

10 Workforce Solutions to Start Today

- 1. Onboarding.** It's time to move beyond the checkbox-driven orientation to an engaging onboarding experience. Check out the free Onboarding Toolkit from LeadingAge Minnesota. The toolkit provides more than 50 activities that will foster a culture of team member engagement, resulting in increased staff retention and improved workplace productivity.
- 2. Connect with local schools.** Reach out to your local secondary and post-secondary schools to develop a relationship. We know that the toughest workforce crisis is yet to come, with the labor force in Minnesota dropping by 46% over the next 20 years (Minnesota State Demographer, 2016). It's important to start building your future workforce pipeline TODAY! LeadingAge National created a "Doing Well by Doing Good" customizable PowerPoint presentation for organizations to use as they connect with students. This tool is available at the national LeadingAge Center for Workforce Solutions.
- 3. Scholarships.** Take advantage of the many scholarship and grant programs available in Minnesota to relieve the financial burdens of staff pursuing higher education. With the cost of education rising, people are more interested than ever before in scholarship opportunities! For details, visit the LeadingAge Minnesota Workforce Center.
- 4. Peer mentoring.** Mentor programs offer an important opportunity for staff to develop positive relationships, and to receive needed support and direction. Further, mentor programs positively impact retention and satisfaction. Visit LeadingAge Minnesota's Workforce Solutions Grant showcase for examples of Peer Mentor programs or access the Mentor Connector to find or become a mentor today.
- 5. Involve frontline team members.** As the staff closest to the people you serve, frontline team members see daily challenges first hand. Train and allow staff to make key decisions for their roles. Bruce Himmelstein, former corporate vice president of sales and marketing at Ritz-Carlton says, "*[Leaders] get it right most often when we get out of the way.*" Learn what this might look like in your organization by trying an engagement strategy from the "Engaging Your Team Members" conversation toolkit or learning about the ICan program through Performance Excellence in Aging Services.

6. **Offer social supports for your staff.** Research by the National Human Services Assembly, funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, suggests that staff who have stable family lives are more effective at work, as they are able to focus on work without personal distractions or stress. The study suggests that it is imperative for organizations to implement practices that support their staff in these personal challenges. This can positively impact staff by allowing them to focus at work, and can reduce concerns like absenteeism, burnout, and turnover. These practices might include flexible schedules, referrals to community resources, child or eldercare resources, or transportation assistance. Access our “Community Support Resources” list to get started.
7. **Career pathways.** Staff want to stay in organizations where they see a future. Offer opportunities for staff to map out a career path within your organization. Do they want to grow into a leadership role? Do they want to join a new department in the future? Check out LeadingAge Minnesota’s Onboarding Toolkit (see Principle 4) to develop personal growth plans for each staff member in your organization. Also be sure to get engaged in programs like OnTrack Nursing Assistant Training and Health Support Specialist.
8. **Engrain your mission.** Millennials and Gen Z want to work for organizations with a purpose. Make sure your mission and values are clear and engaging in your recruitment materials. Also consider other parts of your organization – meetings, job descriptions, reviews, events, new programs, special activities, and daily interactions – challenge your team to engrain your mission in their daily work.
9. **#socialmedia.** Social media is most impactful when it is shared with others – so post frequently and encourage staff to share what is posted! Consider other activity such as mobile-friendly applications, paid advertisements, and using a lot of pictures or videos in your posts. Visit LeadingAge Minnesota’s Workforce Solutions Project Showcase to learn about proven social media strategies.
10. **Encourage staff recognition.** Recognition builds morale and increases retention. It doesn’t have to take a big investment of time, effort or money to recognize team member contributions in a meaningful way. Yet, the results can have a significant impact on your organization. Consider implementing or growing your recognition program. Visit LeadingAgeMinnesota’s *Stars Among Us* Recognition Resource Center for more information.



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