

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®

Human Resources Tool Kit

Employee Retention: Effective Tools

1. PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

Communicating goals early and formally gives new employees the tools they need to achieve success. The most frequent comment during employee exit interviews is that employees did not know what their supervisors or associations expected and, therefore, were at a disadvantage to successfully perform their jobs.

The single most important tool for retaining good employees is the performance appraisal, an ongoing supervisory process that emphasizes constructive feedback. An appraisal process nurtures positive employee-supervisor relationships by promoting honest communication about work performance and ways to improve it. Conduct formal performance appraisals at regular, prearranged times to get a good measure of the degree to which employees carry out their duties.

An appraisal should evaluate the job description as it relates to an employee's specific duties. This evaluation process may allow employees to fine-tune or update their job descriptions. Make other feedback regular and consistent throughout the year, and relate it directly to specific job performance.

The type of appraisal form used depends on the culture of the organization. Some associations prefer written forms that emphasize a narrative approach. Others use forms that allow supervisors to rate specific work characteristics. Forms based on functional job descriptions are generally the most effective.

Performance expectations on which employees are typically judged include:

- Punctuality and dependability
- Ability to follow general office procedures and priorities
- Staff meeting participation
- Industry knowledge
- Courtesy and customer service to members
- Professionalism
- Growth in position
- Cooperativeness
- Ability to follow directions
- Quality and quantity of work
- Ability to problem-solve
- Creativity
- Communication skills
- Willingness to change
- Quality of decision-making
- Strategic thinking
- Technical expertise
- Time management skills
- Attention to detail
- Interpersonal skills
- Teamwork
- Self-motivation
- Telephone skills
- Leadership
- Ability to achieve desired results

Finally, maintain a log of conversations and accomplishments for each employee to ensure a thorough and accurate appraisal.

[Access typical association performance evaluations in the REALTOR® Association Resource Exchange \(RARE\) >](#)

2. VALUE AND BENEFITS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

It is essential for staff to have the opportunity to receive training to acquire additional skills, improve in their positions and maybe even fulfill personal goals. Along these lines, staff must also be permitted to interact with their peers from other associations to learn from their experiences.

Providing training opportunities instills the notion among staff that the association is willing to invest in their continuing education to improve their current job responsibilities and promotional opportunities.

When possible, encourage staff to participate in association-related educational conferences, such as American Society of Association Executive (ASAE) meetings, the NAR Association Executives Institute (AEI) and state-association sponsored learning opportunities.

All REALTOR® association executives should encourage appropriate staff to complete the REALTOR® Association Management (RAM) self-study course and to develop an individual professional development plan that ultimately leads to the attainment of the RCE designation.

3. DETERMINING COMPETITIVE WAGE AND BENEFITS PACKAGES

3a. Building Benefits Packages

A benefits package should include items that are usually provided, such as medical and dental insurance and retirement plans, and those that may be overlooked, such as a vacation policy, sick pay, education incentives and reimbursements, and career advancement paths.

When assessing your association's benefits package, investigate which benefits employees need and expect. The first place to look is other associations, both inside and outside of the REALTOR® organization. Employee questionnaires are also helpful, and contacting human resources people at businesses in your area might reveal how the competition attracts its employees.

A typical benefits package varies by location and budgetary constraints. Budget is an important factor, especially since the cost to provide benefits can vary from year to year. It is difficult to eliminate a benefit once it is established, so be sure to establish benefits on a priority basis.

3b. Benefits Consultants

Secure a benefits consultant to help prioritize the association's insurance needs and to keep decision-making objective. When selecting a benefits consultant, consider the following criteria:

- Years of experience
- Credentials
- Affiliation
- Staff
- Services
- Evaluation

Once a benefits consultant is chosen, the priority list of insurance products can be determined and priced. Give the same care to selecting an insurance carrier as selecting the benefits consultant.

3c. REALTOR Benefits(sm) Program

The REALTOR Benefits(sm) program offers association employees (and members) discounts on hundreds of different products and services, from computers to life insurance.

[Learn more about the REALTOR Benefits\(sm\) Program >](#)