

Strategies for Retaining Diverse Employees

1. **Involve all staff.** Make sure that the commitment to diverse employees involves every member of the business or organization, especially those in top management positions. The point of having a diverse workforce is not simply to have diverse skin colors in the building, but to take advantage of the presence of diverse ideas. If peer-level employees are left to struggle with different ideas, with no support or involvement by management in the incorporation of those ideas and the emergence of a stronger whole, the minority employee is going to feel like an outsider and is never going to feel welcome or accepted.
2. **Follow through.** Follow up on the introduction to the community that you made during the recruiting phase. Orient the employee to the community. Support the employee's efforts to obtain housing, register children for school, find employment for a spouse, and locate local stores and services. Introduce the employee to people in the community who can help him or her become involved in activities of interest. Recognize that your personal involvement is critical, since an employee who is not familiar with the majority culture or is uncertain of a welcome may not feel comfortable striking out on his or her own. Include the employee's family in your orientation and continuing support, because their comfort level with the community environment will have direct bearing on your employee's satisfaction.
3. **Designate mentors.** Continue efforts to welcome the new employee beyond the first week. Recruit mentors for the new employee, from both the employee's minority group and the white majority. A minority mentor would be particularly effective at sharing experiences and serving as a sounding board. A majority mentor could interpret hidden rules and provide networking opportunities. Both can help by supporting the adjustment to "Minnesota nice" and pointing out community resources.
4. **Open communication lines.** Recognize that differences will arise AND that differences can lead to positive growth rather than conflict. Create structures that encourage and support conflict resolution. Convene periodic focus groups of minority employees to find out what is working for them and what is not. Acknowledge that differences and misunderstandings will arise, but build a culture that supports openness, listening, and the active resolution of issues.
5. **Avoid "tokenism."** Don't make diverse employees feel like their only contribution to the organization is their skin color or their representation of a minority group. Encourage their involvement on committees or in decision-making groups based on their interests and strengths, not their diversity. In addition, do not assume that the minority employee speaks for or represents his or her entire minority group.
6. **Be open to new points of view.** Don't assume that "the way it's always been" is the best way. New people bring new ideas and perspectives to the table that creates new revenue

streams and different business opportunities. Diverse perspectives are healthy for businesses and organizations in our global economy, even though it's sometimes hard to change.

7. **Support upward mobility.** Support continuing education and be sure that promotion opportunities are transparent and open to diverse applicants. Demonstrate that diversity is welcome in all levels of the business or organization.
8. **Provide staff training.** Promote collegiality by requiring regular diversity training that promotes understanding of different life experiences and points of view. All employees of a business or organization—both majority and minority—need to increase their ability to work as a team with people from different backgrounds. Recognize that many in your workforce have not come into contact with people culturally different from themselves and need relevant education that emphasizes understanding, empathy, and critical thinking skills and builds their ability to succeed in a multicultural environment.
9. **Respect different experiences.** Recognize that the cultures and experiences of people from other backgrounds are just as valid as yours and just as important to them as yours are to you. Synergy happens when all people believe their opinions are respected and their perspective is valued.
10. **Walk the Talk.** Demonstrate by doing. Realize that diversity needs to be woven into all aspects of the organization. It is not a one-time or a “flavor of the month” occurrence.

Developed by George Thompson.

DiversityCouncil.org

Now here are 7 tips on how to retain a Diverse Workforce:

1. Make sure that you orient all new employees by ensuring that they are introduced to key staff across the organization. It's a courtesy that goes a long way in making employees feel welcome.
2. Share with them the often overlooked, but important information on the mission and culture of the business and the role that they others play to support the company mission and culture.
3. Be sure to include your new employees in workplace activities and initiatives as appropriate by making sure that they are invited to office or company events; being mindful of inviting your employees early, (and not at the last minute. No one wants to feel like a 3rd wheel.
4. Many managers are becoming more aware of the importance of diversity in the workplace. Become more in tune to cultural and communication differences. Take the time to learn or research the impact that cultural and communication differences may have in the workplace.

The article that I referenced earlier, "Understanding Cultural Differences in the Workplace" does a great job at highlighting what some of these cultural differences might be.

5. Meet with all of your employees in order to get a sense of what they like about the organization, or what they feel can be done better. This can be done quite easily through surveys and focus groups.
6. As employees leave your company, meet with them to learn about their experience and use the information to help you to approach new ways of recruiting and retaining employees.
7. Provide mentorship opportunities for employees so that they are exposed to individuals at all levels of the organization.

Mentorships don't need to be formal in nature. Encourage all employees to be collaborative and available to answer questions and be supportive of their colleagues, regardless of their position in the company.

[Dianne Shaddock](#) is the Founder of Easy Small Business HR, Employee Hiring and Managing Tips. Through the Employee Hiring and Managing Tips podcast, blog, and weekly 'quick tips' e-newsletters, Dianne offers expert advice on how to make better hiring decisions, manage difficult employees, develop employee policies, motivate staff, and so much more. No stuffy, corporate HR policy lingo; but straight forward, easy to understand and implement advice for businesses just like yours. Stay ahead of the curve and go to [Easy Small Business HR](#) for more tips on how to hire and manage your staff effectively.

Welcome to the Diversity in Leadership Network !

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is committed to creating an open, inclusive, compassionate and healthy church organization by creating culturally proficient organizations (*which support the church?*).

Because of this commitment we have formed a network to help us achieve our goal. Inside the Diversity in Leadership Network you'll find a platform for:

- **Culturally rich information**
- **Valuable recruitment and retention resources**
- **Referral resources in the identification of potential leaders**
- **Interactive open-forum discussion on issues of diversity and inclusion within the church.**

We hope you are enriched by becoming a part of our Network. If you have any ideas to improve the effectiveness of the Diversity in Leadership Network website, We'd love to hear from you - contact us at [link]

Shared values

Our vision to become a culturally proficient organization is based on these shared values:

- We believe our purpose is to glorify and serve God and that God's grace inspires us to bring God's love, justice and reconciliation into a diverse world.
- We believe we provide a living expression of the gospel when we honor God's gift of diversity, respecting and encouraging the good in each of us.
- We believe seeking God's will is integral to our decision-making process.
- We believe employing honesty, integrity and respect in our conversations and interactions with our colleagues and our constituencies create and foster trust.
- We believe working with competence, in consultation and in partnership with others, is the best way to serve those within and outside the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) national offices.
- We believe we do our best and most productive work when we are encouraged to use our individual gifts, talents and creativity in the achievement of our shared goals and objectives.
- We believe a balanced life, with time for work, leisure and spiritual nurture, makes us healthier and more productive colleagues at the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) national offices.

The General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) is a caring, compassionate and inclusive community called by God to fulfill the mandates of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Constitution, serving and leading the people of God through resources, programs and initiatives and the church of Jesus Christ through partnerships with our colleagues, congregations, governing bodies and ecumenical partners.

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- **To create a culturally proficient, healthy church corporation, the employees at the Presbyterian Center will strive to work in a manner consistent with our shared values.**
- **We will keep our values before us and integrate them into our daily lives.**