



THE BIG BOOK OF PERKS

GIVE
EMPLOYEES
THE VIP TREATMENT
SO THEY STAY LONG-TERM

A WHITEPAPER FROM ONSHIFT

On)Shift®



Since senior care faces an unprecedented number of workforce challenges, providers are hungry for innovative ways to attract, hire and retain employees.

And a new generation has entered the senior care workforce, with a recent survey indicating that nearly 70% of new hires in senior care are millennials. Providers are finding that these new workers come with a new set of expectations and are looking for something more “unique” than many of their predecessors.

Perks Over Pay

The millennial generation refuses to settle for the status quo. A competitive salary and benefits are no longer enough to commit to an organization. They crave more tailored, non-traditional benefits in addition to fair pay — including work-life balance, career advancement opportunities and consistent recognition for their

of policies and programs that resulted in the reduction of employee turnover from a high of more than 85% down to 30%.

Corless says that perks and practices are great tools for providers to use to attract employees, differentiate their organization from the competition and ultimately

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contributions. In fact, 79% of U.S. employees would prefer new or additional perks over a pay raise.¹

“I’ve found that today’s workforce wants much more now than in the past,” explains Peter Corless, EVP at OnShift. They’re looking for career growth opportunities, involvement in process improvements and recognition for their contributions.”

During Corless’s tenure as vice president of human resources at one of the country’s largest post-acute healthcare companies, he oversaw the implementation

boost employee retention. And while providers may not be able to splurge on company-wide trips to the Bahamas, there are several affordable perks that go a long way in attracting and retaining employees.

One sure way to increase employee engagement is to give staff a voice in the perks that you offer. Not all suggestions will be feasible, but simply asking staff for their opinions and doing your best to implement them will improve your employee engagement initiatives.

OnShift is committed to helping providers create

¹ Glassdoor Q3 2015 U.S. Employment Confidence Survey, Glassdoor, 2015.



a stable and consistent workforce. Based on our experiences working with thousands of post-acute care and senior living providers, we have developed a list of effective employee perks that help attract, engage and retain employees.

Feel free to cherry pick the perks that make sense for your organization and make your employees feel like the VIPs that they are.

Celebrate the Employee

The majority of employee turnover in senior care occurs within the first 90 days of employment. Making new employees feel like they are part of the team right out of the gate is critical to retention. VIP treatment from the start shows employees how important they are to the team and the organization.

“In today’s environment of reduced length of stay, insufficient reimbursement and squeezed margins, providers need to carefully evaluate which labor investments yield the most returns,” says Corless. “And not all perks have a big dollar amount tied to them. There are lots of benefits employees value that smart providers can add to make them more attractive to both recruits and employees.”

1 Reach out before they start

Let new hires know you’re excited to have them join the team before their official start date by sending a small gift to their home such as a piece of merchandise with the company logo, along with a personal welcome note from the CEO.

2 Roll out the red carpet

One senior living organization literally rolls out the red carpet and has staff line up to applaud new hires as they enter the building on their first day. A welcome like that will not soon be forgotten and starts things off on the right note.

3 Include new hires in your newsletter

Highlight new employees within your company newsletter. A simple Q&A will provide all staff a little more insight into their new teammates.

4 Set up meet & greets

Arrange for new hires to have coffee and connect with key members of leadership to ask questions and learn more about the history and mission of the organization.

5 Inspire newer hires

Bring in employees who started in an entry level position and worked their way up the senior care ladder to discuss their journey and provide insight into how others can chart a similar course.

Reward Good Performance

Create a workforce that works toward your organizational goals by rewarding a job well done. According to a Gallup story by Annemarie Mann and Nate Dvorak, *Employee Recognition: Low Cost, High Impact*, only one in three U.S. workers strongly agrees that they’ve received formal recognition in the past week. And these workers that do not feel appropriately recognized are twice as likely to quit within the next year.²

² *Employee Recognition: Low Cost, High Impact*, Annemarie Mann & Nate Dvorak, 2016.



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- Recognize & reward employee contributions
- Take action with real-time employee feedback
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Mann and Dvorak write, “Workplace recognition motivates, provides a sense of accomplishment and makes employees feel valued for their work. Recognition not only boosts individual employee engagement, but it also has been found to increase productivity and loyalty to the company, leading to higher retention.”

7 Showcase a staff member of the month

Let managers nominate true team players for an “employee of the month” reward. Honor the winner by putting their photo on the wall and let the “congratulations” from staff and residents roll in.

Be sure to hold a small celebration where leaders publicly acknowledge the contributions of the winner in front of their peers.

8 Give cash for consistent contributions

Whether it’s cash, a gift card or a bonus in their next paycheck, thanking your high performers for all that they do is crucial for employee engagement. And you don’t need to spend a fortune to demonstrate that you recognize their contributions to your organization. In fact, you might be surprised to see just how meaningful a \$15 gift card is to an employee for a job well done.

9 Celebrate team and organization wins

Every organization sets goals from census/occupancy levels and cost control, to providing excellent resident care and more. Make sure your

Four out of five employees say personal financial issues affect their job performance, leading to an increase in stress, an inability to focus and absenteeism and tardiness.

“Everyone wants to be recognized when they’ve put in extra effort to support residents, family members and teammates. However, not all managers are equally effective in terms of observing and providing positive feedback,” explains Corless. “It’s important to put systems in place that allow you to objectively measure these meritorious events and provide equitable recognition to all employees.”

6 Say ‘thanks’ for shift pickups

Offer a reward to employees that pick up those hard-to-fill shifts or last-minute call-offs. The benefits are three-fold: 1) It shows appreciation for staff members who help you out of a bind 2) It helps fill open shifts to ensure high quality care and 3) It encourages others to follow suit and start volunteering.

employees know what those goals are and celebrate when they’ve reached them as a team. Throw a pizza party or bring in tacos for a team that meets their goal or gets a stellar customer review. One provider awarded a \$100 bonus for all employees when they received a perfect survey.

Increase Financial Wellness

Forty-four percent of Americans say that that they’re stressed about their finances.³ What’s more, four out of five employees say personal financial issues affect their job performance, leading to an increase in stress, an inability to focus and absenteeism and tardiness.⁴ Providers can help curb some of that stress without breaking the bank by offering employees small goods

³ 2017 Employee Financial Wellness Survey, PwC, 2017.

⁴ Employees’ Financial Issues Affect Their Job Performance, Society for Human Resource Management, 2016.



and services that are already provided to the residents of the community.

“According to a recent Career Builder study, 78% of employees live paycheck to paycheck,” says Corless. “Therefore, anything that an employer can do to help alleviate this stress will be welcomed by employees. This doesn’t just include providing more in wages, but providing other support such as group discounts and education about financial management. This can go a long way towards demonstrating to employees that you care.”

purchase a discounted meal to take home to their family. Just think, you could save them from scrambling to pack lunch before work or from having to cook when they get home after a long day.

12 Supply new uniforms
Offer free uniforms or give employees a stipend to buy themselves new scrubs. This helps employees feel good about what they do and how they look. Plus, it helps ensure that employees are dressed and ready to work each day.

13 Consider cash in lieu of benefits
Some providers give employees the opportunity to waive certain benefits and receive an increase in pay.

14 Make taxes less taxing
Taxes can be daunting and paying an accountant can be pricey, so have someone on-hand to help staff when tax season rolls around.

15 Ease transportation expenses
Lessen the cost associated with getting to and from work by giving employees a transportation stipend or discounted bus pass.



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10 Offer instant pay for rainy days
Providers should allow employees to gain real-time access to their earned but unpaid income between paychecks when an unexpected expense puts them in a bind. Simply knowing they have access to it will provide employees peace of mind.

11 Feed staff at a discount
Offer employees a discounted or free meal during their shift, or the opportunity to

“With a qualified transportation fringe benefit, an employee can use pretax dollars to pay for transit passes, vanpool fares and parking and employers save on payroll related taxes,” says Corless. “In addition, employers that subsidize at least \$30 per month for transit or vanpool fares may meet the National Standard of Excellence and qualify for designation under the National Center for Transit Research’s Best Workplaces for Commuters.”



Promote a Healthy Lifestyle

A healthy staff benefits both employees and your organization. Healthy employees take less sick days, bring down the cost of insurance and are more productive. And healthy employees are usually happier and can have a positive impact on the overall morale in your community.⁵

16 Let staff help staff

Senior living providers have a wealth of wellness professionals in and out of their communities on a daily basis. Create a program where employees can work out with a physical therapist or have a lunch and learn session with a nutritionist.

17 Encourage physical fitness

Negotiate a discounted gym membership rate or offer a gym membership stipend. For more cost savings, providers can allow employees access to their on-site resident fitness center or therapy room.

18 Weigh in on weight loss

Hold weight loss contests between individuals or teams. Have each entrant contribute a few bucks and give the pot to the winner at the end.

19 Offer PTO for Community Service

Organizations can tap into senior care employees' desire to do good and offer paid time off for volunteering—whether that's helping to build homes or volunteering at a local soup kitchen.

20 Lessen physical & mental stress

Treat your staff who spend long days on their feet. Bring in a massage therapist, or offer free yoga or mediation classes to encourage relaxation.

Encourage Professional Development

Providing a clear path for advancement is a huge differentiator when attracting and retaining employees. The positive impact of professional development extends beyond employee satisfaction. “Your customers and clients will benefit, too, from the high level of efficient service they receive,” a Robert Half blog post explains. “Investing in each of your workers is beneficial to the whole organization and can boost the bottom line.”⁶ Since the senior care industry in particular will see the staff shortage grow in the coming years, providers need to start grooming the next set of leaders to secure their organization's future.

“One of the most important things that you can do to show employees that you care about them is to talk to them about their career aspirations and develop a plan to help them along,” Corless explains. “Not everyone aspires to be the CEO but many people have a desire to learn and grow and appreciate your genuine concern for them.”

21 Give them a guide

Set up each new hire with a mentor to help them learn the ropes of their new job and guide them as they grow in their career.

⁵ 10 Benefits of Healthy Employees, Health Hero, 2016.

⁶ Professional Development Training: A Win for the Entire Team, Robert Half, 2017.

22 Rethink roles
Assign levels within roles based on tenure and skill—like CNA I, CNA II, CNA III—to more rapidly promote employees and motivate them to continue moving up the ladder. There are existing and inexpensive resource guides available to help you develop a program tailored to your company.

23 Pay for certifications
Since finding staff is challenging, why not offer to pay for state-approved training for new hires? Some providers even pay employees a wage for the time spent getting certified.

24 Provide education assistance
Employees will only be invested in employers who are invested in them. Providing financial assistance for continuing education is one of the best ways an organization can show just how invested they are in their workers. Whether it's providing tuition reimbursement or paying for continuing education classes, that level of commitment to an employee's career growth will help attract and retain staff.

Create Work-Life Balance

The Corporate Executive Board, which represents 80% of the Fortune 500 companies, found that



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Corless says. “However, the reality is that employees have unexpected situations arise for which they will need time off. Creating a system to facilitate an employee’s ability to swap shifts and have the employer assist them so the burden doesn’t rest solely on the employee, demonstrates that you truly care.”

25 Implement Superb Scheduling Practices
Other than pay, scheduling flexibility is rated as the #1 driver in job satisfaction. Understanding employee obligations outside of work and giving them more control over their schedules will dramatically improve retention. Consider offering more convenient shift times and the ability to easily pick up shifts

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those employees who report having a good work-life balance work 21% harder than those who don’t. And they tend to stay with your organization long-term. HR professionals reported increased employee retention rates simply by offering staff more flexibility in their schedules.⁷ Keep in mind that the idea of work-life balance also includes celebrating staff milestones and making your community a fun place to work.

“There have been many studies published outlining the benefit of consistent assignment on clinical outcomes. Employees also like having a consistent work schedule,”

on-the-go. Easy and convenient online scheduling helps employers create better work-life balance for their employees.

26 Try shorter shifts
Think outside of the typical 8-hour shift and utilize your on-call staff for shorter, 5-hour shifts when residents require extra care. This relieves stress for employees who might be overwhelmed and ensures you’re properly staffed to provide quality care.

⁷ *How Work Life Balance Can Keep Your Employees Happy and Your Business Healthy*, John Rampton for Inc., 2016.

27

Celebrate good times

Birthdays, engagements, marriages and new pregnancies are among a slew of life events that are worthy of small celebrations with coworkers. Take a few minutes out of the day to hold a public celebration and serve cake for staff work anniversaries. Obviously the bigger the milestone, the larger the celebration. You can also offer staff tenure pins to wear on their uniforms to showcase their commitment to your organization.



Does your organization offer unique perks? Share them with us by emailing marketing@onshift.com. We'd love to hear from you!

“Put together a calendar of events at the beginning of the year to ensure you don’t miss staff milestones,” Corless recommends. “Include association promoted events that are scheduled on certain dates like National Assisted Living Week and National Nurses Week.”

28

Be a good sport

Bring in local sports teams to rally your staff for a big game and let them wear gear to show their support.

29

Brighten up the break room

Update the break room for your employees to enjoy with new furniture, board games, small appliances, etc.

30

Break & dance

During particularly stressful days, gather your staff, turn on some tunes and dance for five minutes or so in the break room. Staff will return to work re-energized and in better spirits.

31

Have fun with field days

Organize an office Olympics with fun employee-suggested games and award prizes to the winners of each event.

32

Celebrate senior staff

Let your most tenured employees play “hooky” once a year. Send the group to a baseball game, museum or other local event to connect away from work.

Because An Engaged Workforce Works™

These perks can enhance your employee engagement initiatives. And the proven benefits of an engaged workplace are astounding.

- ✓ Higher profits
- ✓ Greater customer satisfaction
- ✓ Higher productivity
- ✓ Less absenteeism
- ✓ Lower turnover

Once you’ve implemented these perks, don’t be shy about sharing them with the world. Demonstrating your organization cares about the well-being and work-life balance of employees can be a huge differentiator in attracting and retaining employees.



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