

The Odds Are in Your Favor: Attracting & Retaining the Motivated Gaming Employee



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We all have heard the varying cost to replace an employee: between one-and-a-half to four times the position's salary to fill one opening depending on the position level, according to Society for Human Resources Management. After years of bombarding the marketplace with catch phrases regarding retention, many organizations are developing solid employee development plans to attract and retain their loyal and motivated employees.

Turnover is hard to miss in the Gaming industry. The latest data supplied by the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) states the highest turnover by far is still in the Accommodation and Food Services sector at 56.4% and the Leisure and Hospitality sector at 52.2%. These sectors also saw the highest increase in turnover from the previous year, with Leisure and Hospitality, up 5.4%. The down side of the "Hospitality Mentality" is that all of the retention strategies and talent management best practices seem to get lost in the "acceptable levels" of turnover.

Utilizing National Gaming Normative research, HR Solutions surveyed employees in gaming organizations within the last 3 years to gain an understanding of Key Drivers of Engagement. Gaming Employees identified the following factors as key drivers to their Overall Job Satisfaction – achieving the desired job fit, a workplace culture that is open to employee input, a direct supervisor committed to employee development, and satisfaction with coworkers. A correlation above .70 indicates there is a strong relationship between two items and that as one increases in satisfaction the other is likely to increase as well. A key driver analysis can be useful by helping to identify which items on a survey have a greater impact on overall job satisfaction, and thus assisting in prioritizing action plans.

TOP TEN CORRELATIONS TO JOB SATISFACTION FOR THE GAMING EMPLOYEE		
1	All in all, I am satisfied with my job.	1.000
2	I leave work often with a good feeling of accomplishment about the work I did that day.	0.894
3	My job measures up to what I thought it would be when I took it.	0.892
4	The organization makes it possible for employees to directly contribute to its success.	0.877
5	I would proudly recommend this organization as a good place to work to a friend or relative.	0.850
6	Administrative policies and practices promote the most effective customer service.	0.827
7	The people in other departments on whom I have to depend are doing a good job.	0.827
8	The workload in my work group is evenly and fairly distributed.	0.826
9	I have an opportunity to participate in decisions made by my supervisor that affect my work environment.	0.825
10	Promotions at this organization are based on performance.	0.819

Very simply, if their work doesn't incorporate the skills they bring to the table and focus on helping the employees develop; they will leave- despite the friendly and competent coworkers. The fact remains that gaming employee turnover is not likely to change over night. Changes made to an organization's work environment and culture will remain an organizational asset to attract new talent and retain highly valued and productive employees.

How managers precede from the start of the on-boarding process determines if an employee will continue as an engaged employee or toward the ranks of the actively disengaged. More attention to the productive and engaged employees is necessary because those employees have the most potential. How do you effectively achieve engagement in an industry where such high turnover is expected? Gaming organizations that capitalize on the levers identified in the Key Driver Analysis are able to increase job satisfaction while focusing on the productive employees.

SURVEY ITEM	PERCENTAGE OF GAMING EMPLOYEES RESPONDING FAVORABLY	
	ENGAGED EMPLOYEES	ACTIVELY DISENGAGED
Employees here receive recognition for a job well done.	57%	34%
My supervisor lets employees know when they have done a good job.	67%	49%
I have an opportunity to participate in decisions made by my supervisor that affect my work environment.	57%	30%
My supervisor regularly gives me feedback on my work performance.	64%	33%

We recognize that the execution of a survey alone will not result in change. Rather, it is the analysis of results leading to actionable findings and viable recommended solutions that matter. Creating an environment where your employees are motivated and feel an increased sense of job satisfaction is not just a one time event. It is a process that requires continuous input and is unique to each and every organization and department within those organizations. Clearly, these items create a circle of interdependence—and if it continues in a positive way, employees are engaged in their work, focused on outcomes, and committed to improving the bottom line.

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