Checklist: Why They Leave?

1. Why Good Small-Town Nonprofit Employees Leave?
   a. Poor supervision is the main reason (bad boss).
   b. Lack of opportunities for career growth (no delegation).
   c. Money and benefit issues (no support).
   d. No one is disciplined or fired, or only some are (fear).
   e. Turned into “bad” employees (all of the above).

2. How To Address These Issues Today
   a. The management issue: What needs to be in place while you are waiting for your managers to improve?
   b. What if it is you? Mistakes even experienced directors and managers make.
   c. Using your strategic plan to address career growth.
   d. The good fight for better pay.

3. For the Future - Preventative Actions
   a. Better recruitment strategies.
   b. A community issue: growing good employees.
   c. Evolving leadership for better long-range planning.

4. What are you going to do next?
   a. Political constraints.
   b. Economic constraints.
   c. Belief system constraints.
   d. Rural success: collaboration and consolidation
How to Address These Issues Today

The management issue: What needs to be in place while you are waiting for your managers and employees to improve:

1. Negotiated and clearly understood expectations.
2. Positive reinforcement: praise for doing things well.
3. A way for employees to provide feedback to supervisors.
4. Positive evaluations: What have you done right and what do you need to work on for the future?
5. Involvement in decision-making not limited to input.
6. Growth: What will be different, better, more challenging on the job in the future.
7. How will conflicts be negotiated?
8. How can additional responsibility be earned?
9. Opportunities for training and education.
10. Finding mentors.
11. Opportunities for making a contribution.
12. Assistance with recruiting replacement, if necessary.
13. Opportunities outside the organization.
14. Timetables for climbing the ladder.
15. Honesty about alternative plans.
16. Manners, with everyone, always.
17. Realistic lifecycle: How long will they stay?
The good fight for better pay

1. Evolve better relationships with decision-makers.
2. Build alliances with other employers.
3. Learn your community’s political pressure points.
4. Conduct research on successes.
5. Align yourself with champions of character.
6. Make money for staff a priority.
7. Invest in longterm actions in the larger community.
8. Look into foundations, grants, and alternative funding.
9. Look at R.A.V.E. (Recognizing and Valuing Employees) programs that formally and informally provide employees with significant non-monetary and monetary rewards.
10. Partner with more prosperous organizations.
11. Invest in political currency; work on other people’s issues.
13. Look at community issues regarding other kinds of underpaid public workers: teachers, firefighters, nurses, police officers, and other nonprofits, and deal with this at a higher level.
15. Educate everyone on the staff about budgets and finance.
16. Pick your battles.
Preventative Actions – Recruitment
(Increasing the pool of professionals and paraprofessionals)

1. Existing support staff.

2. Staff other institutions

3. College juniors and seniors who live in your community.

4. Working age adults starting their college careers.

5. Other degreed professionals.

6. Retired military.

7. Historic Native American Indian and black college students.

8. Recent refugees and immigrants: New Americans

9. Older community members with family wanting to move back.

10. Guidance and career counselors.

11. Community alliances to grow employees.

12. Making mentoring a priority.

13. Clients and volunteers as scouts.
Supervisory Standards

Please score each item as it applies to you and your organization on a scale from one to ten, corresponding to from never to always

1. ____ I treat everyone like a peer. It is part of the culture of the organization that everyone says good morning, please, and thank-you to everyone with good will, no matter what their relative position.

2. ____ I communicate clear expectations during the recruitment, hiring and evaluation process, and the effort is made to verify that new hires understand their jobs. No one has to guess what is required to succeed.

3. ____ Policies and procedures are written down, and everyone has their own copy. “If the plan is in your head, there is no plan,” is taken seriously.

4. ____ I give everyone the same information at the same time, regardless of his or her position in the organization. I do not hoard information.

5. ____ Everyone knows who makes decisions, what decisions they get to make, and how decisions are made. Transparency breeds trust.

6. ____ Everyone has the opportunity for input and receives feedback about why their ideas were accepted or rejected.

7. ____ Everyone has the opportunity for leadership on committees and collaborative projects.

8. ____ Decisions that arise from meetings are communicated to everyone within 24 hours after the meeting. Communication to staff is the number one priority.

9. ____ I provide coaching to everyone on supervisory skills, as well as cross training in technical and professional skills.

Recruitment and Retention:
Finding and Keeping Quality Employees in Small Communities

Heart of Colorado Rural Philanthropy Days – September 29, 2016

Pat Wagner, Pattern Research, Inc., PO Box 9100, Denver CO 80209-0100; 303-778-0880; fax: 303-722-2680; pat@lsicarlearn.com; www.siercarn.com
10. _____ I know the difference between oversight and micromanagement; as long as employees accomplish their goals and the goals of the organization within the appropriate parameters of time, quality, cost, legality, ethics, and civility, how they do it is up to them.

11. _____ I evaluate regularly on both productivity and workplace civility, with no exceptions for status, tenure, credentials, etc. (Everyone is expected to do the job well and treat each other well, even if they have tenure, are in a union or have worked at the organization for 35 years. Bullies are dealt with swiftly.)

12. _____ I give feedback is given as constructive criticism: what needs to happen “right” next time instead of what happened “wrong” last time (negative criticism, blaming, lecturing about past mistakes).

13. _____ Positive reinforcement (sincere, specific workplace praise) is experienced at a ratio of better than 5-to-1 in most interactions with me as compared to complaints about behavior. (Employees expect that most interactions with me will be realistically positive.)

14. _____ Everyone has experienced sincere specific workplace praise at least once in the last week from me. (Employees expect that most interactions with supervisors will be realistically positive.)

15. _____ There is a healthy, effective mechanism in place for quickly resolving stalemates between me and my employees, and it is used. (Disagreements are resolved within days and the work moves forward.)

16. _____ I learn and grow all of the time.
Resources

- Roger Fisher and William Ury. *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In.* (and anything else they wrote)
- Robert Greenleaf. *Servant Leadership.* (And anything else he wrote)
- Linda Hill. *Becoming A Manager*
- Tom Kendrick. *Results Without Authority: Controlling a Project When the Team Doesn’t Report to You.*
- Patrick J. McKenna and David H. Maister. *First Among Equals: How to Manage a Group of Professionals.*

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