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THE WORKFORCE EXCELLENCE™ BRIEF

November 2026 Edition

Insights for Stronger Leaders, Engaged Workforces & Healthier Organizations

ALL ABOUT YOU! LLC

Strengthening Lives, Leaders, and Organizations™

The Leadership Factor in Employee Retention

Why employees stay—or leave—is shaped by more than compensation.

Welcome to the November Issue

Welcome to the November edition of *The Workforce Excellence™ Brief*.

Last month, we examined why hiring alone will not solve the healthcare workforce problem. This month, we take the next step by examining one of the most influential factors in workforce stability: leadership.

Healthcare organizations invest considerable resources in recruitment, compensation, benefits, and retention initiatives. Yet an important question often receives less attention:

What is the day-to-day leadership experience of the employees we are trying to retain?

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Employees experience organizational leadership through everyday interactions—with their supervisors, managers, department leaders, and executive teams. Those experiences shape trust, communication, accountability, engagement, and perceptions of organizational support.

Retention is not created by a single initiative. It is influenced by the conditions leaders establish and maintain.

FEATURED INSIGHT

Retention Begins Before an Employee Decides to Leave

Employee turnover is often treated as an event: an employee submits a resignation, an exit interview is conducted, and the organization begins recruiting a replacement.

But the decision to leave may develop long before a resignation is submitted.

It can begin when employees repeatedly experience:

- Inconsistent expectations and unclear communication.
- Limited support from immediate supervisors.
- Unequal accountability or perceived favoritism.
- Insufficient recognition and professional development.
- Unmanageable workloads and inadequate resources.
- Concerns that are raised but never addressed.

One difficult interaction does not necessarily cause an employee to leave. However, repeated experiences can shape an employee's perception of whether the organization is a place where they can perform, develop, and remain.

The leadership challenge is not simply to respond when employees leave. It is to recognize and address the workplace conditions that contribute to their decision to leave.

THE LEADERSHIP LENS

Five Leadership Factors That Influence Retention

1. Leadership Consistency

Employees need leaders whose decisions, expectations, and actions are reasonably consistent.

When expectations change without explanation, accountability varies between employees, or decisions appear arbitrary, trust weakens.

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Leaders should establish clear expectations, communicate decisions, and apply standards fairly.

2. Communication and Trust

Employees need opportunities to express concerns, ask questions, and provide feedback without automatically being labeled difficult, resistant, or disengaged.

Communication is not effective simply because information is distributed. It is effective when employees understand the message, have an opportunity to respond, and see appropriate follow-through.

3. Accountability and Fairness

Accountability should not begin and end with frontline employees.

Leaders must also be accountable for the conditions they create, the expectations they establish, and the consistency with which they manage their teams.

A workplace cannot reasonably expect accountability from employees while allowing inconsistent leadership practices to go unaddressed.

4. Development and Professional Growth

Employees are more likely to see a future within an organization when they understand how they can grow.

Professional development should extend beyond annual training requirements. It should include meaningful feedback, skill development, advancement opportunities, mentoring, and clear expectations for progression.

Promoting someone without preparing them for the responsibilities of the new role is not a substitute for leadership development.

5. Work Environment and Operational Support

Leadership cannot be separated from operational conditions.

Employees experience leadership through staffing decisions, workload distribution, scheduling practices, access to resources, and how operational problems are addressed.

Telling employees they are valued while consistently overlooking barriers that interfere with their work creates a credibility problem.

Leaders must examine both their interpersonal behaviors and the systems they oversee.

THE WORKFORCE EXCELLENCE™ CHECK-IN

Five Questions Healthcare Leaders Should Be Asking

Consider these questions during your next leadership meeting:

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1. Do employees understand what is expected of them, and are those expectations applied consistently?
2. Do employees feel comfortable raising concerns and providing honest feedback?
3. Are supervisors equipped to manage conflict, communicate effectively, and address performance concerns?
4. Can employees identify realistic opportunities for professional growth within the organization?
5. Are operational barriers affecting employee performance being identified and addressed?

These questions are not simply an employee satisfaction exercise. They are a starting point for evaluating leadership effectiveness and workforce conditions.

FROM INSIGHT TO ACTION

A Five-Step Leadership Retention Strategy

Organizations need more than retention slogans. They need a process for identifying problems, responding to them, and evaluating whether conditions improve.

STEP 1 — ASSESS

Examine turnover patterns, employee feedback, engagement results, absenteeism, internal transfers, and exit interview findings.

Look for patterns by department, supervisor, role, shift, and length of service.

STEP 2 — LISTEN

Create structured opportunities for employees to communicate their experiences.

Do not limit feedback to annual surveys. Use focused listening sessions, leadership rounding, and regular employee check-ins.

STEP 3 — IDENTIFY LEADERSHIP GAPS

Determine whether concerns are connected to communication, supervisory capability, accountability, workload management, or organizational processes.

Avoid assuming that every retention problem can be solved with a compensation adjustment or another employee recognition initiative.

STEP 4 — IMPLEMENT TARGETED ACTIONS

Develop specific interventions based on the findings.

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Examples include supervisor development, improved communication practices, clearer performance expectations, workload review, and professional development pathways.

STEP 5 — MEASURE RESULTS

Evaluate whether the interventions are improving employee experience and workforce stability.

Monitor retention, turnover, engagement, employee feedback, internal mobility, and progress against established goals.

A strategy is not complete simply because an action was implemented. Leaders must determine whether it produced the intended result.

THE HEALTHCARE WORKFORCE PERSPECTIVE

The Numbers Are Telling Us Something

Healthcare workforce research in 2026 continues to highlight the relationship between employee experience, leadership, and retention.

A September 2026 report on the healthcare workforce found that only 51% of surveyed nurses planned to remain with their current employer, even though 79% intended to remain in nursing.

That distinction matters. Employees may remain committed to their profession while reconsidering where they want to practice it.

A separate October 2026 healthcare workforce report found that 65% of surveyed healthcare workers reported burnout, compassion fatigue, moral distress, or secondary traumatic stress.

These findings reinforce an important point: organizations cannot evaluate workforce stability by looking at vacancies and resignation numbers alone.

They must also examine employee experience, leadership effectiveness, operational conditions, and whether employees believe they have a sustainable future within the organization.

Strengthening Lives, Leaders, and Organizations™

THE ALL ABOUT YOU! PERSPECTIVE

At All About YOU! LLC, we believe workforce excellence requires intentional leadership and organizational accountability.

Employee retention should not be treated as an isolated human resources initiative. It is an organizational responsibility influenced by leadership practices, workplace culture, communication, employee engagement, and operational effectiveness.

Leaders must be willing to examine not only employee performance, but also the conditions under which employees are expected to perform.

You cannot build a stable workforce while ignoring the workplace experiences that undermine it.

That is why leadership development and workforce development must work together.

A MESSAGE FROM DR. CASSANDRA ARTHUR

Healthcare organizations are operating in an environment where workforce demands continue to evolve. Leaders are being asked to maintain operational performance, support employees, manage change, and deliver quality services—often with limited resources.

However, workforce challenges cannot be addressed through expectations alone.

Employees need capable leadership, clear communication, consistent accountability, opportunities for development, and workplace conditions that allow them to perform effectively.

My challenge to healthcare leaders this month is straightforward:

Before asking why employees are leaving, examine what their everyday workplace experience is telling them about your organization.

The answers may reveal opportunities for improvement that recruitment alone will never address.

— **Dr. Cassandra Arthur**
Founder & CEO
ALL ABOUT YOU! LLC
Healthcare Leadership • Workforce Development • Professional Education • Consulting
Strengthening Lives, Leaders, and Organizations™

READY TO STRENGTHEN YOUR WORKFORCE?

All About YOU! LLC works with healthcare organizations to strengthen leadership, improve workforce engagement, and support healthier organizational cultures through consulting, training, professional education, and workforce development strategies.

Our services include:

- Healthcare Leadership Development
- Workforce Engagement and Retention Strategies
- Workforce Culture Assessment™
- Organizational Culture and Leadership Consulting

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- Speaking, Training, and Professional Education

Let's examine the conditions affecting your workforce and identify opportunities for meaningful improvement.

Schedule a Consultation:

Book time with Dr. Cassandra Arthur

NEXT MONTH — DECEMBER 2026

Workforce Culture Is More Than a Mission Statement

What employees experience every day matters more than what an organization says about its culture. December's issue will examine the difference between stated organizational values and the workplace behaviors, systems, and leadership practices that employees actually experience.

The Workforce Excellence™ Brief is a monthly publication of All About YOU! LLC, providing practical insights for healthcare leaders and organizations committed to stronger leadership, engaged workforces, and healthier organizational cultures.

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SOURCES & RESEARCH REFERENCED

The following publications and research informed the workforce findings discussed in this issue:

1. AMN Healthcare. (September 15, 2026).
2026 Healthcare Workforce Outlook Survey.
Survey of 4,040 healthcare professionals examining workforce health, leadership, staffing, engagement, and future readiness.

Read the AMN Healthcare research findings

2. BambooHR. (October 13, 2026).
Healthcare's Flatlining Workforce and the Rise of Zombie Burnout.
Research examining healthcare workforce hiring, turnover, employee experience, and reported burnout and related distress.

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Read the BambooHR research report

Research note: Findings reflect the populations, survey methods, and time periods identified by the respective publishers. Survey results should not be interpreted as universal measures of every healthcare organization or employee.