Opportunity Knocks Nonprofit retention and vacancy report 2010

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OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS NONPROFIT RETENTION AND VACANCY REPORT 2010

INTRODUCTION

The economic downturn continues to impact the nonprofit sector in a variety of ways. Despite fewer resources, the demand for nonprofit services has not changed, and in many cases, has grown. Charitable giving is down and many nonprofits have taken a hit in their governmental funding. Nonprofits employ over 13 million paid workers which represents approximately 10% of the total US workforce. Add to that the recipients of services, volunteers, and philanthropists, and it's easy to see that the health of the sector affects a large number of people. While none of us has control over the economy, anyone who is part of a nonprofit leadership team should be acutely focused on saving money and cutting costs. One simple (but not easy) way to do so is by decreasing employee turnover.

Staff turnover and retention rates are concerns for all employers, but especially so in the current economy. Being as efficient as possible with organizational dollars is a top priority, and reducing turnover rates is one reliable way to ensure funds are going towards program costs. While turnover rates may be lower than before the economic downturn, reducing your rate further is low hanging fruit in the effort to operate efficiently.

> "It seems sort of paradoxical that retention seems as difficult as ever, despite the economic crisis facing us."
> **OK Survey Respondent Comment**

Finding a way to trim turnover rates will always contribute to the nonprofit bottom line by reducing operating costs. These efforts can be a simple method for decreasing the costs of running a nonprofit, but require dedication and an investment of time and resources on the part of the employer

The issue of staff turnover is complex and involves many factors. The trick is to identify those areas that can be influenced and design effective strategies for doing so. Has your nonprofit taken an honest and analytical look at the turnover it is experiencing? Identifying the root causes is the only real way to effectively address and stem the tide of turnover and its accompanying impact upon your organization.

To provide nonprofits with current information and suggestions for addressing turnover and vacancy rates, Opportunity Knocks conducted its own research for the second time in two years. It was our goal to re-visit the answers to the following questions:

- What are the turnover rates for nonprofit employers
- Why are employees leaving
- Where are they going
- What are nonprofits doing to address the issue

The report and its findings will give your organization a benchmark against which to measure how you are doing with turnover and retention. It will help to guide your decision makers in developing ways to retain valuable employees. And, considering the state of the economy, we've made recommendations for stemming the tide of employee departures.

KEY FINDINGS

- The average turnover rate for all nonprofits in the Opportunity Knocks 2010 survey was 16% as compared to 2008 reporting at 21%.
- Although the average turnover rate was 16% in this study, more than 37% of nonprofits reported that retention is a problem for their organization.
- Of the sectors participating in the survey, Arts, Culture and Humanities, Health Care and Youth Development, and Human Services have the highest turnover rates.
- As the size of the organization and budget increase, the turnover rate decreases.
- For all positions reported, almost one fifth indicate that the departed employee had been in the position for less than one year.
- For Program / Service Delivery Management, over half had been in the position for 2 years or less before vacating the position.
- After Layoff and Terminations, Competitive Job Offer followed by Dissatisfaction were most often cited as reasons for an employee leaving a position.
- As compared to 25% in 2008, close to 1/3 (31%) of nonprofits report that the employee went to another nonprofit organization.

METHODOLOGY

Opportunity Knocks sent surveys electronically to all of its registered nonprofit employers in addition to nonprofit organizations across the nation. Almost 300 nonprofits employing over 30,000 people responded to supply the data for this report.

Turnover rate, for the purposes of our report, is defined as the rate at which employees leave an organization (whether it was voluntary or involuntary) through termination, resignation or layoffs. Percentages were calculated using data from a 12 month period based on the number of those who left and the average number employed during that 12 month period.

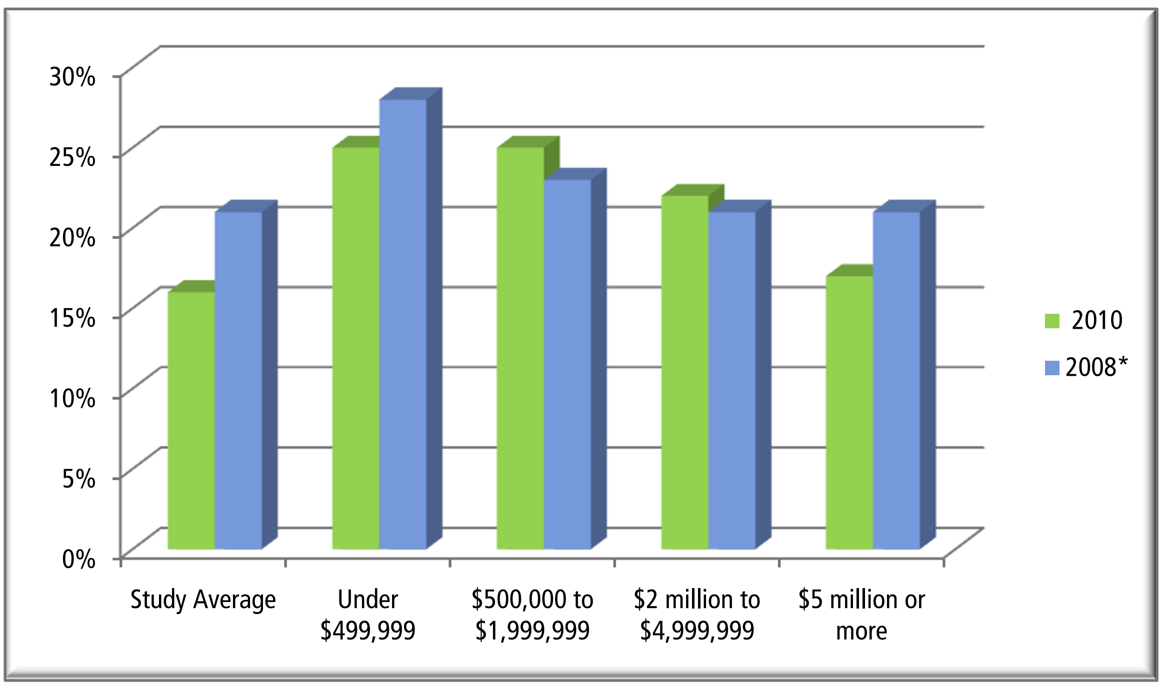
FINDINGS

A. Turnover Rates and Employee Retention

The average turnover rate for all nonprofits in the survey was 16%, a decrease of 5 percentage points since 2008. In comparison, the Bureau of Labor Statistics as of March 2010 shows a total separation rate of 41% for nonfarm positions, 14% for federal government jobs, 27% for finance and insurance, 28% in education services, and 31% in health care and social services. Overall, the nonprofit sector appears to be doing fairly well irrespective of the turbulent economy. It does pay to note that the nonprofit sector figures are lagging indicators and represent conditions 9-12 months later in comparison to the corporate sector numbers above.

It makes sense that turnover rates would have decreased as a result of the tightening job market and the declining economy. While this declining rate can appear to be positive news, it does not indicate that nonprofits should "rest on their laurels." Reducing the negative effects upon an organization by keeping turnover low will help to stabilize budgets in the current volatile economic environment.

Turnover rates by organization annual operating budget

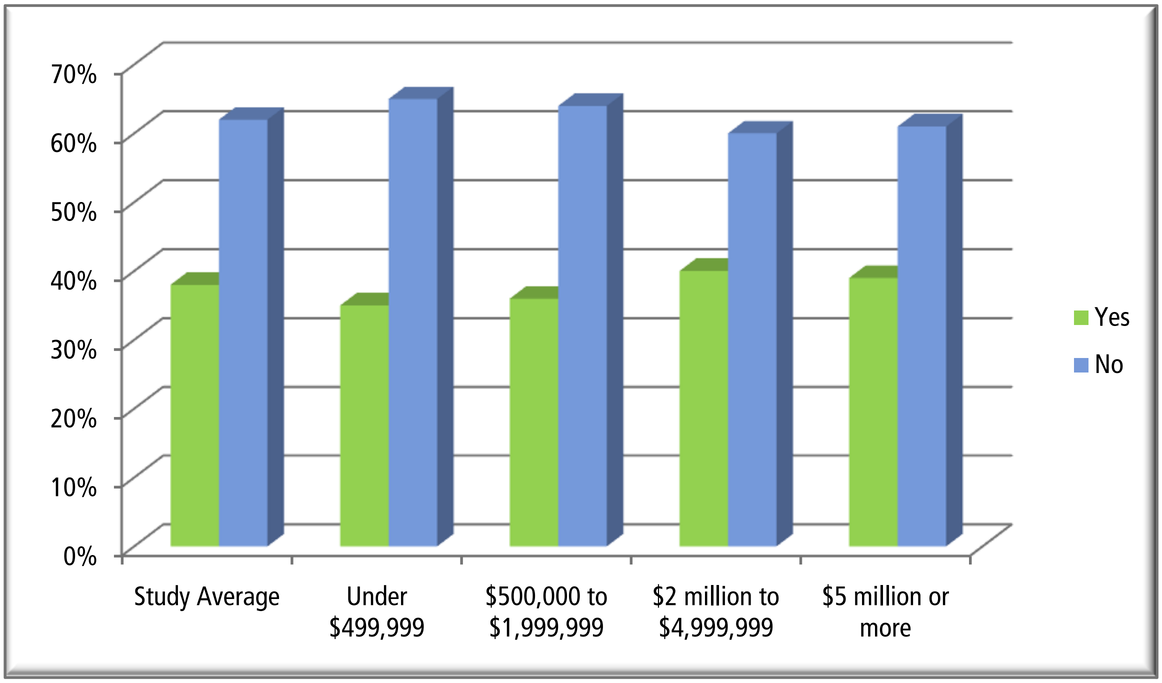


**Source: Opportunity Knocks 2008 Nonprofit Retention and Vacancy Report*

In the OK survey, turnover rates are based on the number of people who leave an organization within a year's time. The impact of these rates on an organization depends on which positions are vacated, for how long, and how often. In any case, research repeatedly confirms that one of the main issues faced by businesses and nonprofits alike is finding and retaining good employees. And being in an economic downturn does not mean organizations do not have to address turnover. Surveys of HR professionals show they believe as the economy recovers, turnover rates will go up.

Although turnover rates appear to be declining, a significant number of nonprofits in all budget categories perceive it to be a problem. Regardless of the data, all turnover has inherent costs which include the costs of advertising open positions, screening resumes, conducting interviews, training new employees, and lost productivity due to unfilled positions and the time it takes for new employees to adapt.

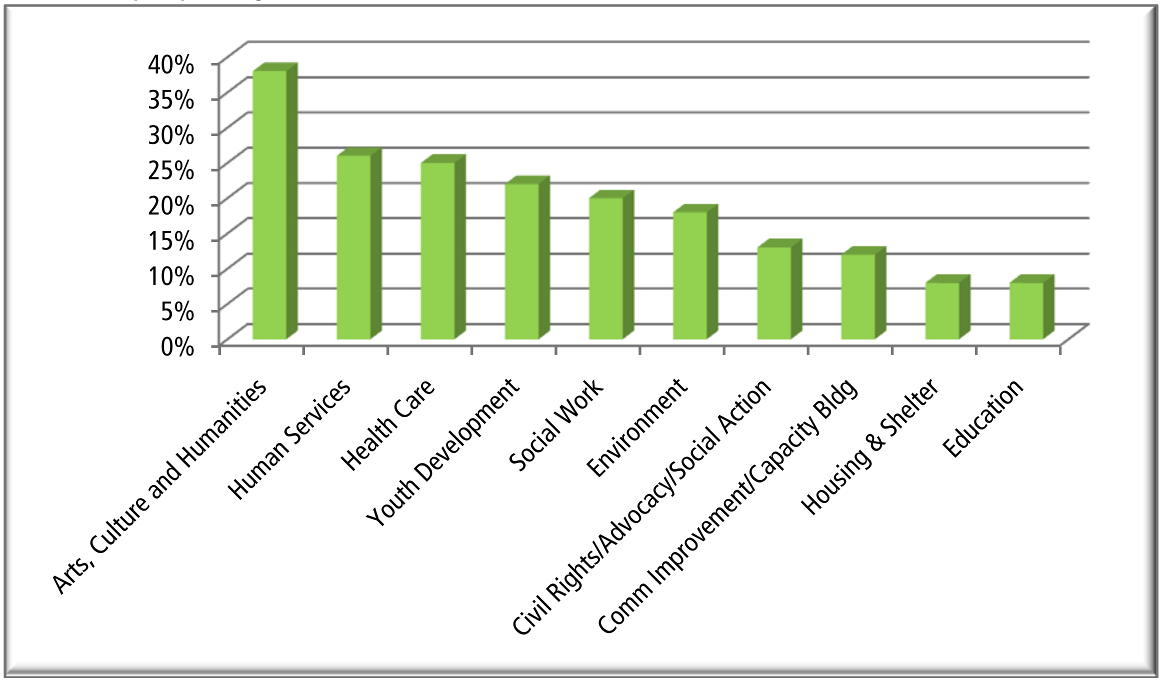
Percent that consider retention a problem for their organization



Layoff rates in nonprofits appear to be relatively low with a study average of 4.1% (note this is self reported in comparison to Bureau of Labor Statistics data on involuntary job separations that we all read and hear about in the news). All but the largest nonprofits had a higher rate than the study average, which may indicate that more resourced organizations have not had to resort to layoffs as frequently. Compared to data collected for the OK Economic Impact on the Nonprofit Workforce Study fielded December 2008, turnover in all budget categories resulting specifically from layoffs is higher.

Turnover rates for various subsectors have changed, in some cases dramatically, from 2008. Two years ago, reported turnover was highest in the Human Services, Education, and Arts. In 2010, while turnover remains high in Arts and Human Services, Education turnover has dropped dramatically. The turnover rate in Human Services remained about the same from 2008 to the present, while the Arts turnover rate shot up over 10 percentage points which reflects the reduction of funding many arts organizations have faced. In contrast, the Education turnover rate fell by about 5% from the 2008 survey which, in addition to some layoffs, may reflect how the field of Education has handled the economic downturn by furloughing staff for short periods of time instead of layoffs.

Turnover top reporting subsectors

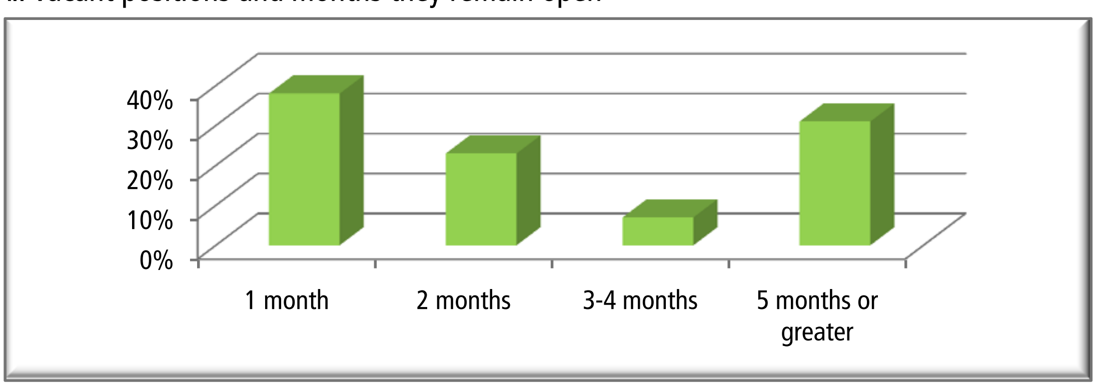


B. Vacancy Rates

In order to have a greater understanding of the impact of turnover, the OK survey accounted for types of positions that were most commonly vacated and for how long. Vacant positions, especially if they remain so for longer than several months, can have far reaching impact ranging from the need to cancel programs to reduction of staff and other infrastructure. The impact of an Executive Director or Development Director position being vacant for more than several months will impact an organization in a very different way than support or administrative staff positions.

All positions had lower vacancy rates in the one month time period in 2010 vs. 2008 except for the "All Other Non-management position" choice. This may be due to fewer people vacating their positions (at least voluntarily) in 2010 due to the uncertainty in the job market. Based on the numbers below, the majority of positions are being filled within 4 months which is likely due to sluggish economy resulting in a high number of qualified individuals seeking employment.

All vacant positions and months they remain open



Vacancy rates are highest in Administrative/Support positions in the short term, and in Development and Fundraising positions in the long term. In the previous report, Marketing positions were the jobs that remained open longest. In an economic downturn, it stands to reason that good Development professionals are in higher demand creating more competition among nonprofits and a longer timeframe to fill those positions. Paying attention to these trends can help your nonprofit anticipate and address the changes your organization will inevitably face.

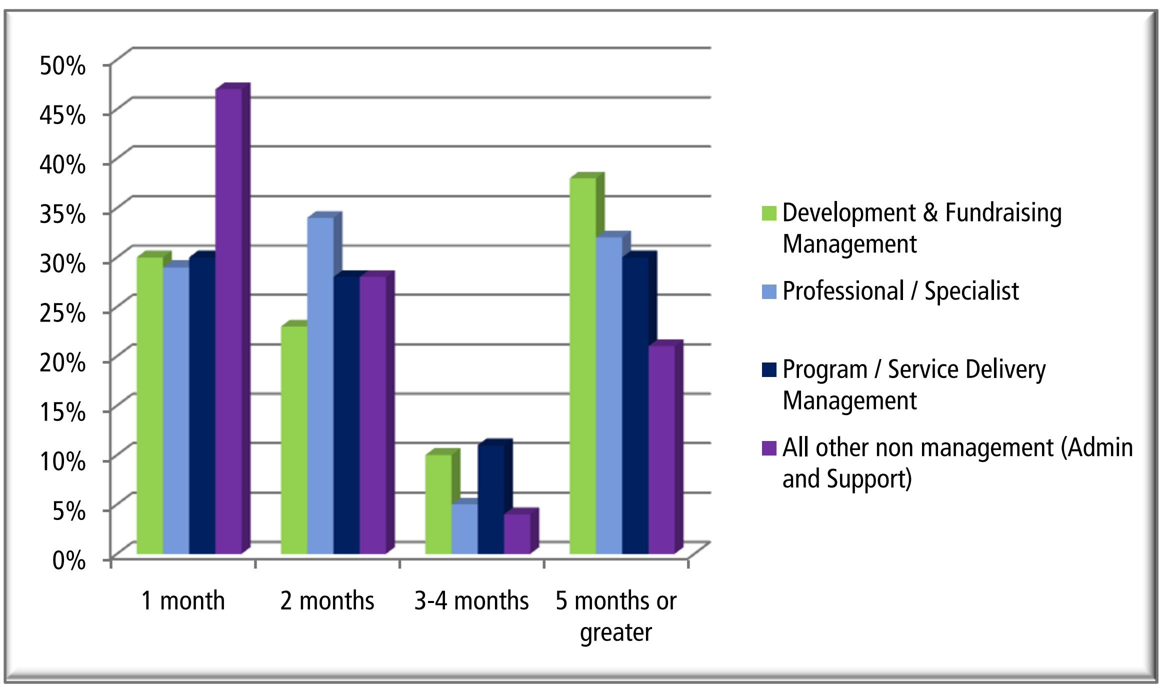
"The Director of Development position seems to be a revolving door."

OK Survey Respondent Comment

Vacancies in administrative support positions can be understood in a number of different ways including low salaries and demanding positions, and the flexibility to be able to cross sectors into the corporate world, unlike a professional who may specialize in the work of nonprofits. Continual hiring and training of support staff not only has a significant cost, it disrupts the efficiency of the agency, delivery of its programs, and quality of services.

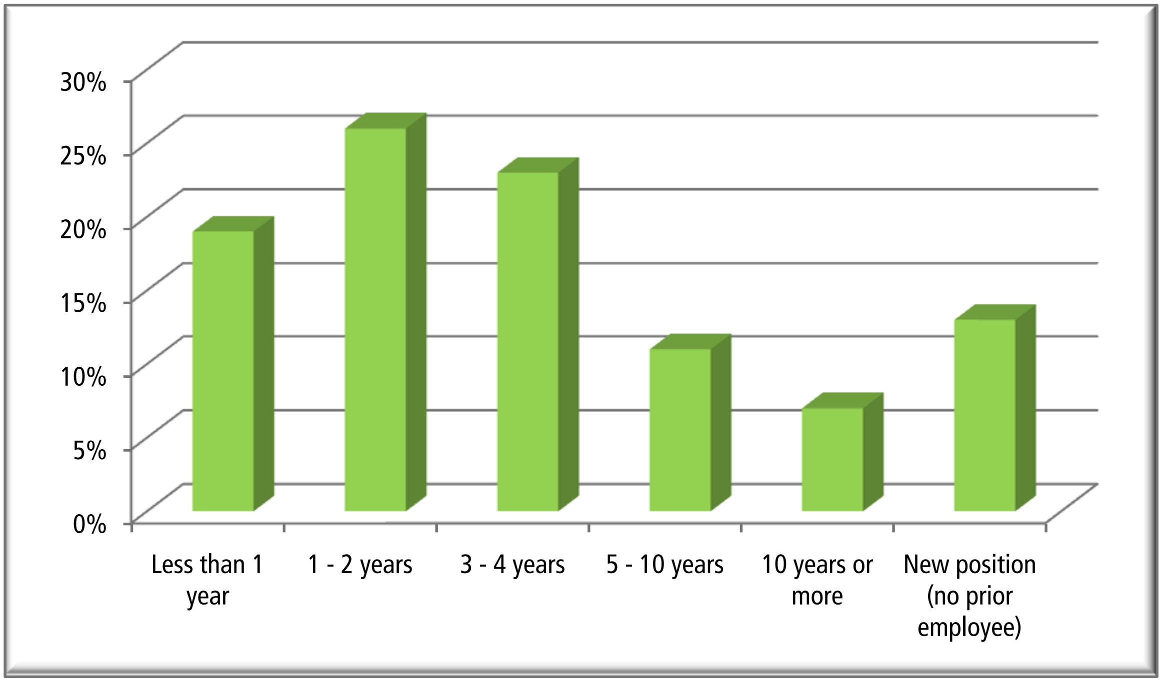
High vacancy rates reported in the Program and Service Delivery positions may correlate with the challenging and often stressful situations in which these managers find themselves, particularly in the areas of Human Services.

Months remaining open top reported positions



Despite the volatility in the job market and the high number of people laid off of work, almost one fifth of employees are leaving their jobs after less than one year. While some of this may be due to the shift in attitudes regarding loyalty to employers or the expectation that professionals will have multiple jobs in the lifespan of their careers, it still behooves a nonprofit to make every effort to minimize turnover and its accompanying costs. Creating a supportive work place with viable opportunities for advancement and professional development together with solid hiring and management practices, will increase your chances of getting and keeping the right person in the right position.

How many years had the employee been in this position

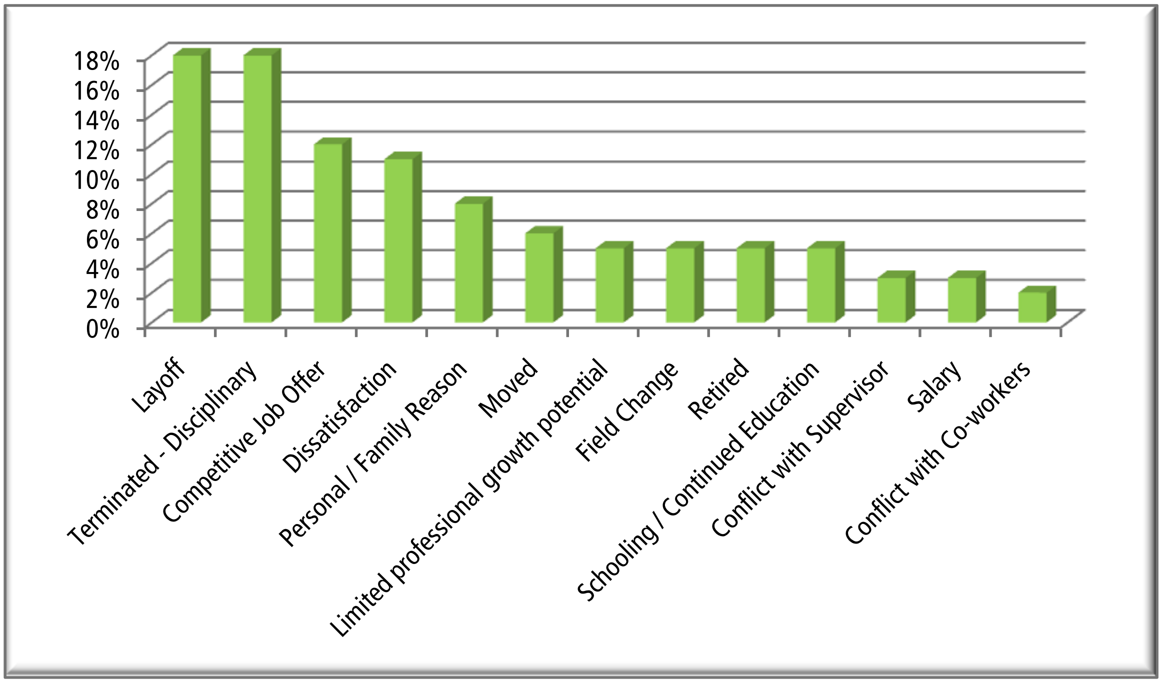


C. Reasons for Leaving

In 2008, 33% of all respondents left for a competitive job offer, while in 2010, this number dropped to 12% likely due to the economic downturn, fewer people leaving jobs, and consequently, fewer jobs being available. The top two reasons for people leaving in 2010, Layoff and Termination, both reflect the current economic environment, and indicate that if the economy had remained robust, Competitive Job Offer would have remained the top reason for leaving a position. In addition, only 11% left their jobs in 2010 because they were dissatisfied compared to 19% who left for the same reason in 2008. In 2008, 28% in total were terminated, while in 2010, 18% were laid off and the same percentage terminated for a total of 36% involuntarily separated. As in 2008, the research that indicates that salary is not a primary factor in reasons for leaving a job, continues to be supported by the small percentage of respondents leaving for a better salary.

"Dissatisfaction" and "Personal/Family Reason" moved down only one position from the 2008 survey indicating that there is still a pressing need to better understand what it is that people want and need in a job with regard to personal growth and satisfaction as well as work/life balance. This information can be determined with solid recruitment practices. Putting aside those factors over which employees have no control, there is still much that can be done to address conflicts with supervisors or a perception of limited professional growth, both factors in employee departure from jobs. Focusing efforts on creating a work environment that supports employees and their growth is a good antidote to high turnover rates.

Reasons for leaving

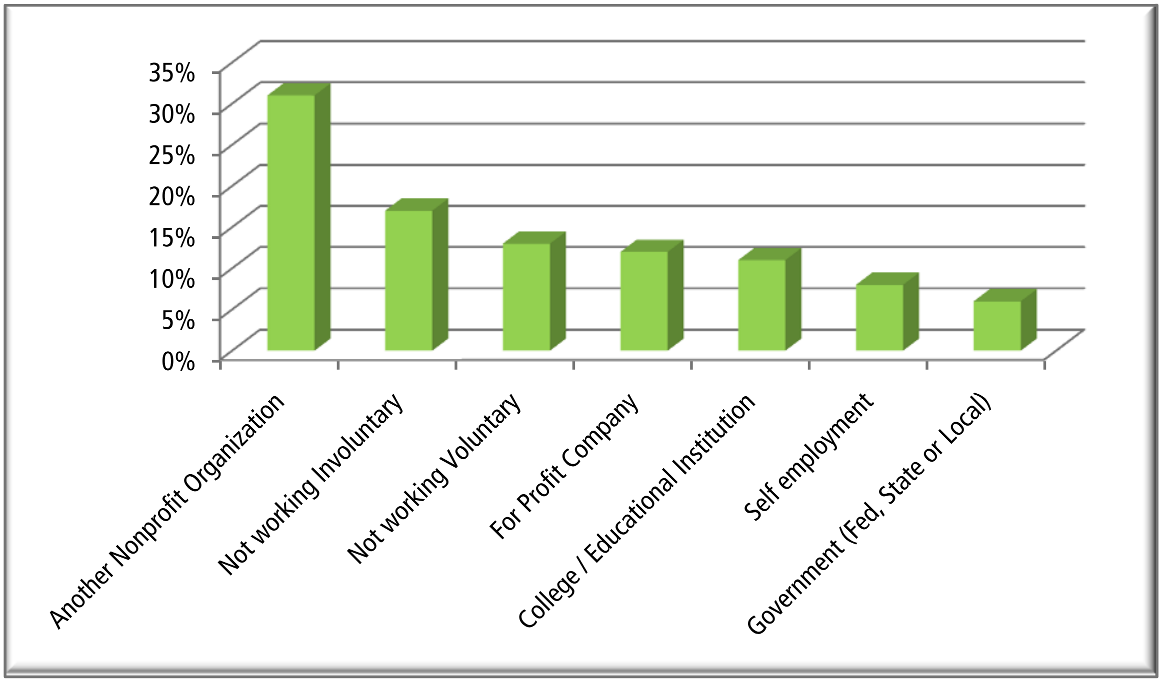


D. Where former Employees Went

Results indicating where people went who left nonprofit jobs were essentially the same in 2010 as they were in the last survey. The largest category reported that their former employees went to another nonprofit, indicating the organization, and not the sector, was the issue. It is interesting to note the biggest single competitor for nonprofit employees are other nonprofits, which in turn is a positive indicator of overarching sector retention of nonprofit talent. As in 2008, while you may not be able to compete with the salaries and benefits in the profit sector where 12% of exiting employees in the survey went in 2010, you can determine how your organization can retain those employees who go to other nonprofits.

The percent who went to college in 2010 is slightly higher than in 2008 as is the percent who became self-employed. Because in a downturn, people tend to enroll in higher education or start their own businesses if they are unable to get work inside an organization, the increase in those two categories makes perfect sense.

Where did former employee go

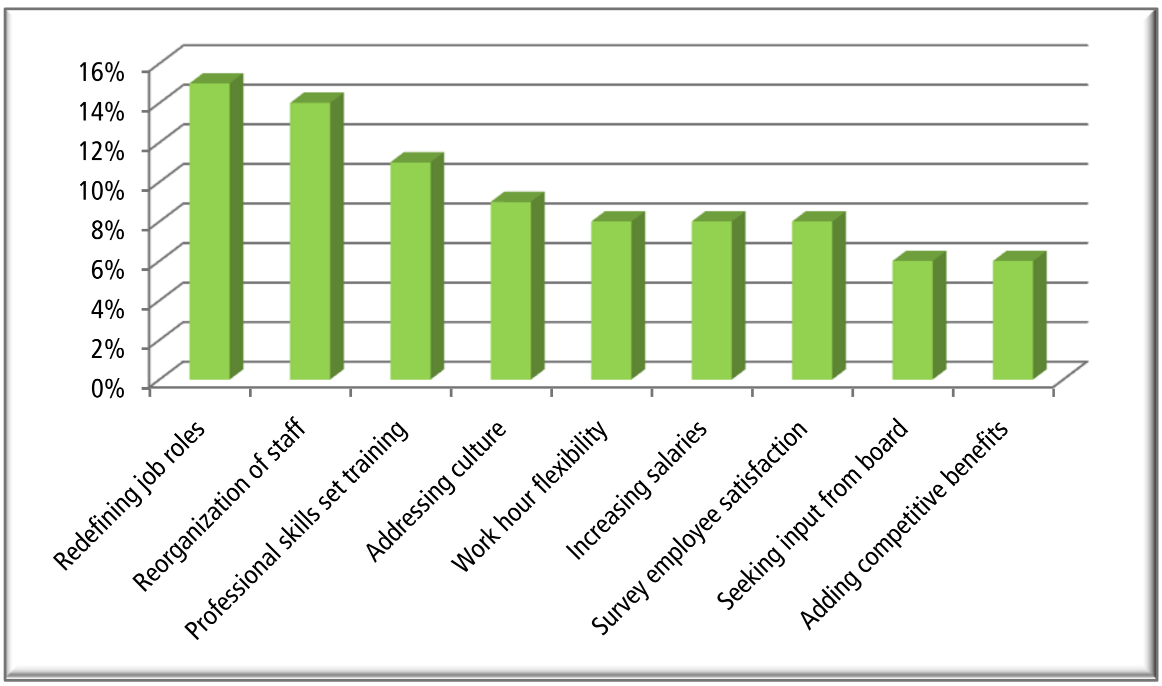


STRATEGIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Close to 40% of all nonprofit respondents consider turnover to be a significant problem – only down 10% from 2008 (decrease likely due to the economic downturn). Some turnover rates are related to the nature of the work, but if your organization isn't retaining employees you need to take a deeper look at what's causing the problem and correct it right away. High turnover will cost you the expense of training and recruiting, valuable employees and possibly your organization's reputation. Employee retention should start before the new hire even begins.

The sampling of cost efficient strategies in the chart below can help prevent and combat turnover. As in 2008, the number one response when asked how respondents are addressing turnover was to redefine job roles and responsibilities. In 2010, this was followed closely by reorganization of staff structure, professional skills set training, addressing culture of organization, and work hour flexibility. Although many of these strategies are recognized as best practices, it is interesting to note that only a small percentage of nonprofits reported implementing. This is likely a reflection of limited capacity or financial resources (in the case of professional training or job redefinition) or a lack of expertise or awareness to implement (in the case of employee surveys or addressing culture of organization).

What organizations are doing to counter turnover



The basics of what people want from a job have been well documented over the years: opportunities to grow and learn, challenging and interesting work, fair compensation with benefits, and a good work environment with great people. This information coupled with the OK survey results and industry best practices led to the following suggestions to combat turnover and retain good employees. Recommendations have been grouped by category to make them easier to access and digest.

Category I - HR Practices and Procedures

First, calculate your own turnover rate

In order to address the issue of turnover, you first have to have a clear sense of the magnitude in your organization. Using the equation below, calculate the turnover rate (as a percentage of total employees) in your nonprofit. Total number of employees who leave includes those who left voluntarily as well as those who left involuntarily through layoffs or discharges.

$$\text{Average turnover rate} = \frac{\text{Total number of employees who leave in one year}}{\text{Average total number of people employed in that year}}$$

Do a full audit of your recruitment and hiring process

Interviewing and hiring employees requires a specific set of skills. Make sure you don't relegate this task to someone who doesn't have those acquired skills. Getting the right employees and keeping them is one of the most important duties your nonprofit will undertake – assign the task accordingly. Are you casting a wide enough net when you recruit to reach a large and diverse pool of candidates? Consider how you are attracting candidates and whether those techniques are working. Make sure the jobs you're seeking to fill are clearly defined and easy to understand. Consider a team approach to hiring so more than one individual interacts with prospective employees. If you have the time, bring prospects in more than once, and give final candidates an opportunity to "walk the halls" so they can discern whether or not your nonprofit is a good fit. Employee Referral programs can be a critical part of an organization's word of mouth strategy and are often overlooked. Remember that hiring a cultural fit is just as important as hiring a candidate with the right skill set.

Include a thorough orientation and introduction to the employee's job and the organization when the employee is first hired

On-boarding is a term defining the process of helping to orient new employees to become productive members of an organization. An effective introduction of new employees to their job and your organization can be one of the most important roles of the hiring manager, supervisor or HR team. When on-boarding and orientation is done right it can not only improve the productivity and effectiveness of the new employee, but also lend to helping with employee retention. Another key objective of on-boarding is to make the new hire feel comfortable and welcome in your organization. It is imperative the new hire's role and duties are clearly outlined from the beginning. Make sure they have a copy of an updated employee handbook and a full understanding of the organization's policies. To avoid any confusion have the new hire sign off on the fact that the handbook, job duties and office policies have been fully explained to them, understood and agreed upon.

Conduct a formal salary and benefits review

Scan the environment and look at what other comparable nonprofits are offering their employees. Like other research, this survey shows a significant number of employees who leave their jobs go to other nonprofits signifying that becoming competitive in compensation may help with retention. Make sure when you interview potential employees you explain the actual dollar value of the position. This includes the worth of all the benefits including money the employee can save through items such as free parking, working from home, flex hours, etc. Highlight those things you offer that other nonprofits don't such as domestic partner benefits or converting vacation time into pay. A good resource for this is Opportunity Knocks' 2010 Wage & Benefits Report.

"I believe we did not offer an appropriate salary for the experience we needed. We have since increased the salary and are about to finalize the hiring of a more experienced, better qualified candidate to fill the position."

OK Survey Respondent Comment

Do not salary gouge to save

Any employer who thinks it is acceptable to purposely and severely underpay an employee for a new position for the sake of "saving your organization money" may not be saving any money at all. Even in lean economic times, an employee knows if s/he is being paid a market wage, and if not, resentment inevitably erodes loyalty. You may actually cost your organization more money in the long run because as soon as another opportunity arises, the dissatisfied employee is out the door. Remember, employees talk amongst one another about their compensation.

Monitor employee satisfaction and engagement levels

Provide employees a platform where they can communicate suggestions, concerns, compliments, and complaints. Take these seriously and act on them accordingly. You can't stem the tide of turnover unless you know why it's happening so poll all your employees. Instead of coming up with a "cure" before the diagnosis, find out what your staff truly thinks about their work environment, jobs, supervisors, etc. Give employees the opportunity to comment on the work environment, i.e. the actual physical space, availability of supplies and appropriate technology, as well as things like how conflict is addressed, how managers treat their employees, how innovation and risk taking is viewed, whether leadership is inspirational, etc. But don't ask unless you're truly willing to act on the information. There's nothing that can kill morale better than asking for feedback and not acting on it.

Conduct exit interviews

Gathering information from departing employees can be extremely valuable and is your chance to obtain information about what your nonprofit needs improvement on and what it's doing well. Conduct (or hire an external firm to conduct) a formal exit interview with each departing employee to determine what might need to change about the position being vacated. Used in conjunction with the data you receive by monitoring employee satisfaction levels, you can learn critical information in these interviews that can help stem the tide of turnover if acted on appropriately.

Plan for departures, vacancies and hiring new employees as an ongoing effort

The average turnover rate in this OK survey is 16%. That means an organization with 50 employees could have 8 vacancies within a years time. At this average rate, an organization with only 10 employees could expect to have 1 or 2 positions vacant at any point in time. Hiring and orienting new employees in addition to planning for the departure of those exiting has to be an ongoing process that is considered part of the cost and practice of running a nonprofit. Viewing vacancies as a normal part of doing business means budgeting for administrative and other staff time spent to hire new employees as well as process departures and new hires. It also means minimizing the negative impact on remaining employees by using temporary workers where appropriate, identifying work that could be delayed or put on hold, or giving bonuses to employees who pick up extra work in the interim. Often it means eliminating programs if capacity is down instead of, like many nonprofits, doing more with less, something that will definitely create burnout in the long run.

Do not tolerate office bullies and create and anti-bullying policy

Workplace bullying is a growing worry for many employers, and an increasing liability risk, too. In addition, bullying can result in increased absenteeism and lower productivity. Studies show that 1 in 10 employees around the United States will be the target of "persistent aggressive or unreasonable behavior" from their co-workers. Minimize your legal and financial risks by staying alert for the red flags that signify bullying is occurring, establishing clear-cut policies prohibiting these behaviors, and dealing swiftly with complaints and claims as they're made.

Category II - Human Capital Development

Clarify and redefine roles in your nonprofit

People in nonprofits are often underpaid and overworked. Do an honest assessment of the positions in your organization and make sure the expectations are achievable and clear. Once the right expectations are in place, make sure there are strategies in place to help employees succeed in meeting them. As noted under conducting a formal salary and benefits review, it cannot be stressed enough how important it is to make sure your organization is offering fair and competitive salary and benefits. Your employees will give much more if they feel they are treated fairly.

Annual employee reviews

Annual reviews are a must, more frequently as in semi-annual or even quarterly, and should at a minimum clearly cover any new duties the employee has been given since the previous agreement. Reviews are also opportunities to get agreement on changes in the job description, monitor employee satisfaction levels, and give them a platform for making suggestions, voicing concerns, and issuing compliments on what's working well. Discussions on how to capitalize on strengths and shore up weaknesses, including what assistance will be provided, and monitoring the success of professional development plans could also be part of this review. Identify those employees you want and need to keep or who have been with you for a long time, and ask them about how to make their jobs even better, what they would change about the organization, and other topics. Find out why they stay and what would make them consider leaving. Not only will you get valuable data, asking for input shows your interest in their wellbeing and job satisfaction.

> "We conduct "stay" interviews to see what is important to employees who stay with our organization."
>
> **OK Survey Respondent Comment**

Require anyone who manages people to do ongoing management training (and if you're the CEO or Executive Director, do it yourself as well)

All management must lead by example. Research has repeatedly shown that one of the top reasons for leaving a job is not getting along with a direct supervisor. Retention is primarily a management and not a human resources issue. Being a good manager, like anything else, requires certain skills and takes ongoing learning and practice. Anyone who manages people should be carefully trained just as you would train program managers or other specialists to do their job. Teach supervisors how to be good coaches and managers by providing ongoing training on issues such as conflict resolution, giving effective feedback, empowering employees to perform, etc. And always hold managers accountable for their own behavior and for ignoring or tolerating unacceptable behavior on the part of others.

Offer professional and career development opportunities designed or chosen by employees

Studies have shown that employees often leave a work place when there is a lack of career growth or challenging opportunities. All employees, together with their managers, should have the opportunity to create a professional development plan to guide learning, discuss career aspirations, and a vision for their growth in the organization. Use assessment tools if necessary to identify employee strengths and weaknesses and develop action plans for improvement. Consider initiating a formal coaching program (especially for new employees) to teach and share skills among team or department members.

Create a system for recognizing and appreciating staff

Many employment studies indicate that one of the highest ranking motivators for wage earners is recognition. Recognition by a superior is more likely to create employee loyalty in an employee than a higher salary for an employee that receives no such recognition. People put a premium on hearing that their work is appreciated and recognized, and it can be a low cost way of building retention rates. The key is finding out how employees like to be recognized and responding accordingly. The important thing is to have a system of recognition and reward for all levels of the organization that realistically links performance with reward. Leave room for spontaneous surprises like a set of tickets for everyone to the movies after an especially grueling month of work. A staff run committee for identifying achievement and how to recognize and reward is often a good way to go.

Have a succession plan for top positions – Build your bench

Succession planning helps your nonprofit identify key employees to prepare for future vacancies of top level positions. Succession planning enables an organization to build its bench strength when turnover does occur by providing these employees with professional development opportunities to build the skills necessary to do the job. This means having a written account when possible of each job's responsibilities, procedures and policies. It is critical when individuals leave the organization that the key knowledge of the position stays within the nonprofit. Relationships built by the departing employee should be institutionalized enough that they can be continued by someone else in the organization. When possible, maintain enough of a relationship with the individual leaving to be able to ask critical questions and gather important information after s/he leaves.

Category III - Organizational and Management Optimization

Actively work on creating a good work environment

In numerous studies, employees define a good work environment as one in which the expectations and values of the organization are clear, their work is valued, they receive quality supervision, are able to speak their minds openly, use their skills and talents, and have room to grow. Ask employees regularly and often what is working and what isn't. Involve them directly in setting expectations – people are more committed to objectives they've helped define. Talk to top performers and find out why they stay and what makes them successful.

> "Ensuring that our organization is a fun and fulfilling place to work is a top priority for me."
>
> **OK Survey Respondent Comment**

Be a detective about all aspects of your nonprofit, continually gathering information on how to improve the less tangible aspects of the work place like the atmosphere (are people generally content or is there a lot of griping going on?). Make sure you and other leadership practice what you preach. Build trust with employees by explaining why their work is important but leaving how to accomplish it up to the employee. You'll get more ownership of the outcome that way.

Also be sure the physical environment is comfortable and employees have the tools and resources they need to be successful in their role.

Ask the leadership to take a long, hard look at itself (and join them if you are part of the leadership team)

Staff (and often board) leadership at the top of the organization sets the tone and culture of the work place. In a work world of low loyalty, high mobility, and increasing willingness to change jobs, creating an appealing work environment is critical to decreasing turnover rates. Good leaders take responsibility for the success of the organization and its employees. They work hard at creating a culture in which everyone can succeed, and know they must continuously develop themselves. Ongoing work on interpersonal skills should be part of the portfolio of all top leadership. A good leader has enough self awareness to read and regulate her/his own emotions while also understanding how others feel. A leader's behavior should express the values s/he espouses on behalf of the organization. All leaders should do an honest assessment of their leadership style and effectiveness, and make corrections accordingly.

Keeping Morale High in Lean Economic Times

Employee morale affects every aspect of an organization's culture from its mission to its competitive advantage. Staff meetings (at least monthly) where staff members can hear honest updates from the Executive Director and senior management team can not only keep employees informed but also make them feel respected, valued and appreciated. While communicating about what challenges lie ahead may or may not allay employee fears, discussions about possible budget cuts or other reductions will allow employees to ask questions and/or voice any concerns that they may have about their positions, or about the organization at large. Asking for employee input before making decisions, creating an open door policy, and responding to employee requests promptly can all go a long way in boosting and keeping morale high. Maintain honest communication and transparency even if it means sharing disconcerting news. Be careful to share only the information you are certain of as foreshadowing or predicting can cause anxiety, unrest, and at times, unnecessary departures.

Begin a discussion about turnover and vacancy between the Executive Director, senior staff and the board of directors

As much of the organization's leadership as possible should be involved in the strategizing about how to address the turnover and vacancy rates in your nonprofit. Senior leadership is the steward for the organization and as such should be part of addressing its problems. Board members can provide information on how turnover is addressed in other industries including best practices garnered from their own personal experiences. They can also help define the process for surveying employee satisfaction, design employee appreciation strategies, and methods for training and continuing education.

Consider how to offer the most flexibility possible to employees

Flexibility is highly prized by some employees and can be the key to retaining talented people. Explore how other work places offer their employees flexible hours, locations (the opportunity to work from home), job-sharing, or family or pet friendly environments. There are many strategies for showing your employees that not only do you care about their preferences, you also trust them to get the work done regardless of where or when they do it.

"We already have work hour flexibility and excellent benefits and are looking at the potential for instituting some remote work policies."

OK Survey Respondent Comment

Consider implementing a mentoring program

According to Beverly Kaye of Career Systems International in a recent article, "People with mentors are twice as likely to stay [in jobs] as those without." Mentoring includes the ability to relate one's own experiences, guide an employee through difficult or complex decision making, provide experience based insight, create access for mentees to others to whom they would not have access, and be a sounding board for issues that ordinarily wouldn't be discussed openly. Key to succeeding in these types of programs is identifying who to match with whom, training mentors, managing mentee expectations, and establishing routine meetings.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The nonprofit sector is a major employer of paid workers and a place where vast number of volunteers are engaged. Although the economy has created a large pool of available applicants to fill the void that departing employees create, and employees are not leaving in numbers as large as in 2008, it is also true that addressing the cost of turnover is much more economically significant and important today than ever. And according to Thomas Tierney of Bridgespan Group in his 2006 report, *The Nonprofit Sector's Leadership Deficit*:

- Over the next decade, nonprofits with budgets of $250,000 and over that Bridgespan surveyed, will need to attract and develop some 640,000 new senior managers—the equivalent of 2.4 times the number currently employed.
- If the sector were to experience significant consolidation and lower-than-forecast turnover rates, this number might fall as low as 330,000. On the other hand, given historic trends, the total need could well increase to more than one million.
- By 2016, these organizations will need almost 80,000 new senior managers per year.

Even if the economy has modified these numbers to some degree, there will still be increasing competition among organizations for a decreasing number of qualified applicants. Learning to address turnover now is a long term strategy that can add to the health of your organization's bottom line for years to come.

About Opportunity Knocks

Opportunity Knocks is a national online job site, HR resource and career development destination focused exclusively on the nonprofit community. We are committed to lead and support efforts that help further nonprofit careers and promote a robust workforce that enables organizations to complete their missions.

For nonprofit professionals and those interested in exploring a nonprofit career, www.OpportunityKnocks.org is the premier destination to help find nonprofit jobs that match their passion and access valuable resources for developing successful careers.

For nonprofit employers, www.OpportunityKnocks.org is the best way to find experienced, qualified candidates and find information that nonprofit organizations need when building successful recruitment, retention and human resource development strategies.

Explore the OK Resource Center to learn more through unique resources including:

- OK Insight – Featured and Guest Columnists share their subject matter expertise
- OK Radio - Podcasts Providing Real-World Insight from Leaders in the Nonprofit Community
- News and Analysis – Updated regularly with news impacting the Nonprofit sector and jobs in nonprofit
- OK Research - Provides analysis and data that helps nonprofit organizations build successful human resource strategies including the 2010 Nonprofit Wage & Benefits Report
- OK Online Training – Web based courses bringing to life key issues on human resource management, workforce dynamics and career development that affect people that work within nonprofits
- Nonprofit HR Library – Forms, procedures, checklists and business tools all assembled in a convenient collection

Additional HR Resources

Society For Human Resources Management (SHRM) - The world's largest association devoted to human resource management

Jossey-Bass Publishing - Publications featuring the work of some of the world's best-known authors in nonprofit, leadership and conflict resolution

About.com Human Resources - HR Basics, tools and checklists