

## **Retaining Top Performers: Are You Doing Enough to Keep Your MVPs?**

Your most valuable players — your MVPs — contribute most heavily to making your business a success. They're also the employees who would get snapped up in a heartbeat by your competitors if given the chance.

Retaining top performers isn't easy in the current hiring environment. These professionals have options, and they know it. If they would decide to leave, replacing them — and their skills, experience and industry knowledge — would be a challenge. But how can you stop them from leaving when they could get a better offer at any time? Start by finding out, and then remaining in touch with, how these employees feel about their jobs at your company.

Here are six steps you can take to increase your firm's chances of retaining top performers:

### **1. Check the work pulse of your MVPs with stay interviews**

[A stay interview](#) is just what it sounds like: a regular check-in with key employees to encourage them to stay with your company. It's an opportunity for them to discuss their level of enthusiasm for their work and, critically, any areas of frustration or dissatisfaction that you may be able to help them address. By hearing workers out, and acting on their feedback, you reinforce how important they are to your company — a crucial message that can never be overcommunicated.

Listen to how your employees feel about their career progression and whether their job is personally rewarding to them. But don't force the issue. Just make them feel comfortable enough to bring these topics up themselves. Once you have their input, take it to heart. Whenever possible, find ways to accommodate their hot-button issues. Following through shows you take their career satisfaction seriously.

### **2. Make sure your MVPs earn competitive compensation**

When people decide to search for a new job, compensation is often a motivating factor. Likewise, it's a reason to stay in a job. [In a recent Robert Half survey](#), 43% of workers said more money was the one thing that would convince them to stay in their current role.

To offer competitive compensation, compare salaries you're paying your top people to those listed in resources such as the [2020 Robert Half Salary Guide for Accounting and Finance Professionals](#). You can also measure your numbers against local averages using our Salary Calculator, which allows you to zoom in on ranges in your city and state.

*Access the Salary Calculator [here](#).*

### **3. Provide a company culture MVPs would find hard to leave**

Money is important, but it isn't everything. Organizational culture can play a huge part in whether your MVPs enjoy their job. In fact, [35% of 1,000 U.S. workers in a Robert Half](#)

[survey](#) said they would turn down an employment offer if the role was a perfect fit, but the company culture wasn't.

When asked to describe their ideal [organizational culture](#), workers interviewed for the same survey said they preferred environments that were supportive, team-oriented and innovative. If those attributes don't describe your workplace, you may want to prioritize making improvements to your company's culture. Otherwise, retaining top performers will only be that more difficult.

#### **4. Let MVPs create schedules that work best for them**

Most professionals today place a premium on their ability to maintain [work-life balance](#). And like many employers, you probably offer some type of alternative work arrangements, like telecommuting, compressed workweeks or flextime. But here's a question: Can your MVPs take advantage of those opportunities on their terms — or do they need to align with yours?

Inviting employees to propose their own work arrangements can be a powerful retention tool. Let star players set their work hours to show you trust them to get the job done. They'll appreciate the flexibility and the fact that you're not asking them to sacrifice their personal lives to conform to a one-size-fits-all schedule. You may also find they are even more productive — and may inspire others on your team to work harder, too, so they can earn the privilege of setting their own schedules.

#### **5. Fire up MVPs by helping them visualize their future**

One key to retaining top performers is recognizing that these professionals are driven and ambitious. If they think their careers are on a road to nowhere, you can count on them hitting the job boards soon. One strategy to prevent this from happening is including your MVPs in your [succession plan](#), as well as working with them to create a road map for acquiring the skills and experience they'll need to advance.

There's more to career stagnation than not being promoted. Bright professionals crave stimulating work and their eyes could wander if they're bored. Talk to your stars about their career paths, asking which projects they're most interested in pursuing. But don't stop there. Help them develop the expertise needed to tackle new areas by offering them [job rotation opportunities](#), cross-training or mentorships. The end result is a win-win: Satisfied team members with more robust skill sets.

#### **6. Don't expect your MVPs to be superstars 24/7**

You can't expect your best people to do everything for your company. And they may be closer than you think to becoming overloaded: Financial executives surveyed for our [Benchmarking Accounting & Finance Functions 2019 report](#) said that their teams could be derailed by an unanticipated project or an assignment that might stretch beyond their abilities. As the report notes, that tenuous situation could pose a serious risk for companies in the current business environment where technological change is constant and growth initiatives abound.

When workloads rise, consider engaging interim professionals who can provide support to your MVPs — and all of your core team. These professionals can also be brought in for short-term but critical initiatives that require time and specialized expertise your existing staff may not have. It is a strategy many leading employers rely on. In fact, this year's Benchmarking research shows that the use of [project professionals and other contingent resources](#) is rising at many organizations throughout North America

Retaining top performers is an ongoing challenge for many businesses today. Take steps to ensure these valued employees truly *feel* valued, and you will be well-positioned to maintain a deep bench of in-demand talent that will help your business succeed — and your competitors will envy.

*Accountemps, a [Robert Half](#) company, is the world's first and largest specialized staffing firm for temporary accounting, finance and bookkeeping professionals. Accountemps has more than 300 locations worldwide. More resources, including job search services and [career advice](#), can be found at [roberthalf.com/accountemps](http://roberthalf.com/accountemps).*

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