



The Importance of Transparency and the Key to Retention

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For many reasons, employers are taking a hard look at their employee retention efforts. How well is your company retaining top-performing employees? Are employees in key roles staying or leaving? What's working to keep employees engaged and on board? What's not?

Not surprisingly, industry stakeholders are conducting their own research to find out what's happening. And, as employee feedback company [Peakon](#) so succinctly put it, "Everyone, unsurprisingly, wants to be paid decently, shown respect, and allowed to have a life outside the office."

Digging a little deeper, though, there are retention factors beyond the obvious that really are making a difference. One big one? **Career transparency**. Here is why career transparency will increase employee retention.

Career Paths Provide Visibility into Growth Opportunities

At a time when so many employees are feeling professionally stuck or in careers that have slowed or stalled, having visibility into how their jobs can lead to a fulfilling career with a current employer can make or break the "stay" decision. Individual career paths give employees and their employers a clear plan, outlining the skills, competencies, experiences, and milestones needed for career progression at the company. Better yet, in our world of change, employees prefer [flexible career paths](#) which are designed to engage and develop them to serve in a variety of roles over time.

Either way, the key is visibility. Transparency across all levels is vital – and lacking in many organizations. Employees want to know that the skills they have – and the skills they know they need to develop – will lead to fulfilling careers. So many people leave jobs for career growth opportunities. Companies that offer compelling career opportunities – and career paths for current employees to secure them – have the best chance to keep those workers.



Succession Planning Aligns Employee and Company Growth

Business leaders know that the long-term success of their companies depends on having competent successors ready to step in as company leaders move on. Succession plans are not just for top-level executives; the best [succession planning](#) programs are preparing leaders and managers at multiple levels in the organization.

For employees, a succession planning program identifies clear career opportunities and next steps. Over time, they get to take on more responsibility, build new skills, gain recognition within their teams and across the company, and increase their value to the team. For employees interested in the management track, succession plans may offer specific, valuable growth opportunities that they could not find at another company.



Performance Management Should Also Be Career Management

Performance management is no longer (and should never have been) a once-per-year performance feedback conversation between a manager and employee. These days, most companies understand that performance management is an ongoing conversation about performance and goals.

Still, a [Career Progression Survey](#) from earlier this year found that 24 percent of employees surveyed said they lack mentorship and 16 percent said a decrease in facetime/one-on-one meetings with supervisors contributed to feeling career stagnation.

In our new world of the hybrid workplace, it's a good reminder for managers to keep up those important individual meetings with their employees – even if they become Zoom or Teams meetings. Remember, too, that conversations are much more than providing performance feedback. The best conversations – the ones that keep employees engaged, recognized, and motivated – involve listening as much as talking. Performance management conversations can be career management conversations, routinely exploring what could be next – and how to get there. Given this attention, respect, and support, many employees will be reassured that their next, best career growth opportunity is with their current employer.

Cultures that Promote Learning and Inclusiveness Support Career Visibility Across Organizations

Your culture is your company's "personality." It reflects your organization's foundational mission, ethics, and values. It sets expectations and practices for how to approach the work and how to treat each other.

Cultures that promote learning and inclusiveness thrive on collaboration, curiosity, respect, problem-solving, diversity, innovation, and individual and team development. Companies that figure out how to create and maintain cultures of learning and inclusion are the ones that truly engage their workforce. In such cultures, employees know that their contributions are valued. They know how to move their projects, their careers, and their companies forward. They – and their companies – thrive together.

A Competency-Based Approach Keeps Careers Tied to Skills

Too often, employees and managers focus on current job responsibilities. When stuck in the "now," it's tough to align employees for longer-term success. And, absent a focus on skills and competencies, it's tough to see how to earn the next promotion or where the job will lead. Promotion of others in the organization may be perceived as (and may, in fact, be) based on relationships and popularity.

Employees want to be doing work that matters. A [competency-based management approach](#) enables managers and employees to identify what skills workers need to do their jobs today, what career paths are available in the company, and what skills and competencies are needed to get there.

By agreeing on what skills and competencies are needed in every job role, employees and managers at all levels across the company have clear visibility into career progression. Focusing on competencies minimizes the influence of relationships and biases that so often inadvertently skew performance appraisals and promotions, so employees and managers alike can feel proud and confident in employees' career progression. It's this kind of career visibility that keeps employees engaged, motivated, and eager to move forward within the company they're working for now.

If your company is looking to increase employee retention; more specifically whether competency management can support your career transparency efforts to improve employee retention, review our [Competency Management Toolkit](#) for some insights. Or ask us how Avilar's [WebMentor Skills™](#) competency management system and assessment tools can help.

About Avilar

Avilar – The Competency Company™ is a leader in web-based competency management and learning solutions for corporations, government, and non-profit organizations. Formed in 1997, Avilar's award-winning WebMentor™ product line has built itself on highly adaptable product design. Avilar consultants are recognized as industry thought leaders and have decades of experience in implementation and analysis. Let Avilar help transform your organization from ordinary to extraordinary.