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Employee Turnover: Costs, Causes and Cures

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Abstract

Employee turnover is a severe problem in today's workplace. The number of people quitting their job has risen steadily in the last 10 years, which is costing organizations exorbitant amounts of money. Replacing a less productive worker with a more productive worker can increase revenue, but replacing a valuable employee can cost the organization significantly in various ways, potentially equaling 150% of the lost employee's salary, or even more. There are many causes of employee turnover, most of which are preventable, and it is important for management to study these issues to determine what actions to take to prevent excessive turnover in their own organizations. In this day and time, creative ways must be found to give employees a reason to stay with the organization, as opportunities are so many and varied. Then end goal is to create a satisfying work environment that fulfills the employee's needs and engenders loyalty to the organization, thereby retaining talented employees to aid in the fulfillment of the organization's goals.

Keywords: turnover, hiring, employee, prevention, costs

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Employee Turnover: Costs, Causes and Cures

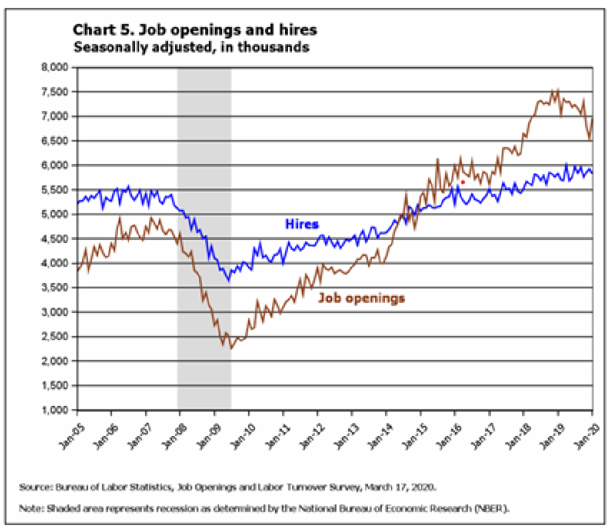
Employee turnover is the movement of employees around, in, and out of the labor market, or the replacement cycle after a position is vacated. It is a costly endeavor, as employers invest heavily in their employees, from recruitment, to training, developing, maintaining, and retaining them. It is vital that employers understand what causes turnover and how it can be prevented, so that they can control turnover and enhance the success of their organization (Ongori, 2007). High employee turnover is an often-insurmountable problem for organizations that can adversely affect an organization's productivity, its employee relations, and its bottom line, which makes finding a solution imperative. This study is going to look at the costs of employee turnover, its causes, how it can be prevented, and how hiring practices, training, and other factors lead to turnover or retention.

The turnover rate for an organization is calculated by dividing the number of employees that left employment during the desired time period by the average number of employees employed during the desired time period (the number of employees at the beginning of the time period plus the number of employees at the end of the time period divided by 2) multiplied by 100. One hundred percent turnover would mean that the number of people that left the organization equals the number that are usually employed by the organization (Tesone & Pizam, 2013). Turnover is a symptom of a very serious multi-faceted problem that needs to be explored and understood by any employing organization.

"Turnover disrupts an organization because it requires managers to divert resources and takes time away from the organization's core goals, which impacts the effectiveness of public organizations" (Johansen, 2013, p. 860). Johansen also notes that turnover can have negative effects such as "loss of institutional memory," work backlogs, and unfilled positions. In addition, high turnover can affect morale and “disrupt the organization’s social and communication patterns” (p. 860).

In today’s economy, the job market is affected by many factors that were unknown in the past. With a global market, easy relocation, and low unemployment, there are endless opportunities for job seekers, or even for those not seeking or desiring to change jobs. According to Theresa Agovino (2019), we have “one of the tightest labor markets in the past 50 years”, with an unemployment rate of around 4 percent in January 2019. Of course, this is pre-pandemic. Nevertheless, the issue under review is what results from an abundance of jobs and fewer job seekers: turnover.

In a chart of job openings and hires (Chart 5), the Bureau of Labor Statistics shows that



the number of hires outpaced the number of job openings from 2005 until 2015. At that point, the number of job openings sharply increased, while hires more gradually increased. There were significantly more job openings than candidates to fill those positions. In other words, the job market had unlimited opportunities for employees seeking to make a change (2020). The Work Institute’s 2017 Retention Report predicted this crisis in supply and demand. “The continuation of this trend fuels the war for talent in the U.S. job market. Employers are faced with the challenge of attracting employees from other companies rather than the easier task (several years ago) of recruiting them from a ready unemployed supply” (Mahan et al., 2020, p. 9).

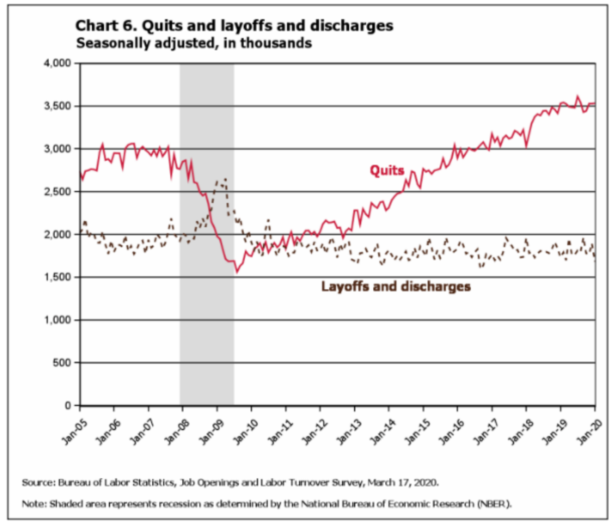


Chart 6. Quits and layoffs and discharges
Seasonally adjusted, in thousands

According to the following charts by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2020), layoffs and discharges of employees have remained relatively stable over the last 15 years, with the exception of a recession during which layoffs were high and quits were low. However, Chart 6 shows that the number of employees that quit their job has risen dramatically over the last 10 years since the recession. Chart 8 shows that approximately 42,000 people quit their job in 2019.

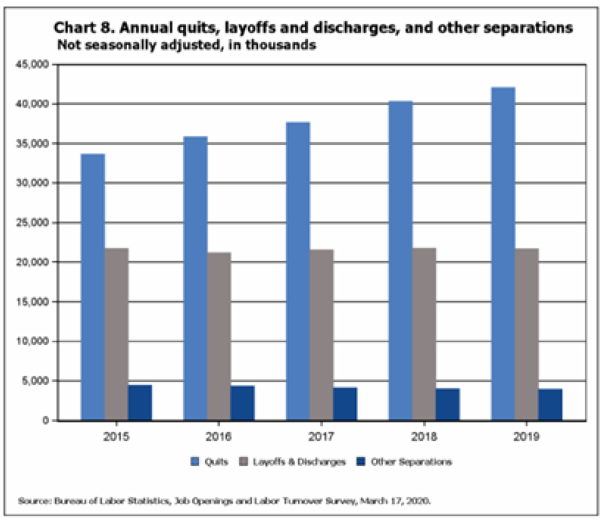


Chart 8. Annual quits, layoffs and discharges, and other separations
Not seasonally adjusted, in thousands

The number of employees with other reasons for leaving employment are relatively stable. That is a huge difference. What could be causing these increases in numbers, how much do these employment fluctuations cost an employer, and what can be done about it?

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (2020), in an article about job openings, hires and quits in 2019, states that the number of unemployed persons per job opening is a ratio useful to evaluate the economic state of the country. “When the economy is strong, the number of unemployed is low and the number of job openings is high, causing the ratio to decrease.” The opposite happens when the economy is weaker. During the 2007 “Great Recession” the ratio began at 1.7 and increased to 6.4 by July 2009. That is 6.4 unemployed persons per job opening. In 2018 the ratio dropped below 1.0 for the first time and remained there through 2019.

In regard to hires, the same article notes that the number of job openings exceeded the number of hires for the first time in January 2015 and continued through December 2019. This seems to indicate that there were many jobs that were going unfilled. Total separations, voluntary and involuntary turnover combined, have also risen steadily for 9 years. All of these statistics make it clear that the abundance of available jobs have contributed to the high number of turnovers (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020).

It also has to be understood that all turnover is not detrimental to the organization. There is a rate of turnover that is beneficial to the organization when underperforming employees are replaced with higher performing employees called functional turnover. Dysfunctional turnover is when a valued employee desires to leave the organization, but the organization wants to retain the individual. Also, dysfunctional turnover is “divergence from the equilibrium where the costs of turnover equal the costs of retention” (Stock, 1996, p. 3). Diverging in either direction is inefficient, either spending more on turnover or more on retention than the breakeven point. When an organization wishes to keep an employee, it has to be considered if the cost of keeping him outweighs the benefits to the organization. The goal is to “minimize dysfunctional turnover without artificially suppressing functional turnover” (p. 5).

Lee (2018) poses the question, “does employee turnover necessarily have a negative impact on organizational performance” (p. 522)? Traditionally, it has been thought that there are pecuniary (recruiting and training costs) and nonpecuniary (employee morale) costs to the organization’s performance. The author states that turnover may, in fact, be beneficial to an organization’s performance. This research concerns public sector, in particular federal government agencies, which are operated more rigidly in regard to terminating low-performing employees, to determine whether turnover is beneficial or detrimental. There are theories that turnover should be high enough to prevent stagnation, but low enough to maintain healthy working conditions. The positive aspects of turnover could be mobility, a fresh viewpoint, and breadth of experience from new employees. This is only true as long as the costs of recruiting new employees do not exceed the benefits. The author also indicates that scholars believe turnover's influence on organization performance is determined by the type of turnover, i.e. transfers, quits, and involuntary, which hypothesized relationship the author detailed in Figure 1. Only involuntary turnover is hypothesized to have a positive relationship on organizational performance.

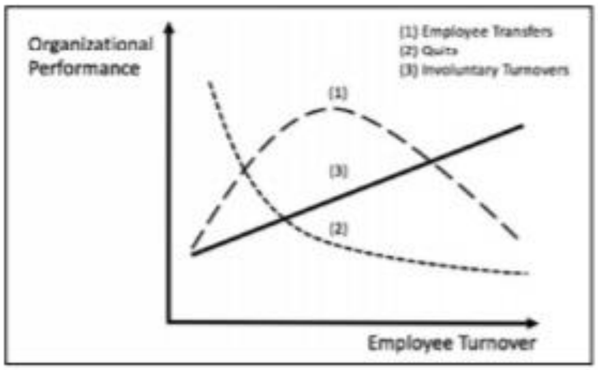


Figure 1. Relationships between employee turnover and organizational performance by type.

Source: Lee, S., Employee turnover and organizational performance in U.S. federal agencies, 2018.

Employee transfers, as they increase up to a certain point, are hypothesized to have a positive impact on organizational performance, but after that point the effect becomes negative on performance. Conversely, quits are hypothesized to have an overall increasing negative effect on performance. This hypothesized information is what the author is working from for her research (Lee, 2018).

The author's research confirms the employee transfer relationship hypothesis, which is at optimal level at a 7.2% transfer rate. The quit rate hypothesis in the above chart was disproved by the research; however, this was attributed to the short amount of tenure of those employees (less loss of knowledge and experience) and the fact that it was a government agency instead of a private organization. Lastly, the positive linear relationship of involuntary turnover was confirmed, suggesting that the termination for poor performance or misconduct is beneficial for an organization in nonpecuniary benefits. The conclusion is that turnover is detrimental or beneficial on a contingency basis (Lee, 2018).

Our focus in this study is on dysfunctional turnover.

The High Costs of Employee Turnover

The best place to begin looking at the issue of employee turnover and why it is such a problem for organizations is to study the costs associated with turnover. Seeing how costly this is for an organization will make the importance of the issue clear. It is something that must be dealt with for an organization to be successful and productive. The costs of employee turnover are not limited to the things that come immediately to mind, such as recruiting and training costs, but include such intangible things as loss of production, co-worker perceptions and morale, and loss of commitment to the organization. One estimation is that a leaving employee costs a company about one-third of his annual earnings (Agovino, 2019). However, this is a rather conservative estimate. According to Cloutier, Felusiak, Calvin, and Pemberton-Jones (2015), “expense to the organization for recruiting a new employee costs half to 200% of the former employee’s salary” (p.119).

In his article, William Bliss (2004) details the costs associated with employee turnover in an organization. He concludes that the total costs to an organization could be 150% of an employee’s salary, and even more for management or sales positions. He suggests that costs be accrued for each of these areas affected by turnover: the costs due to leaving, recruitment costs, training costs, lost productivity costs, new hire costs, and lost sales costs. He takes into consideration who is doing the work for the vacant position, the extra cost to management to get the work covered, the lost costs of training, and the effect on the entire department and customer base. Replacing the employee accrues costs for advertisement, which varies according to the position being filled, the amount of time preparing to interview and the interviews themselves, and the follow-up research, reference checks, and second interviews. Training costs accrue for both the trainee as well as the trainer, such as both of their salaries, loss to productivity of the trainer and trainee, costs of training materials, loss to all employees' productivity while they are helping the new employee, and costs of mistakes made by the new employee. Then there are the administrative costs of a new employee being put into the system. The lost sales due to an experienced salesperson being replaced by a less experienced salesperson, or the vacancy of the position, or the loss of revenue in general for non-sales positions is another cost to consider. Bliss suggests that the loss of a $50,000 salaried employee could cost a company $75,000 to replace (Bliss, 2004).

A more comprehensive study is performed by Tziner and Birati (1996), who started with the work of F. W. Cascio in his book *Managing Human Resource: Productivity, Quality of Work Life and Profits,* and adding additional cost considerations. Cascio's work on turnover costs divides them into categories of expenses: separation costs include exit interviews, administrative, and severance pay; replacement costs include advertising, processing applications, conducting interviews, orientation activities, and the like; training costs include imparting information, and attending training programs and activities. The total of these should be the costs incurred by the organization. Cascio goes a step further by considering the costs incurred by the "reduced productivity of the new worker during the period required for the level of performance of the previous employee to be reached" (p. 114).

Tziner and Birati (1996) discuss the limitations of Cascio's theory, in that he fails to consider whether turnover is functional or dysfunctional. Functional turnover releases ineffective workers and allows an opportunity to replace them with better performers. Dysfunctional turnover is losing a good performer, for whatever reason, and is a detriment to the organization.

> Costs that ensue due to performance downfall or disturbances in the normal work-flow and functioning of the entire organization can be considerably high, particularly if the quitting or terminated employee is a reasonably good performer holding a centrally located job. (p. 115)

There are also costs associated with the socialization of the new employee, which is acquiring the relevant information necessary to perform his job. It takes many months for socialization to be complete and costs the company considerable expense because the newcomer performs at lower levels than the former employee. In addition, socialization takes much time and energy, causing additional stress to the new employee, thereby causing a drop in performance. This socialization would also be costly in regard to the supervisor's time to mentor the new employee. Further considerations Cascio failed to take into account are detrimental consequences of dysfunctional turnover such as morale of the remaining employees, lost customers due to inability to fill orders, overtime costs to cover workload, and additional costs paid to trainers. There are also immediate expenses to consider when an employee leaves, or separation costs. Tziner and Birati take these additional factors and construct a new model of calculating turnover costs (Tziner & Birati, 1996).

Tziner and Birati (1996) break the factors down into these categories: direct outlays of the replacement process, indirect costs and losses relating to interruptions to business, and the financial effect of the drop in morale affecting the remaining workers' performance. Indirect costs are the most difficult to measure, but since they are so significant, should be included in the calculations, and the authors have derived a method to estimate these costs and have detailed it in their report. Another factor to consider is the turnover rate multiplier, which computes for the increased likelihood of a new employee leaving the company after a short period of time, whether by choice or termination, and should be estimated by the accounting department.

Tziner and Birati's (1996) calculations on a sample case of dysfunctional turnover of an employee making $64,800 per year would cost the company $103,434 to replace. This is very costly to an organization and when repeated multiple times could have devastating consequences. If the employee were in an important position in the company, the costs would likely increase even more substantially. Implementing preventative measures is imperative for a company to head off the loss of strong performers and essential workers, or in economic circumstances of a tight employment market.

Certain industries generally have higher rates of turnover than other industries, and the hospitality industry has one of the highest. According to Tracey and Hinkin (2008), the lodging segment of the hospitality industry can average turnover rates of 60 percent for line-level employees and 25 percent for management, annually. Rates are even higher in the fast-food industry, where annual turnover can run to 120 percent or more. That means that significantly more than the average total number of workers employed by the company leave within a year's time. Even a relatively low-paying position, such as a minimum wage fast-food worker, can be extremely costly to an organization's annual profit with repeated turnover costing the company in more than just salaries. This can also greatly impact customer service, which is the key component of the hospitality industry. "Variance in service quality is often a function of time on the job; it is virtually impossible for newly hired employees to provide the same levels of service as veterans who have mastered their tasks" (p. 13).

A similar situation in another facet of the fast-food industry is a convenience store in the Midwest that was seeing annual turnover rates of 160 percent, but with hard work has reduced that figure to 90 percent, saving them a tremendous amount of money. However, this is still very costly to the company due to overtime incurred trying to cover shifts, and frustrations of staff which lead to quits. On a further positive note, a fast-food chain in Kingsport, TN, has a remarkable turnover rate of 23 percent, about one-third of the industry average (Agovino, 2019). The necessity of a plan to prevent excessive turnover is obvious, and success is possible.

The costs of high turnover in the healthcare industry are shocking, according to Waldman, Kelly, Arora and Smith (2004). The research in this article focuses on actual quantifiable expenses – hiring, training, reduced productivity - as there are so many variables to consider that are not able to be calculated to get a true and complete figure. The medical center used in this study had an annual turnover cost of 3.4-5.8 percent of the annual operating budget. This translated to $17-29 million of a $500 million budget. Hiring and training represent approximately 2 percent of the annual budget, so reducing these costs would be significant to the budget. However, reduced productivity constitutes 42-66 percent of total turnover costs. The authors state that

> In addition to the not readily quantifiable financial costs of turnover, other nonquantifiable disadvantages of employee turnover exist. These include multiple opportunity costs such as repetitive training obligations of remaining employees, defensive behaviors related to terminations, and lack of discretionary energy. Turnover also saps the morale of remaining employees, adds administrative time, and is disruptive to both organizational culture and structure. (p. 6)

These costs are not a budget line item but affect the company's bottom line with a significant amount of lost revenue. The largest expense for the medical center comes from the nursing staff, then physician turnover, even though care providers make up less than half of the staff. Turnover costs of the medical center studied are about 5 percent of the annual operating budget, which would be equivalent to giving "*every* nurse on staff a 33 percent retention supplement *every* year" (Waldman et al., 2004, p. 6). Considering nonquantifiable costs would undoubtedly raise this figure.

The authors view the enormous costs of turnover as a great opportunity to turn the negatives to positives by making changes to the underlying causes of turnover to greatly reduce the outlays and wastes. This must be done responsibly, however, so that correcting the problem does not negatively affect the desired purpose and outcome of the organization. For example, healthcare organizations must ensure that patient health is still the focus and any measures taken do not compromise the goal of treating them successfully (Waldman et al., 2004).

Another facet of employee turnover to consider is the length of time a new employee works before the employee leaves that employment. According to the Work Institute's 2020 Retention Report, "over one-third (37.9%) of interviewees exited their organization within 365 days or less. Two out of three employees who leave in the first year do so in the first six months." That is little return on the investment of hiring and training an employee. There are many industries that experience this kind of turnover regularly, and it is very costly to them.

To view the situation from another perspective, Ton and Huckman (2008) discuss some positive effects of turnover. Specifically, there is a beneficial aspect in regard to worker mobility, such that an employee would be improving the match between themselves and the firm employing them. Also, organizational psychologists claim that an employee's work level is highest when they first join an organization and can decrease over time, making turnover positive. In a similar vein, in positions that require innovation, turnover can be more costly with the loss of expertise; however, the addition of new perspectives and knowledge from new hires can be a great gain for an organization. Therefore, whether turnover is positive or negative, costly or cost-effective, can be contingent upon the situation.

Causes of Turnover

For what reasons do employees quit? “Seventy-eight percent of the reasons employees quit could have been prevented by the employer” (Mahan et al., 2020, p. 13). The 2020 Retention Report categorizes the reasons employees quit in 2019 into 10 categories. From greatest to least: career development, work-life balance, manager behavior, job characteristics, well-being, relocation, compensation and benefits, retirement, involuntary, and work environment. As we look further at this issue, it will be apparent that employers should use any means available to reevaluate their policies and revamp their hiring practices, work environment, and benefit offerings to combat the desire of employees to leave the company.

To get another point of view, Robert Scally (1998), in an article for Discount Store News, wrote about the erosion of the U.S. work ethic. He opined that in the last 10 years, 1988 to 1998, employee attitudes toward attendance have changed. He attributes this to the rash of consolidations and mass layoffs. Unlike past work history when people worked for the same employer for a long period of time, now people have very little loyalty to their employers. The feeling is that seeing the company profit without sharing those profits with the employees leaves the employees feeling like they have to look out for themselves. More and more people feel they are justified to call in sick if they feel they need a day off, or to just take a day off if they are feeling overworked, and that poor attendance should not be grounds for firing.

Conversely, Stephen Laser (1980) comments in his article on turnover that it is a misconception that the decline in work ethic is the cause of the high turnover rates we are experiencing. He says, “while it is true that worker attitudes have changed dramatically in the last thirty years, the problem of turnover goes beyond this shift in values” (p. 17). He attributes turnover to problems within the organizations, and the failure to realize this has perpetuated the problem.

According to a 2004 report from the Society for Human Resource Management, “75% of employees are actively seeking a different job” (Cloutier et al., 2015, p. 119). Further, 43% are looking for better pay, 32% for better career opportunities, and 22% are dissatisfied with their current opportunities. These statistics should tell an organization that changes need to be made to make the organization a desirable place to work, with the end goal of retaining a talented workforce, i.e., becoming an employer of choice. Knowing why employees leave is key to reducing the turnover rate of the organization.

Expounding on early theories about employee turnover, Michaels and Spector (1982) look specifically at the work of Mobley, Griffeth, Hand and Meglino who attempted to trace the chain of causes of turnover. The Mobley et al. model showed these connections:

> Age and tenure would lead to both job satisfaction and perceived alternative job opportunities; job satisfaction would lead to thinking about quitting, which together with perceived alternatives, would lead to intention to search, which would lead to intention of quitting, which would lead to turnover. (p. 53)

The current study by Michaels and Spector (1982) is to test the accuracy of the Mobley et al. model. Rather than attempting to validate the entire study, it is using these variables from the Mobley et al. study: turnover, intentions of quitting the job, job satisfaction, perceived alternative employment opportunities, task characteristics, consideration behavior by the supervisor, age, tenure, salary, and job level. The authors are adding these variables to the study: confirmed preemployment expectancies and organizational commitment. Confirmed preemployment expectancies refers to the time when an employee discovers that a job is not what he or she expected it to be, making turnover likely.

Results of the current study showed consistency with the previous study, that “it was age, perceived task characteristics…and perceived consideration by the supervisor that led to total satisfaction and commitment” (p. 57). This and other studies could not confirm that alternative employment opportunities alone specifically led to turnover. Confirmed preemployment expectancy did prove to be linked directly to satisfaction, but not to organizational commitment. There are now several studies that “cast doubt as to the role of perceived alternative employment in the turnover process” (Michaels & Spector, 1982, p. 58).

In an early study from 1979, Wanous, Stumpf and Bedrosian study job survival – or turnover – of new employees. The goal was “to investigate the extent to which individual and organizational factors explain how long new employees remain in an organization” (p. 651). They surveyed employers and employees on factors such as demographics (age, sex, race), organizational (pay, type of training, length of training), as well as job attitude and performance from both perspectives. Basically, they are eliminating tenure as a driving force by studying new hires and are attempting to make predictions based on job attitudes, performance, and survival. They are also taking into consideration whether turnover was voluntary or involuntary. The goal is to fill in the blanks from some of the earlier studies with those factors that the authors felt were necessary to complete the picture of turnover.

A newcomer's tenure is determined by the desire of the individual to stay with an organization, which is determined by job attitudes, and the concurrent desire of the organization to retain the individual, which is determined by job performance. The findings of this study in regard to predicting voluntary turnover is that there is not a significant difference between the contribution of job attitude and job performance. Predictably, higher job performance and lower job attitude more likely led to voluntary turnover than involuntary turnover. In addition, "job performance accounts for more of the involuntary turnover variance than do job attitudes" (p. 657). Further, demographic factors had little effect on voluntary or involuntary turnover. Organizational factors of pay, job training, and length of job training, which are controlled exclusively by the employer, significantly affect the instances of turnover, both voluntary and involuntary. Many other studies find information contrary to this, possibly because they were conducted exclusively within the organization. This study approached employees outside the organization so that their responses were felt to be confidential, and respondents were free to be honest (Wanous et al., 1979).

Wanous et al. (1979) attempt to explain why the findings were not what they expected in regard to the significance of job attitude predicting voluntary turnover, by noting that the availability of alternative sources of employment played a part in the equation. At the time of this survey, there was relatively high unemployment, and that would naturally reduce the ability to change employment at will. Involuntary turnover would not have been affected in this way.

The authors note that the results of this survey support the view that "organizational entry influences organizational exit" (p. 661) and conclude that training for new employees corresponds more strongly to job survival than job performance. This is not the traditional reason for providing job training, but this shows the value and importance of a good training program to the retention of employees. From an organizational view, the training has failed to produce improved performance, but from an individual view the training has facilitated socialization into the organization. Contrary to previous studies, Wanous et al. found that in predicting job survival, the organizational factors (pay, type of training, length of training) were pinpointed as being more accurate indicators than the individual factors (age, sex, race). One reason for this could be that this study was conducted outside of the organization and included a variety of organizations, and other studies were conducted within one organization (Wanous et al., 1979).

Wang and Sun (2020) look at turnover from the approach of turnover as a consequence of an organization's performance, instead of the reverse, which is the usual topic of research. As an organization becomes underperforming, measures may be taken that would cause turnover to increase, whether voluntary or involuntary. Performances could be evaluated that could lead to low-performing employees being fired, or downsizing or restructuring could take place. Pressure could be increased on current employees that might lead to voluntary turnover. These performance problems could have an even greater effect on new employees, as it brings negativity into their effort to make sense of the new environment. There is also a potential effect on the psychological contract with the employer causing the employees to lose their commitment to the organization (Wang & Sun, 2020).

The research in this study was performed using records from the New York City school system. It appears that poor performance of schools leads to turnover, especially of beginning teachers, which "damages the social fabric that has been established and causes the loss of social capital, which negatively affects student learning" (p. 221). Measures to address the organization's performance issues can lead to turnover, such as cutting or redistributing resources, cutting programs, and strengthening performance management. In addition, "low-performing organizations run the risk of a vicious cycle: poor performance leads to a higher level of employee turnover, which further aggravates performance problems" (Wang & Sun, 2020, p. 222).

Another important factor in studying turnover is the new employee's experiences as compared to their expectations. Is the job what it was presented to him to be or was he given inflated expectations? "Job expectancy" is one of the earlier theories proposed as an important factor to consider in labor turnover. A prospective employee comes into contact with a company with a preconceived idea as to what working for the organization will be like. Management only has so much control over a prospective employee's expectations, but from the first point of contact there is a great opportunity for management to "dispel any misconceptions" and set the stage for a productive relationship. A significant discrepancy between expectations and actuality could lead to turnover (Scott, 1972).

Many times, initial contacts with an organization prior to starting a new job is completing paperwork and gathering information from the new employee, but little accurate information is imparted to the new employee to prepare him for his new position. Management should use this opportunity to fully prepare an employee to understand all the aspects of his employment, including his responsibilities, working conditions, co-worker relations, management relations, and what the organization will do for him in return (Scott, 1972).

Scott (1972) details some of the successful strategies that were used by various organizations and were found to reduce turnover of new employees. Some of these are giving plant tours to prospective employees, giving a brochure of daily tasks for the position desired, providing new employees with checklists to be sure topics are understood, as well as providing the trainer with checklists of everything that needs to be covered. These checklists serve a dual purpose, in that in addition to the basic purpose of topics to be addressed, the employee is given personal attention at the time that it is needed for him to acclimate to the organization and "at a time when personal attentiveness is critical to building a long-term relationship" (p. 362).

In an article by Dunnette, Arvey and Banas (1973), the hiring of college graduates is specifically addressed in regard to their longevity with a company right out of college. "Many companies lose nearly 50 percent of their college graduates during the first four or five years of post-college employment" (p. 25). The authors, in an attempt to discover why some stayed and some left their first employer and how the percentage of turnover can be reduced, surveyed former and current employees of a large company that hires many college graduates and who were employed during the same time period. The result of the survey was 495 usable questionnaires from former employees and 525 from current employees.

Dunnette et al. (1973) computed a Motivation Index (MI) from the answers to particular questions on the questionnaire for both former and current employees. The lower the MI, the less motivated the employee is to work hard at their job, and the higher the MI, the more motivated he or she is. The results showed opposing statistics for former employees (more dissatisfaction) and current employees (less dissatisfaction) in comparable percentages, making it apparent that those former employees did not have their desires met for what they wanted and anticipated from their job, and those who stayed felt that their jobs met their expectations more closely.

Other comparisons of import from this study were the discrepancies between job expectations and experience between the current employee's first job and their current job with the company, and the former employee's first and last job with the company and their current job with another company. The current employee's present job showed that the majority of the features of the job were closer to their expectations than their former position. The former employee’s positions in the company were consistently low in regard to their expectations, but their current job was much closer to their expectations. As new college graduates, these employees have certain expectations of use of their talents and knowledge, and when they have to begin their working career at the bottom of the ladder and are unable to feel accomplishment or are bored with their work and feel no chance for upward mobility, this will lead to dissatisfaction and turnover. Apparently, those who stayed transitioned to positions that more closely met their expectations (Dunnette et al., 1973).

Dunnette et al. (1973) modeled their survey after the work of Victor H. Vroom and his theory of work motivation in his book *Work and Motivation*. Referring to Vroom, the authors state,

> He theorizes that the force impelling a person to exert effort in a job and/or toward staying in a particular job situation depends on the interaction between what that person wants in a job and the degree to which he believes that the company will reward effort exerted on that job with the things he wants. (p. 34)

The authors’ survey results show that, as Vroom theorized, employees will stay with an organization if they feel their work is leading them in the direction to get what they want out of their career. In research by AT&T and General Electric, it was found that there are

> …very definite relationships between early job challenges and later job effectiveness. In other words, college graduates placed in job situations under managers who successfully utilize and challenge, rather than delimit and stifle their abilities, tend to be more effective performers over the long run than men who are either put up with or actually put down in those early jobs. (p. 37)

College graduates are achievers and should be treated as such by their supervisors and employers. When they have accomplished their degree through hard work and determination, they are looking forward to continuing that success into their future job, with expectations of what that entails. The authors submit that the use of the motivation index as described in this literature is a tool to take “periodic checks on the motivational health of a firm’s recently employed college graduates” (p. 38). Use of this information would enable a company to determine if an employee’s needs are not being met, and whether their work history justifies making a change in their position to further meet the desired needs, thus heading off potential turnover (Dunnette et al., 1973).

Dissatisfaction with a current job can lead to the feeling that a new position would be advantageous. Hom and Kinicki (2001) discuss various conflicts that can cause dissatisfaction with the job and lead to quits. First, they look at how interrole conflict can lead to turnover. The conflict between work and nonwork duties is increasingly a cause for dissatisfaction, as the importance of other social responsibilities has increased in later years due to more single parents, dual-income families, elderly caregivers, and such entering the workforce. The dissatisfaction from balancing heavy job obligations and the loss of the quality of private life must be considered as well. People desire leisure time and when quality of home life suffers due to work obligations, family members can encourage a job change and the desire to leave increases. Family-friendly or non-traditional benefits offered by the employer are helpful in combating this issue. Also of consideration is job avoidance, which is a reaction to job dissatisfaction. Symptoms of job avoidance would be tardiness or absenteeism which reinforces quit intentions and which will eventually lead to termination or voluntary turnover. Studies have shown that there are other forms of job avoidance less severe than these, that eventually lead to exit as well.

The final construct that Hom and Kinicki (2001) discuss is unemployment. The quality of the labor market and the unsolicited jobs that can come during times of economic prosperity can lead to quits. A tight labor market also can encourage quits before employment is found, specifically to enable the employee to job search more intensely, as the opportunities are plenty. During labor shortages when firms might relax hiring standards, those that are “marginal drifters” might leave after a period of time to pursue other things, and their intentions won’t fit into any turnover theory. However, times of unemployment decrease the chances of acquiring new employment, and could lead to expensive relocations in the pursuit, whereby the desirability of leaving the current job is lowered. Economic times have a definite impact on turnover.

Prevention of Excessive Employee Turnover

Preventing excessive employee turnover is the logical goal of any organization to increase productivity and reduce costs, thereby providing superior customer service and maintaining a profitable business. It is obvious from the above discussion that excessive turnover is a wasteful use of company resources. An employee should be considered a valuable resource and should be treated in a way that will preserve the employer-employee relationship. Here we look at a variety of ways to retain productive employees.

Preparing the Organization for Hiring

Managing the organization’s reputation is a very proactive and subtle way to prepare to attract quality candidates and then to retain them. It is not enough to attract and hire the candidates, but the goal is to retain them as well, and making your organization an attractive place to work is a first step toward attaining that goal. Ahmad, Khan and Haque (2020) point out that with the globalization of our workforce, innovation, technology, organizational restructuring and the like, employee recruitment has radically changed and employers need to change their approach as well. Today's employees are concerned with their employer's reputation. Strategies that improve the employee relationship are vital to attracting and retaining quality employees. Ahmad et al. discuss the "employee value proposition" and how it sets an organization apart by treating their employees as if they are important to the company and in return it engenders loyalty from the employee to the employer. Becoming an "employer of choice" is the key and branding is the way to make the organization stand out from the competition by marketing offerings to potential as well as existing employees. In a way, it is attempting to manage the perceptions of those invested or those seeking to invest in the organization.

"Employer branding" is a strategic tool that is explored by Tripathi, Rajlaxmi, Srivastava and Tripathi (2020). It consists of using a marketing strategy applied to human resource management to attract applicants to a brand, which can decrease hiring costs and increase retention. This is a long-term strategy that involves exploring the offerings of the company and determining a way to make it distinguishable from other hiring organizations, and more attractive and desirable as a place to work. "In order to attain the best workforce, employers have to offer best job conditions, benefits, compensation, salary package, work culture, work-life balance, etc." (p. 22).

Since there are so many options for employment globally, if an employee feels that another company can fulfill their needs better, then there is no need for them to remain with their current employer. It is important for an organization to focus on retaining their existing employees, which will allow the knowledge, experience, and training to remain as an asset to the organization. When an organization retains trained employees, it benefits the organization through their performance. The goal of employer branding is to grow the organization's reputation as a desirable workplace, which should be advertised, and will be spread by word of mouth as well. This also can reduce the costs associated with hiring (Tripathi et al., 2020).

Tripathi et al. (2020) performed research in the IT industry by surveying employees employed in India. Their research concluded that brand image and belongingness are factors that affect an employee’s desire to maintain employment with an organization. “Other factors like growth opportunities, work culture, creativity and learning, socio-ethical responsibility, and compensation and recognition do not influence the intention of employees to stay in an organization” but lead to dissatisfaction when absent. (p. 29). Brand image and belongingness are “motivational factors” that are found to robustly increase motivation and job satisfaction, but the absence of them is not dissatisfying to the same extreme. If these factors are managed by the organization in an effective way, they can create a sense of belonging that influences the brand image in a positive way.

The recommendations from the Tripathi et al. study are to promote a positive work culture that provides a stress-free environment through cooperation; reduce role conflict by providing clear duties and responsibilities for each position; have opportunities for growth and individual career paths; create a socio-ethically responsible environment; ensure competitive compensation, such as recognition benefits with monetary and nonmonetary rewards, and other flexible benefits. These things lead to a positive brand image, as people desire to work for an organization that treats people fairly and rewards them for their successes in creative ways that are beneficial to them. In return they will continue to work for the company and recommend it to others who are seeking employment (Tripathi et al., 2020).

Laughman (2020) looks at a company that has a very high retention rate, primarily achieved by a superior training program. They look at their training program as a way to keep a happy and successful workforce. In addition to that, they go above and beyond their regular training by offering support resources, which give “training” in “life skills, estate planning, financial wellness and mental health resources” (p. 40). Any issue that might be a stressor for an employee, they try to address in some fashion. Thus, the company is on multiple lists of best places to work. In a similar vein, Henry Ongori (2007) concludes in his article that businesses should treat their employees as one of their assets that require much attention. He states,

> Employees are the backbone of any business success and therefore, they need to be motivated and maintained in organisation [sic] at all cost to aid the organisation [sic] to be globally competitive…And in the long run the returns on investments on the employees would be achieved. (p. 52)

The retail industry is an employer of about one out of five American workers, according to Ton and Huckman (2008). It is also an industry that is fraught with high turnover. The authors in their article suggest that the impact of turnover on an organization’s performance depends on the nature of the environment. Retail is mostly a series of repetitive tasks and they discuss “process conformance” as a way to mitigate the costs of turnover on performance. Process conformance is a way to turn the repetitive tasks inherent in the retail business into standardized procedures that are carried out in every location, thus simplifying the work to increase efficiency and lessen the impact of employees coming and going. The authors advocate for the use of process conformance in industries that do not require innovation, but repetition.

The authors research 268 retail stores over 48 months and find that turnover does lead to decreased store performance, but not by large amounts. They attempt to determine whether turnover has a negative impact on performance in a repetitious environment and whether process conformance is a way to moderate that impact. The authors’ conclusions were that increased turnover shows decreased performance, with low-turnover stores being more affected by turnover than high-turnover stores. Employees at low-turnover stores have an accumulated knowledge based on experience, and the loss of an employee is felt more heavily. Conversely, high-turnover stores' employees do not gain that knowledge and the loss is not as significant (Ton and Huckman, 2008).

In regard to process conformance, the study found that stores in which the managers chose a low-process-conformance approach felt the negative effect of turnover in their profit margin. In stores that followed a high-process-conformance approach, the increased turnover does not decrease store performance. Consistency seems to be the key to transferring knowledge to new employees to maintain performance in a retail store. Without the use of process conformance, loss of an employee is loss of acquired knowledge. Therefore, "storing knowledge in organizational routines rather than in employees represents one approach to mitigating the negative consequences of turnover on organizational performance" (Ton and Huckman, 2008, p. 65).

Preparing the Candidate for Hiring

One of the first things a company can do with a potential employee to set the stage for preventing turnover can take place during the job interview. Avner, Guastello and Aderman (1982) advocate for a "realistic job preview" and claim that a new employee that is given a realistic view of what the new job entails will stay longer in that job. In a study, a select group of new hires that were shown a realistic film of the new job had lower intentions of leaving than those who were shown a positively biased film of the new job. The authors feel "expectancy theory" is the explanation for this outcome, though other studies show that the actual impact on turnover is insignificant.

Previously, John Wanous, in 1973, studied how a realistic job preview would affect a candidate's job acceptance, job attitude, and job survival. Hiring is a "matching process" between individuals and the organization, which includes matching individual talent with what is required for the job and the individual's needs with what the job provides. The focus of his study is matching the individual's needs with the organization. Candidates for a position were separated into two groups, one of which was given a realistic preview, and the other a traditional preview. Previous studies have found that those given a realistic job preview have higher survival rates and increased job performance. Wanous was looking for evidence that a job preview would impact whether the candidate selected the job, by allowing the candidate to compare whether the job met his needs. In addition, he wanted to see if the preview would impact job survival, by heading off disillusionment.

What Wanous (1973) found is that all subjects in both groups, with the exception of two, accepted the offered job, so there was no effect on job acceptance by the preview. However, there were differences in job expectations between the two groups. Those that viewed the realistic film had lower expectations, which led to a higher percentage of those that stayed on the job after three months. However, the difference is not significant. In addition, the measurement of the number of employees thinking about leaving the organization after one month of employment were fewer among those that had had the realistic preview.

From the results of this study, the preview appears to be more effective on initial expectations than job acceptance. However, during the time of this study there was relatively high unemployment, so the lack of available jobs could possibly have affected whether the job was accepted and whether the job was retained. What Wanous concluded from this experiment is that job previews serve to create accurate expectations, and these expectations are associated with higher job survival and more positive attitudes about retaining the job (Wanous, 1973).

In a related study, the influence of job satisfaction and organizational commitment on turnover intention was studied by Tnay, Othman, Siong and Lim (2013). This study was performed in Malaysia but the research cited was from western sources. Therefore, some of the variation in the results could be attributed to cultural differences. The authors define job satisfaction as satisfaction with pay and supervisory support. Organizational commitment is an employee's belief in the organization's goals and values, their willingness to work toward those goals, and their desire to remain with the company. The authors hypothesize that there is a significant relationship between turnover and each of these factors studied: satisfaction with pay, satisfaction with supervisory support, and the level of organizational commitment.

Tnay et al. (2013) cite studies showing that those that feel there is inequality in the pay scale are not committed to staying with the organization; that "employees who are given a voice, open communication, recognition, support by their respective supervisors, and cared for their well-being, they tend to remain in the organization for a long period of time"; and "affective commitment has significant negative influence on turnover intention" (p. 203). The results of the research in this study establish that "satisfaction with pay is negatively correlated with the employees' turnover intention," meaning that if an employee's salary satisfaction is high, his turnover intention is low (p. 204). In regard to supervisory support, the research showed that when perceived supervisory support is high, turnover intention decreases accordingly. This is consistent with other research cited in this report that shows dissatisfaction with supervisors as the top reason for turnover. Finally, the findings of Tnay et al. show that there is no correlation between organizational commitment and employee's turnover intentions, although many other studies show a significant relationship. This difference could be because of the cultural values mentioned previously.

Ultimately, the “Person-Organization fit” determines job satisfaction. Cloutier, Felusiak, Calvin, and Pemberton-Jones (2015) stress the importance of the employee selection process to the prevention of unnecessary turnover. An integral part of this is the necessity of transparency and honesty on the part of the applicant to allow the organization’s agents to determine whether the applicant will “fit” into the organization’s culture and vision. Making that correct determination about a potential employee will greatly reduce the chance of turnover in the future. It is immensely important that the employee and the organization have common values and goals. Cloutier et al. discuss “strategic intent” which is the common commitment by employer and employee to the company’s vision and mission. Making those known to the workforce, as well as making them attainable, is important to the success of the collaboration.

Zeffane (1994) explores the “interactive effects of potential independent variables” affecting turnover, and how the contingency theory can be used to analyze the research (p. 22). He explores the individual-organization fit: how the personalities of the employee and the organization affect the relationship and its longevity. The article details the many reasons for turnover, and the author talks about whether turnover is functional or dysfunctional, based on negative or positive relations between employee and organization. Research has shown that employees are more satisfied when their values coincide with their supervisor’s values. There are three groups of variables that affect satisfaction and commitment: individual characteristics, job/task-related characteristics, and organizational characteristics, which are interrelated. The main focus is how the “fit” affects performance, which affects job satisfaction, which affects commitment, which affects whether an individual will stay or leave. Commitment is characterized by an employee's belief in the organization's values, an employee's willingness to work hard for the organization, and a desire to maintain a working relationship with the organization. Commitment is a more accurate predictor of voluntary turnover than is job satisfaction. The author applies the contingency theory to the individual-organization fit, where the degree of commitment is contingent on a match of the values of each.

Laser (1980) discusses the human costs of turnover, specifically addressing the people that do not fit into the organization. They spend their time destroying the morale of workers around them that might be more content than they are. They can spread discontent from their immediate co-workers to customers and to the community. This has a high cost to the organization. He stresses the importance of hiring the right people: first, by widening the pool of candidates; second, using an objective system to weed through the candidates; and third, to give the employees a realistic idea of what is involved in the open position.

Ahmad et al. (2020) cite the recommendation of a "match between personal and fundamental organizational values" (p. 30). Person-organization fit involves assigning attributes to the organization that would be desirable to an employee and will make the company attractive as an employer to those like-minded candidates. Thus, retention is a more likely outcome. So what are the attributes that attract employees and make them stay with an employer? Ahmad et al. looked into this issue in light of gender and public v. private business. There was no significant difference as to gender in regard to employee attraction or retention factors. However, government employees showed more likely retention than did private, and the authors conclude that private business need to focus on retention, especially in regard to these factors: market value, social value, career development, and image.

In a related study, Glaserova (2019) studies the influence of value preferences on frustrations felt in the workplace and on turnover. “The values embodied by an organisation [sic] are of great importance to new job seekers” (p. 32), as they seek to find an organization with values similar to their own. The values embodied by the organization convey to the employee what is important to the organization and if it is compatible to the employee’s values, will lead to commitment to the organization. Commitment is a factor affecting turnover. The author looks at the values of the individual employees in a healthcare organization, and at the values that the employees attribute to the organization and compare them to see how they affect the employees’ satisfaction with their job. If they differ, it is unlikely that the employee will enjoy a satisfying relationship with the organization; however, if they line up, the employee will feel more satisfied, more committed, and tend to remain.

Values have a motivational effect on an individual, which if they correspond with the organizational values, can lead to goal fulfillment. The results of the study confirmed that the employees with the highest correlation of values had never considered leaving the organization. The lower the value correspondence, the more serious the employees were about leaving the organization. The author also determined “a link between the level of frustration of values due to leadership style and the turnover tendency” (p. 42). If the values of leadership members in an organization clash with the employee’s values, it causes high frustration levels. Those employees with high frustration levels had considered leaving, and those employees that had not considered leaving showed low levels of frustration (Glaserova, 2019).

Preparing the New Hire for Success

According to Kelli Cruz (2018), even though employee training seems an expensive proposition, it is much less costly than turnover: “One of the best employee retention strategies is to invest in their training and development." Cruz specifically talks about the lack of a cohesive work environment when co-workers are coming and going and there is no time to build a team where co-workers can rely on each other. This can negatively affect morale and job satisfaction, as well as customer service. Cruz advocates establishing a "culture of learning" in the organization, whereby employees are always learning, with continuity in training, and can request training they feel is important for them to improve the performance of their job. Cruz references a survey that found that the majority of millennials want the potential for career advancement from their employer, but a good training program came in third. Training is an important tool for two of the top three things that millennials look for in a new employment position.

Training is a tool and a benefit that can help produce satisfied employees that want to stay with the organization. Casey Laughman (2020) delves into the importance of a good training strategy and program. It is an investment that takes time, effort, and resources, but it pays off in the long run with improved skills and knowledge, a more confident staff, and one that will more readily be in for the long haul with the organization. Laughman says,

> The key to ensuring that training is successful is to have a detailed plan, ensure that the employee understands the expectations, give them the appropriate time/available resources and review where each employee is at in the process regularly. (p. 37)

Laughman is looking specifically at the food and beverage processing industry, but the facts regarding the importance of training apply to every industry. An updated training program, with job-specific training, is vital for employee satisfaction and success. Laughman looks at a Chicago based company who treats training as part of their commitment to employee satisfaction. They spend 32% more on training than comparable companies and are rated as one of the best places to work with a high retention rate. Their intention with their training program is to "focus on creating cultures that empower employees to succeed" (p. 38).

An updated training program, with job-specific training, is vital for employee satisfaction and success. Virtual and mobile technology, real-time training, as well as senior employees that enjoy training, are effective tools to prepare an employee for success. As changes continue to happen in the workplace, training becomes even more crucial for success. Training that goes beyond what is necessary and providing additional resources for employees is addressing an issue that is critical to success. The author concludes that "ultimately, training is part of a company's culture, and viewing it as such gives processors the opportunity to use it as an effective tool for developing, attracting and keeping a qualified workforce" (Laughman, 2020, p. 41). Long and Perumal (2014) also tout the importance of a dedicated training program as vital in today's modern organizations to produce a competent workforce with knowledge and expertise to give them an edge over the competition. They state that "training forms the backbone of strategy implementation (p. 113).

Switching gears from external factors to internal factors, **"**emotional intelligence" is a concept studied by Nanda and Randhawa (2019) and is defined as "a form of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions" (p. 157). They conclude that emotional intelligence affects well-being, which in turn affects employee behavior in the workplace, of which turnover is one, and that emotional intelligence training should be included in the organization's procedures. This study is hopeful that organizations will be able to use this information in their employee training programs to develop their employees' emotional intelligence, thus increasing beneficial attributes which in turn increase organizational performance. Emotional intelligence is crucial to facilitating the well-being and the desired work behaviors of an employee. This research by Nanda and Randhawa focuses on these behaviors that correlate to emotional intelligence: well-being and employee behaviors.

Well-being encompasses many facets, three of which have been identified in literature, those being psychological, physical, and social. Emotional intelligence is more closely related to psychological well-being, which itself is comprised of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and emotional exhaustion. Job satisfaction and organizational commitment both have shown a positive relationship with emotional intelligence, but have been studied elsewhere in this paper, so we will concentrate on emotional exhaustion. Emotional exhaustion is becoming "emotionally over-extended, depleted, and fatigued by one's work," and causes burnout (p. 160). The authors cite numerous studies that show a negative relationship exists between emotional intelligence and emotional exhaustion, such that when emotional intelligence decreases, emotional exhaustion increases. Lastly, employee behavior is a direct result of emotional intelligence and encompasses job performance, turnover intentions, organizational citizenship behavior, and counterproductive work behavior. This is significant enough to warrant organizations' implementation of a related training program for new and existing employees to produce "a well-performing and satisfied workforce" (Nanda and Randhawa, 2019, p. 167).

An issue that should be broached with potential candidates and new hires to help set the stage for a successful work relationship is listening-centered communication. Chakravarti and Chakraborty (2020) discuss the importance of communication that is listener focused. Many times, the reasons for leaving a job have little to do with money or the job itself, but because the employee may feel unappreciated. Active listening, which is a conscious effort, is effective for communicating with employees about work issues and conditions, all of which affect an employee’s work relationships and lead to potential turnover. The authors promote communication training during all stages of employment and state that listening-centered communication will promote a positive work environment and sustain good relations among co-workers.

Employee engagement is a subject explored by Raza and Nadeem (2018) as it relates to job satisfaction and turnover intentions. Employee engagement is shown to lead to greater financial performance, increased productivity, and overall reduced turnover. Employee engagement has been defined as “a person’s physical, emotional and cognitive involvement in his/her job” (p. 172), which tends to lead to a happy, productive employee. This person is energetic in his work, giving the best of himself to his employer, and investing himself in his job. There is much evidence that human resource managers that focus on employee engagement retain their workforce at higher rates.

The authors also delve into performance related rewards and how they relate to these issues. There are many types of rewards appropriate to recognize achievement, intrinsic and extrinsic, and the authors believe that these rewards have a positive impact on employee engagement, turnover intention, and job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is more than just reducing the desire of employees to quit. It is enjoying the job and desiring to perform it to the best of one’s ability. In addition, valued employees should receive rewards and recognition, as it is important for their motivation to continue to excel in their job (Raza and Nadeem, 2018).

Having employees involved in the decision making for the situations that affect their job gives them the feeling of engagement and empowerment. When employees feel that their contributions matters and they are valued by management, they become more engaged and take ownership of the issues that affect them. Similarly, communication is an important factor in employee engagement. “Two-way communication between supervisor and employees is important to form a productive as well as working relationships with subordinates so that ideas are easily exchanged between them” (p. 176). Supervisors must be engaged daily with the employees they supervise, and they should make it known that communication lines are open. Employees need to know that their views and opinions are respected and welcome, and turnover intentions will be affected. The authors conclude that “employee engagement is a partial mediator between three predictors (performance related rewards, decision making and communication) and two outcomes (job satisfaction and turnover intentions)” (Raza and Nadeem, 2018, p. 185). The importance of employee engagement should not be understated.

Workplace empowerment in relation to job satisfaction is a topic that has also been studied by Laschinger, Finegan, Shamian, and Wilk (2004). Empowerment is a tool that encourages workers to think for themselves, think creatively, and take the initiative to do the job the way it needs to be done instead of blindly following direction. This is a study that takes place over a three-year period of time regarding nurses in Canada who were involved in many cutbacks and layoffs due to downsizing, and who were under much stress in the workplace because of being short-staffed. The number of managers was also reduced significantly, and because of the limited presence of leadership, the nurses were empowered to make decisions in the workplace.

The results showed that “changes in perceptions of access to structural empowerment have an impact on changes in both psychological empowerment and job satisfaction over time” (p. 538). They did not find a linkage whereby psychological empowerment mediated the relationship between structural empowerment and job satisfaction. Since there is a direct relationship between structural empowerment and job satisfaction, the authors conclude that this study would be useful to look at how these perceptions of empowerment are responsible for actual turnover and retention (Laschinger et al., 2004).

Maintaining an Inviting Work Environment

Providing a work environment that shows employees that you care about them is how Pal's Sudden Service, a fast-food chain, keeps their turnover rate at 23 percent, an astonishingly low rate for the hospitality industry. The environment is what helps employees feel valued: where the equipment always works, and it is a clean and safe work environment. In addition, hours of training are provided, and employees are certified and regularly tested. They are also taught skills that they will take with them into other jobs in the future, such as personal grooming and communication. Finally, keeping employees informed of the company's sales and profits help them to see the bigger picture and feel involved in the success of the company (Agovino, 2019).

"Internal marketing" is a concept discussed by Abhay Shah (2014), and which concerns an organization marketing itself internally to current employees for available jobs and benefits. In doing so, the company is working to create happy employees who then make happy customers, which benefits the company and its organizational objectives. The goal of internal marketing is to develop human potential to fulfill goals, which "necessitates economic compensation of employees that encourages long term job commitment" (p. 34). This study, through a model showing the chain effect, links internal marketing to employee satisfaction, which leads to productivity and a better quality product or service, which leads to customer satisfaction, and finally to positive firm performance. The author concludes that if a firm has proper internal marketing strategies in place, a chain reaction will lead to better firm performance. Internal marketing requires an investment in employees which will have a long-term payoff through job satisfaction, but management can tend to be shortsighted many times and do not invest in these things. The author again concludes, “[t]he bottom line is that if a firm has proper internal marketing strategies in place, it will trigger a chain reaction which will ultimately lead to higher firm performance” (p. 36).

Human resource departments handle most of the employee benefit packages in larger organizations and have great impact on an employee’s satisfaction with their job. Long and Perumal (2014) look at the importance of human resource managers’ impact on turnover intentions. This study takes place in Malaysia; however, the significance of their findings can be applied to other cultures as well. There are two factors that Long and Perumal indicate affect an employee’s decision to resign and that is “perceived ease of movement” and “perceived desirability of movement” (p. 111-112). It is the human resource manager’s job to put into place preventive measures that reduce turnover.

One of the first considerations is an employee’s remuneration, which is the “tangible reward for their services as well as a source of recognition and livelihood” (Long and Perumal, 2014, p. 112). It must be fair and appropriate for their level of training and skill. Today’s human resource departments also must take into account the modern family’s attitude toward work and family. They seek a balanced life between work and family, in which they are more involved than ever. Human resource management must consider including incentives such as flexible work hours, day care, job sharing, parental leave, education, and job rotation as part of the incentive package in addition to compensation. Human resource management is made more complicated today by the need for new incentives to address the lifestyle desires of employees, who are seeking more meaningful and less complicated lives. Motivating factors are totally different than in the past. Career development is discussed by Long and Perumal as another factor that will meet the needs of the employee at every level. The employee should be kept appraised of available training, career opportunities, open positions in the company, and other offerings that might be of interest to them. “Career growth can occur when individual contribution combines with organization opportunity” and the opportunity to successfully manage their career will keep valued employees with the company (p. 114).

Dalton & Mesch (1990) looked into the effect of flexible scheduling on employee attendance and turnover. When a large public utility company decided to implement one year of flexible scheduling to a significant section of their workforce to evaluate whether it would be of future use in the organization, this research became possible. This experiment allowed employees to choose to work part of their hours early or late in the day around the core required hours. It is suggested that that flexibility could improve working conditions, allow for commute time during non-rush hours, improve supervisor relationship, be intrinsically satisfying as responsibility increases, and allow personal time flexibility. The result of this experiment was an immediate and large reduction in the absentee rate, which bounced back immediately after termination of the program. In addition, if this program had been motivational for the employees, you would expect a reduction in turnover as well. However, there was no demonstrated reduction in turnover that was not consistent with the control group; therefore, it is concluded that the flexible schedule did not have an effect on turnover. Despite the success of the program in regard to absenteeism, it was discontinued after the year, as it was very difficult to implement.

A study that looked at paid parental leave as it relates to employee benefit satisfaction, job satisfaction and turnover intentions was performed by Manes, DiDona, and Zuniga (2018). They state that an organization’s benefit system is an essential recruiting and retention tool. The authors use the United States and Germany to compare how employees view the benefits they receive. Interestingly, the United States is the only industrialized nation that does not offer government paid leave to new mothers. However, the results of the study show that the U.S. employees that had employer paid leave were slightly more satisfied with their benefits and jobs than their German counterparts. In regard to both German and U.S. participants, those that had access to paid parental leave had significantly more employee benefit satisfaction and job satisfaction than those that did not have that access. Further, those that had a higher level of benefit satisfaction showed lower levels of turnover intentions. The results of this study are in line with other research showing "attitudes toward benefits as the most powerful predictor of turnover" (p. 9).

Management's Role in Turnover Prevention

According to Ryu and Lee (2013), management must initially "find, recruit, and retain highly productive workers in order to increase organizational performance" (p. 134). In modern times, human resources are treated as assets instead of costs, and turnover has become a crucial issue. The authors discuss the fact that there are costs incurred through turnover, such as recruiting and training new employees, but there are also costs incurred to retain employees, such as wages, benefits and pleasant working conditions. Management must find a balance between these costs as optimal to the performance of the organization and they must maintain that equilibrium. "In other words, turnover-related costs decrease until the optimal level of turnover is attained, and then they increase once the turnover rate exceeds this point" (p. 135).

Ruy and Lee (2013) explain that one way to manage employee turnover, taking into consideration that performance varies among employees, is "to increase the turnover of low-performing employees and to reduce the turnover of high-performing employees" (p. 135). The authors refer to the theory that high-performing organizations are filled with employees that have different characteristics, such as seeing challenges as opportunities, than do low-performing organizations. Interestingly, their findings support the “hypotheses that innovative management decreases turnover when an organization is high-performing, and increases turnover when an organization is low-performing” (p. 146). They suggest research into literature on creativity management, which is the process of developing and preparing new ideas that can be used by organizations to promote success. It is a particularly effective way to include employees, and reduce turnover as well, by soliciting suggestions from them and implementing the ones that would be most effective.

Management styles have a particular effect on turnover. Researching military leadership, Carter, Dudley, Lyle and Smith (2019), delve into the relationship that employees have with their bosses and how strong leadership affects turnover. “One of the most enduring aspects of a job that impacts worker satisfaction is the relationship that workers have with their boss. What often differentiates a good boss from a bad one is leadership ability” (p. 323). This is most especially true in the military hierarchy, which has to prepare recruits for potential advancement, to lead military operations that are continually changing, and in turn prepare others to eventually take the lead. The U.S. military is the perfect organization to study leadership types and their effect.

The study undertaken by Carter et al. (2019) takes into account race, SAT scores, and under-graduate institution affiliation, specifically West Point, to explore retention. Previous studies show a correlation between the race of college instructors and upper grades of same race students, and the authors saw similar results in their study, although because of the small number of corresponding incidents in the sample, there was no evidence of race playing a significant part in retention. There is a significant correlation between West Point graduates, however, showing a 5.2 percentage point greater likelihood of a West Point graduate remaining in the Army if serving under a West Point graduate. The authors also found that officers with high SAT scores have even greater retention effects than other strong leaders.

The basic conclusions reached were that “bosses with strong leadership increase retention rates by 2.7 percentage points and senior bosses with strong leadership increase retention rates by 2.1 percentage points” (p. 337). Another interesting finding is that the length of time an employee serves under a boss with strong leadership skills affects the retention rate slightly. An employee serving under a strong leader for 6-12 months increases retention by 4.5 percent (2.2 percentage points), and after 12 months increases to 5.7 percent (2.78 percentage points). This is interesting for companies that move leaders periodically. It might be beneficial to move a strong leader around the organization every 6-12 months to maximize retention (Carter et al., 2019).

Another facet of how management affects turnover is the quality of the management. Managerial quality is studied in a Texas school district by Morgen Johansen (2013), specifically how the level of the manager affects turnover. The many functions of management that have a relation to the turnover situation include hiring suitably skilled employees that will fit in well with the organization, budgeting of resources so that employees are fairly compensated and trained, directing workers in their job tasks including autonomy and responsibility, and setting goals and motivating employees to reach those goals, which includes a supportive work environment. “In sum, quality managers can influence turnover through human capital management, budgeting, setting tasks and providing goals” (p. 861).

The influence of managers depends upon where they are located in the organization. Upper-level management has more power over budgets and can allocate resources for training, benefits, and salaries; they have control over setting goals for the entire organization and the human resources, thereby influencing turnover. Middle managers, on the other hand, work closely with their employees, and thereby can influence them by motivation, teamwork, and goal setting. Johansen's research is about the quality or the "added value" of a manager. Studying principals and superintendents in the school system, as middle and upper management, Johansen's findings were that "superintendent quality is not a significant predictor of turnover" (p. 869). However, middle management, or principals, have a more significant effect on turnover, and quality principals have a negative effect on turnover. (Johansen, 2013).

Johansen (2013) also purports the theory that organization size is a factor in the influence that managers have in an organization. He says,

> Managers in small organizations have a greater influence on the factors that affect turnover. Managers in small organizations have a narrower span of control and are therefore more closely involved in the recruitment, placement and training of workers. (p. 869)

Larger, more complex organizations have a different structure that does not lend itself to the personal relationships, but instead have most functions coordinated through a human resources department. Johansen concludes that because of these types of management in small and large organizations, the managers in small organizations will have a greater influence on turnover. The findings of Johansen's study also reveal that "organizations with high-quality middle managers experience lower turnover than organizations with lower middle management quality" (p. 872). The influence of upper management on turnover is dependent upon the size of the organization. Therefore, he concludes that good management does impact turnover rates, but the amount of impact is relative to the size of the organization.

Supervisor support is an important tool in management's arsenal, and Long and Perumal (2014) discuss it in tandem with the social exchange theory and the norm of reciprocity as it relates to employee relations. If employees feel the organization cares for them, they feel obligated to give their best effort and loyalty in return. Supervisor support, in particular, has a direct effect on turnover intentions. If an employee feels they have the support of their supervisor, turnover intentions are lowered, but if they feel their supervisor is hypocritical, turnover intentions increase. Good relations between employee and management are an important force for a healthy working environment and will lead to job satisfaction, reduced turnover, and goals being met.

Afzal, Arshad, Saleem, and Farooq (2019) also studied the impact of perceived supervisor support on turnover intentions. There is much research that shows that supervisor support has a negative effect on turnover intention, such that when supervisor support increases, turnover intentions decrease. The authors view supervisor support through the “theoretical lens of social learning theory” which says that people learn through observation about the completion of tasks, and that “mediating processes occur between stimuli and responses” (p. 370). This culminates in self-efficacy, or believing oneself capable of performing the task. Supervisor support works to develop their employees’ confidence in themselves to complete the task and to stay on the job and face any challenges, increasing retention.

This study also looks at the social exchange theory to study the relationship between supervisor support and turnover intention. The social exchange theory is a “framework that deals with the mutual rewarding process to exchange and reciprocate through various acts” (p. 371). It is a motivation to do for others because you expect some return on that investment. This exchange can explain the commitment an employee has to his supervisor, such that the employee expects to receive rewards and benefits in return for the effort he expends in his work. This may include mentoring the employee and displaying confidence in them through “trust, praise, and faith" (p. 372). In addition, for the support he receives from his supervisor, he will in turn perform tasks that will benefit his supervisor, which will reduce stress in the workplace, and increase job satisfaction and retention. Connected to this is how much the employee feels his supervisor listens to his concerns and needs, which can also lead to employee loyalty and reduction in turnover (Afzal et al., 2019).

Afzal et al. (2019) concluded that "the direct effect of PSS [perceived supervisor support] on employee TI [turnover intentions] is insignificant" or does not directly affect it. However, "the impact of PSS on TI through the mediation of self-efficacy was negatively significant." Also, "PSS develops the self-efficacy of employees which, in turn, decreases their TI." "PSS influenced TI through the mediation of perceived organizational support, job commitment and self-efficacy" (p. 377). These findings prove the importance of a supervisor's role in the success of an employee's work with the organization.

An effective tool for supervisors to use is "listening centered communication" researched by Chakravarti and Chakraborty (2020), who opine that since turnover causes are numerous job-related stressors, giving employees a voice and promoting inclusiveness is a way to relieve those stressors. "Employees need to be heard, acknowledged, valued, appreciated, trusted and provided with feedback, and effective communication contributes to meet these issues" (p. 68). The key is addressing employees' concerns in an effective way, which will increase teamwork, help handle issues, and maintain positive relationships, all to culminate in an increase in retention.

The four major listening skills are listening, speaking, reading and writing. Organizations rely on communication, but communicating is more than just sending information. It involves an understanding of what was intended and an appropriate response. As important as communication is in society, it should be taught as an art. The most unused, or misused, skill in organizational communication is listening. “Listening is not the same as hearing, listening is not as natural as hearing and everyone does not receive the same message” (Chakravarti and Chakraborty, 2020, p. 69). It is an interactive process and requires conscious effort, while hearing is automatic. There are many techniques to effective listening, which involve posture, attentiveness, questions, and paraphrasing. Further the authors advocate that “the communication itself should be listening-centered” and focus on the listener (p. 70).

The authors promote communication training during all stages of employment and state that listening-centered communication will promote a positive work environment and sustain good relations among co-workers. This promotes employee retention as well as increasing motivation. During recruitment, potential employees should be briefed on “the need and relevance of listening-centered communication” (Chakravarti and Chakraborty, 2020, p. 72). After recruitment, listening-centered communication helps identify needs of the new employees, gives them a sense of respect and belonging, which will head off thoughts of quitting, and will provide management with much information about their organization that will enable them to take care of problems before they materialize. It will reduce conflict and help employees understand what is expected of them, thereby creating a good working relationship among co-workers, and eventually boost productivity and profits. During resignation, much can be learned from an exiting employee. Listening without being judgmental can elicit important information about causes of turnover and could help address the issues with the exiting employee, possibly preventing the loss of a valuable worker, or preventing the loss of further employees for the same reasons.

Another tool that management can use to improve performance of the individual and the organization as a whole is the performance appraisal process. Information must be gathered on the employee's performance in the organization and communicated to the employee in a way that will encourage an increase in performance. It has been seen that a lack of employee appraisals, or politically motivated appraisals, can have a negative effect on employees' motivation and can contribute to their turnover intentions (Long and Perumal, 2014).

Stritch, Molina, and Favero (2020) study public organizations and their results-oriented structure, that flood management with targets, goals, and objectives to be met. This includes all levels of government businesses. Although the institution of goals is not bad in itself, since it gives a company an idea of its effectiveness as well as a direction to point future decisions, few studies have been done on the effect of these goals on an organization's frontline employees when they are unrealistic and unattainable. The survey data analyzed by the authors showed that it is quite common for unattainable goals to be set. There is also a downside to setting goals that are unclear, which contribute to reduced job satisfaction and, in return, turnover.

The authors' research on unattainable goals was conducted in the school system, in which high turnover of frontline employees causes substantial strain on management and principals who must recruit, hire, and train new frontline workers. Public organizations continue to use goal setting as their management system, therefore study of this phenomenon of unattainable goals is warranted. Unattainable goals are defined as "goals that are judged to be seemingly impossible, or where failure to achieve the goals appears inevitable given an organization's extant capabilities" (p. 276). The authors explain how unattainable goals can "negatively affect the cognitive, affective, and behavioral components of employees' attitudes" (p. 276). Cognitive responses could include "hypervigilance and the inability to process new information, as well as focusing on uncontrollable factors that may affect performance" (p. 276). Affective responses may be fear of failure, defensiveness, or failure to accept the goals. Behavioral responses could be chaotic attempts to improve or withdrawal from participating in company processes. Although initially these goals can see increased work effort, eventually demotivation can occur along with reduced work effort, as employees doubt their abilities and lose self-confidence. Interestingly, the employee can begin to lose the psychological safety that they feel in their employment, will lose trust in management, and feel the desire to leave the position. These types of discouragement could lead to turnover, which negatively affects an organization's productivity (Stritch et al., 2020).

One of the authors' conclusions is that the effect of unattainable goals are contingent upon the performance level of the organization. Employees of high-performing organizations are more resilient and accepting of unattainable goals, as they know the company's performance record and feel more motivated to work toward attaining those goals, stimulating creativity. The authors warn that low-performing organizations should be careful in setting goals, because employees most likely have low morale already, and adding an unattainable goal to that problem will increase the likelihood of turnover. The recommendation is the managers should focus on goals that are difficult, but attainable. Public service employees in the education, welfare or mental health field already feel a high degree of stress, and that should be taken into account when working to set organizational goals and objectives (Stritch et al., 2020).

Finally, as an employee's resignation is certain, an important tool for management is the exit interview. Stock (1996) studied the exit interview as a tool to identify problem areas that are contributing to turnover in the organization. It is a way to pinpoint the issues that have caused the employee to desire to leave the organization. Finding the common issues from multiple exit interviews can provide an accurate picture of problem areas. Once identified, they should be used to improve those areas and possibly head off further turnover. It is more advantageous to have the exit interviews conducted by an outside source, as employees are more likely to give truthful information about management issues and other factors for their dissatisfaction that they might not want to tell a superior in the organization.

Exit interviews are not always used as they should be to make the changes that should be made to the organization with the intent to keep the productive employees satisfied and retained. Sometimes they are not used at all. Lack of concern for the results of the exit interviews can be seen as lack of concern for the employees' needs. There is also the issue of the failure of the exiting employee to be honest for fear of losing an important reference for further job applications. To combat this issue, the exit interviews could be anonymous. Another source of honest evaluations would be retirees. They may have been there longer and may see it as doing something beneficial for the organization before they leave, and they should have no reason to hold back the truth of their work situation for fear of future recriminations. (Stock, 1996).

The author's research took place with university faculty, and the interview questions covered a wide range of job satisfaction issues including work, co-worker, pay, supervisor, and health satisfaction. They compared the responses according to gender differences, similarities and differences between stayers and leavers, employee voice, and others. The strongest finding pertinent to this paper was that leaving groups were more dissatisfied with their supervisor than the staying groups. The findings show the importance of the supervisor as an intermediary for the employee with the organization. To improve relations between management and employee requires an investment by the organization which will have great return in satisfied and productive employees. The results of the study also show that a larger percent of people who quit are in general more dissatisfied with their job than are people who stay. Organizations should take the time to re-evaluate their exit strategy and revamp it if necessary, to make the most of the important information that could be gained from those that know the most about the organization's inner workings (Stock, 1996).

Conclusion

Employee turnover is not a simple or straightforward issue. There are many facets to the causes and cures of dysfunctional turnover; it is as complicated as the people that are involved. Knowing why employees leave is the key to reducing the turnover rate of the organization, and communication is the way to discover why employees leave, what they want, and what they need from their employer.

At the outset of an employee's career with the organization, determining employee-employer "fit" is a useful tool to ensure starting a new employee on the right foot, including a realistic job preview. Employee engagement, communication, and supervisory support are tools to help keep an employee happy with their job.

An employer should never assume that an employee is "sold" on their organization. In this day and time, it is just too easy to find another attractive position, offering better pay or benefits. The organization should continue to market themselves to their employees as a great place to work, and through communication and benefits let their employees know that they are a valued part of the organization. Employer branding expands this type of marketing and gets a company's name out to job seekers as a desirable place to work. Company training programs continue this work and are essential tools whose importance cannot be understated.

The increasing importance of life outside of the organization should be considered in crafting policies, as there are changes in perceptions of what is important in life, and family responsibilities are different, as there have been changes in the make-up of today's families. This is a case for the importance of flexible benefits, monetary and non-monetary.

Finally, the exit interview is an important tool to use when all else has failed to retain a desirable employee. Much information is lost when an employee leaves the organization that could be used to prevent further losses.

Management must look at every stage of an employee’s tenure with the organization to see what can be done at each level to cement a relationship with that employee, to continue to provide the employee with support, and to make the employee desire to give back to the company as much as he can and to do so willingly.

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