and even to engage them as "Stay Ambassadors"

Regularly report back what we're hearing – so people feel heard and valued, and will continue to share opinions and ideas that create a virtuous cycle

And we kept going... (2 of 3)

Lead the way as we define the hybrid workplace – for us – such that talent, business results, + organizational culture are thriving

Seek out teams successfully making hybrid work. Interview them to understand the practices they're using to drive their success, and begin building a hybrid playbook from there. Ground up versus top-down!

Develop – and share with leaders – some key questions to help direct decisions about who is in the office, when, and for what purpose (business-drive and well-being-driven outcomes all matter!)

Begin to (and continually) assess tools and systems in their ability to attract, onboard, and sustain teams and talent working in various configurations to codify FWOV (Future Ways of Working)

Sharpen focus – attention and investment -on what matters most, and let the rest go...for now

Inventory all of our policies, programs, and processes to assess where we're delivering impact and where we're creating distraction and where we may need to add resources or support

Give leaders what they most need to drive a positive human experience: simple tools, coaching, support, clear accountability, and role modeling from above

Highlight mitigating programs (i.e., forced wellness days, Zoom yoga, mental health benefits) but also dial up burnout *prevention* (more effective boundaries, flexibility, prioritization) so that burnout remains at bay

And we kept going! (3 of 3)

Help the organization define our version of community, connection, and belonging

Proactively invite from employees suggestions, experiments, external practices designed to build a sense of trust and community – whether in-person, remote, or hybrid. Share ideas with leaders to play with

Facilitate focus groups inviting a cross-section of talent (generations, geography, function, background) to co-create a picture of what it feels like to belong here. Extract practices to be codified and shared

Host forums in which employees can share elements of their cultures and personal lives with colleagues – cooking demonstrations, lunch-and-learns, virtual dance lessons, book clubs, etc.

Align reward and recognition to desired ways of being and working – things we want to see repeated

Democratize recognition – and decouple it from money. Monetary recognition is one way – but simple programs that allow anyone to express appreciation or gratitude anytime go a long way

Connect recognition to inputs – not just results. We always recognize the hero that closes the sale. We need to recognize the colleague who asks the “dumb” question that shifts our direction for the better

Explore new and creative ways to recognize people – provide opportunities to coach, mentor, present to an executive, speak at a conference...there are many ways that build us up while recognizing talent

How Lead Above Noise can support your Stay Strategy!

[Lead Above Noise](#) designs experiences for – and with – organizations who believe that outstanding team performance and business results are born of positive Human Experiences (HEX) at work.

Experiences are delivered via workshops, keynotes, group coaching programs, and advisory partnerships.

Our [clients](#) have spanned small startups to the Fortune 100,

Our [ethos](#) is non-negotiable in any engagement we take on.

[Let us know](#) how we can support you!

Learn more about us.



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Lead Above Noise

How we can support your Stay-Planning efforts

Retained Advisory	Executive Alignment	Leadership Coaching
<p>You: Your HR team is ready to build a Stay-Plan...but it sure would be helpful to have some external expertise on-call to help shape your efforts, priorities, decisions, and plans.</p> <p>Us: In a 3-6 month retained engagement we'll advise on your journey of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discovery (ask + listen)• Prioritizing• Planning• Implementation of a Stay-Strategy	<p>You: Your HR team has a clear vision and strategy. But is your executive leadership team clear, aligned, and universally supportive of your Stay-Planning efforts?</p> <p>Us: We'll design and facilitate an engaging conversation with your executive team during which they will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify key opportunities,• Develop a set of talking points• Commit to action and ongoing sponsorship of your efforts!	<p>You: Your HR team is ready. Your executives are bought in. Your leaders <i>want</i> to do the right thing...but are they equipped and empowered to change their own behavior?</p> <p>Us: We'll facilitate a multi-session, cohort-based group coaching program that delivers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Insights• Tools + Skills• Practice• Accountability <p>All to empower leaders to not just <i>want</i> to change – but actually do it and do it well!</p>

Thanks for the memories...

The words and phrases this collective generated

