

Staffing for Sustainability:

Strategies for Recruiting and Retaining Talent in Aging Services



Agenda

Our Roadmap for Today

What we'll cover:

- **The Nonprofit Turnover Challenge:** Understanding the unique drivers of staff turnover in our sector.
- **The First Handshake:** Crafting compelling job descriptions that attract and retain.
- **Putting IDEA into Practice:** Weaving Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility into your entire recruitment process.
- **The Three Pillars of Retention:** Strategically aligning compensation, flexibility, and culture.
- **Actionable Takeaways:** Walking away with a practical plan.



The Core Problem: The Leaky Bucket



Why This Matters for You

Your mission and your resources.

- **Sustained Impact:** Stable, dedicated teams are essential for consistent progress and effective grant management. High turnover disrupts programs and relationships.
- **Safeguarding Resources:** Reducing turnover directly protects your budget. The cost of replacing an employee is significant.
- **Enhanced Reputation:** Organizations known for retaining talent attract higher-quality candidates and build stronger trust with funders and partners.
- **Mission Alignment:** A long-term team becomes deeply invested in the mission, driving innovation and preserving institutional knowledge.



Learning Outcome 1:

Understanding the Nonprofit Turnover Challenge

What are the key factors driving talented people away?

- Compensation Gaps
- Burnout & "Compassion Fatigue"
- Limited Growth Pathways
- "Mission Creep" in Roles
- Leadership & Culture Issues

The High Cost of Turnover

The financial drain of saying goodbye.

The true cost of losing an employee is estimated to be 30-150% of their annual salary.

$$\text{Turnover} = \text{Separation} + \text{Vacancy} + \text{Recruitment} + \text{Training}$$



Learning Outcome 2:

Compelling Job Descriptions

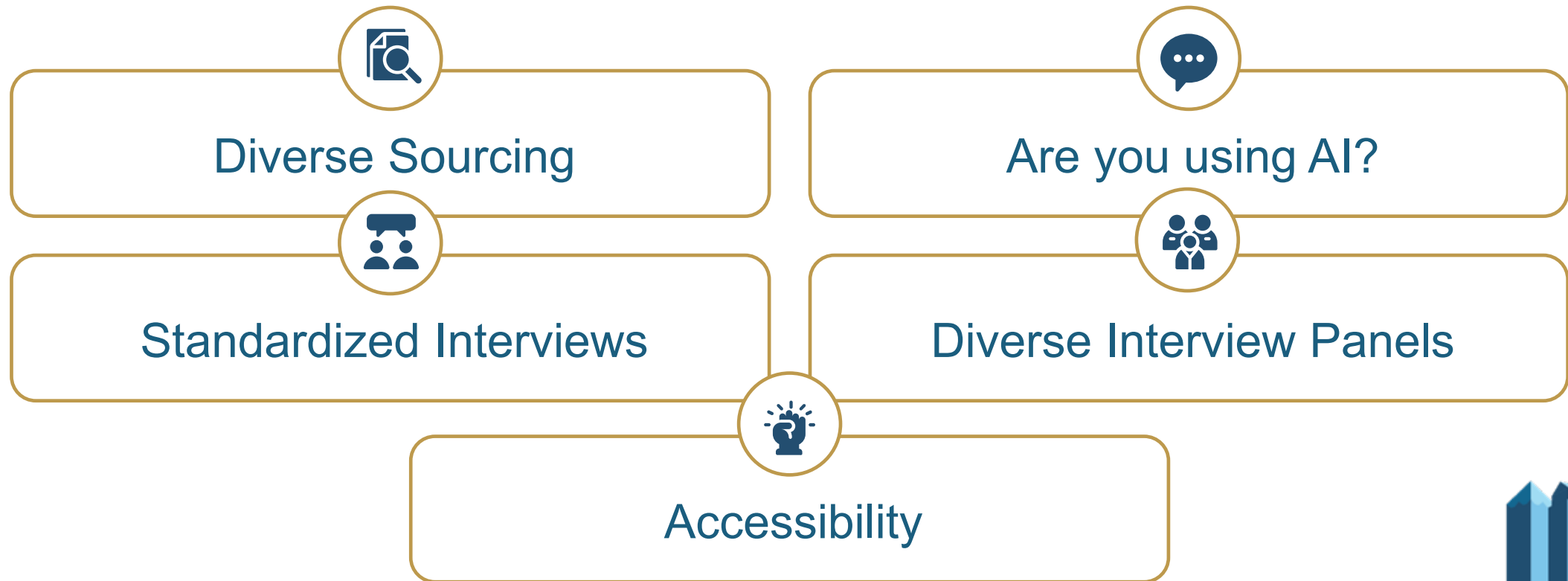
A job description is your first retention tool!

Crafting Your Message

- Compelling Title
- About Us
- Leadership & Culture
- What We Offer (The Retention Hook)
This is crucial! Detail your value proposition beyond salary.
- The Opportunity
- Core Responsibilities
- Background Profile

IDEA in Action: Equitable & Inclusive Processes

Embedding equity from start to finish.



Learning Outcome 3:

Aligning Strategy



The Three Pillars of Retention

1. Compensation & Benefits
2. Flexibility
3. Culture

Pillar 1: Compensation & Benefits

Thinking in terms of “total rewards.”

- **Benchmark your salaries**
- **Highlight the full package:**
 - Health, dental, and vision insurance
 - Generous paid time off and holiday policies
 - Retirement contributions
 - Professional development funds
 - Paid family leave

***The Retention Question:** Does our total rewards package show that our organization values our people’s well-being and growth?*



Pillar 2: Flexibility as a Strategic Asset

The new “F-word” in retention: flexibility

Flexibility is no longer a perk; it’s a core component of a modern, inclusive workplace.

Types of flexibility:

- Where: Remote or hybrid work options.
- When: Flexible start/end times, compressed work weeks (e.g., 4x10 hour days).
- How: Focus on outcomes and results, not just hours clocked (“asynchronous work”).

The IDEA Connection: Flexibility is an equity and accessibility tool.
It allows you to attract a wider talent pool.



Pillar 3: A Culture of Belonging

Culture is your ultimate retention tool.

People join companies, but they leave managers and cultures.

A retention-focused culture includes:

- Psychological Safety
- Recognition & Appreciation
- Growth & Development
- Transparent Leadership
- Equity & Inclusion



Key Takeaways & Your Action Plan

Key Takeaways & Your Action Plan

Start hiring for the long haul today!

1. **Diagnose Your “Leaks”:** Identify the top 1-2 reasons for turnover in your organization. Use exit interviews and staff surveys.
2. **Rewrite One Job Description:** Pick an upcoming opening and rewrite the description with a focus on mission, value proposition, and inclusive language.
3. **Embed One IDEA Practice:** Commit to one new equitable practice, such as standardized interview questions or a more diverse interview panel, for your next hire.
4. **Audit Your Pillars:**
 - **Compensation:** Are you communicating your “total rewards”?
 - **Flexibility:** What is one small step you can take towards more flexibility?
 - **Culture:** Ask your team: “What is one thing we could do to make this an even better place to work?”



Strategies for Talent Management

Human-centered design and your hiring process:

- It is, and it isn't all about the money
- Creative non-monetary components:
 - Remote/flex/hybrid work arrangements
 - Performance incentives
 - Individual professional development budgets
 - Unlimited PTO
 - Fun factor
 - Brand: how is your org perceived in the market?



Tactics for Talent Management, Part 1

- Move fast
- Woo heavily
- Don't be cheap
- Look locally and nationally
- Opportunity cost: delays cost far more than we realize
 - Foregone revenue
 - Staff time, payroll
 - Management distraction from core activities



Tactics for Talent Management, Part 2

- Ditch the annual performance review
- Monthly 1:1's
- Surprise and delight
- Growth opportunities: personal & professional
- Re-engineering the employee experience – the long view



Thank You!



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