



Fall Conference | September 14-16 | Spokane

The New Workforce Blueprint: Reinventing Recruiting and Hiring

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About Me

- Licensed Nursing Home Administrator
 - Spent 10 years in operations in Skilled Nursing and Assisted Living communities
 - Currently working as the Director of Workforce Solutions- consult with executive teams on recruitment, retention, onboarding, leadership development, and operational workforce strategy
 - Passionate about improving long-term care
 - Passionate about sharing ideas and experiences
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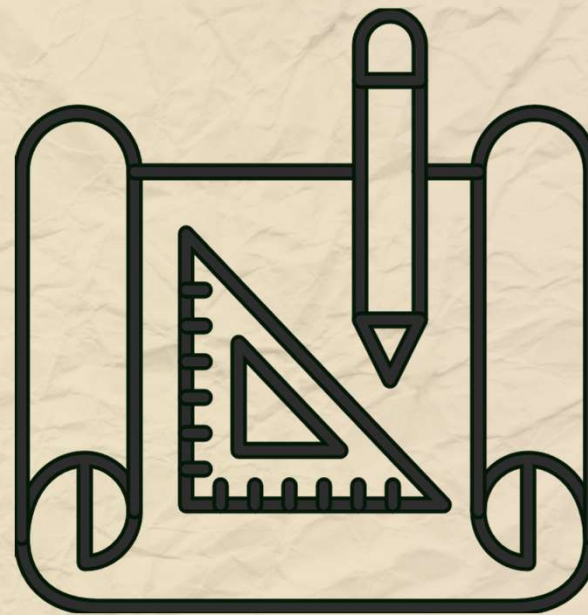
Our Reality



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The Blueprint Story

- Staffing is not transactional-- it is operational
- It requires planning, structure, and intentional design
- Like construction, every piece must fit together, and any weak areas will impact the entire system



The Reality We're Operating In

- Over 70% of nursing homes have fewer employees than pre-pandemic levels
- Over 90% of nursing home providers report difficulty hiring new staff
- 97% of organizations have asked staff to work overtime



of U.S. nursing homes report experiencing staffing shortages

The Reality We're Operating In



The Reality We're Operating In

- The workforce crisis is a retention crisis
- The first 30-90 days = the highest risk period for employee loss
- Recruitment can bring people in, but retention is what will determine success



Why This Matters- Business Impact

Decline in
care
quality

Increased
survey risk

Resident and
family
dissatisfaction

Staff burnout
and low
morale

The Core Problem

Outdated Practices

- Traditional hiring models are typically:
- Slow and process-heavy (often taking days to weeks)
- Focused on compliance vs. connection (task-oriented)
- Reactive instead of proactive
- Overly complex applications
- Lack of communication during process



Vs. Modern Workforce Expectations



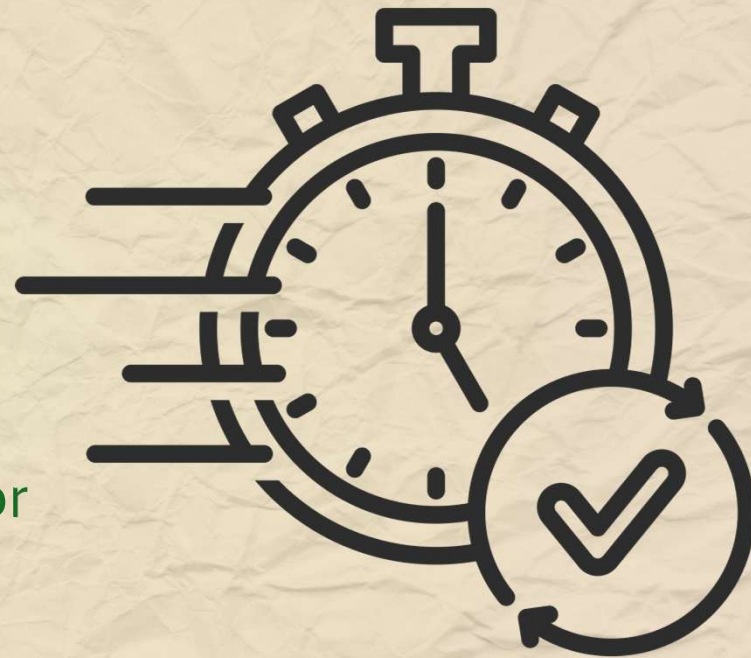
CONVENIENCE

TRANSPARENCY

SPEED

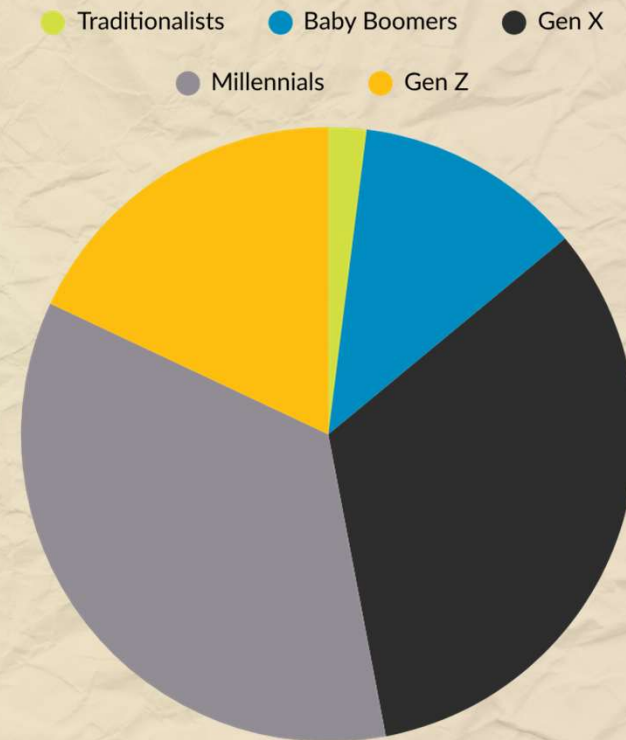
Today's Candidate

- Applying to 5-10 jobs at one time
- Getting multiple offers from different communities
- Making decisions quickly; most applicants have either already given notice to current company, or have quit without notice and need to start ASAP



A Multigenerational Workforce

- Traditionalists- 2%- limited or PT
- Baby Boomers- 12%- delaying retirement for financial reasons
- Gen X- 33%- current backbone of leadership and operations
- Millennials- 35%- largest in the workforce
- Gen Z- 18%- by 2030, will make up 30% of the U.S. workforce



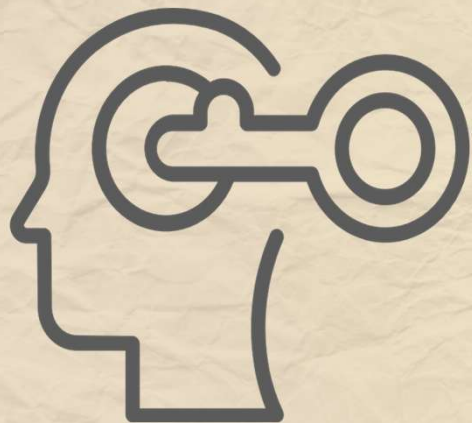


Additional Insights

- By 2030, Millennials and Gen Z combined are expected to make up nearly 75% of the global workforce
 - Baby Boomers are retiring at a rate of approximately 10,000 per day, creating an urgent need for succession planning
 - Gen Z surpassed Boomers in the workforce at the end of 2025
 - Gen X holds the majority of senior leadership roles, and serves as the bridge between traditional and emerging work values
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Generational Challenges

Stereotypes and Unconscious Bias



Communication



Employee Expectations and Priorities





Generational Stereotype Example

- Baby Boomer vs. Millennial
 - One has worked for the same company for 46 years; the other has worked for 4 different companies over the last 10 years
 - Millennials and Gen Z's are not disloyal- we just won't settle; if we don't find purpose, we will find an employer who provides it
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Top Drivers for Millennials and Gen Z

Feeling valued
and appreciated

Schedule flexibility

Strong leadership
and communication

Positive team
culture

Growth
opportunities

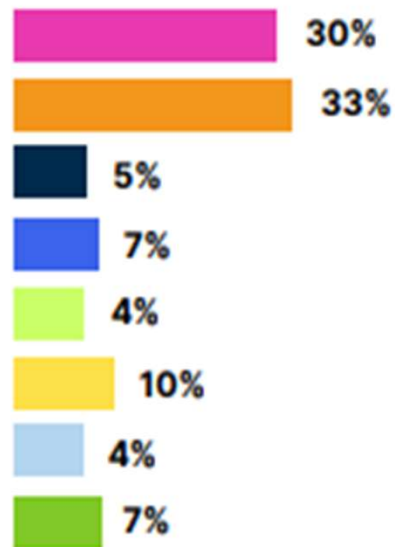
Will I be
respected
here?

Will I be
supported?

Will I be
set up to
succeed?

Hireology Candidate Study, 2025

What is your primary motivation for seeking a new job?



Barriers:

46% quit applications with account creation required.



Speed:

62% want an interview within 1-4 days after applying.

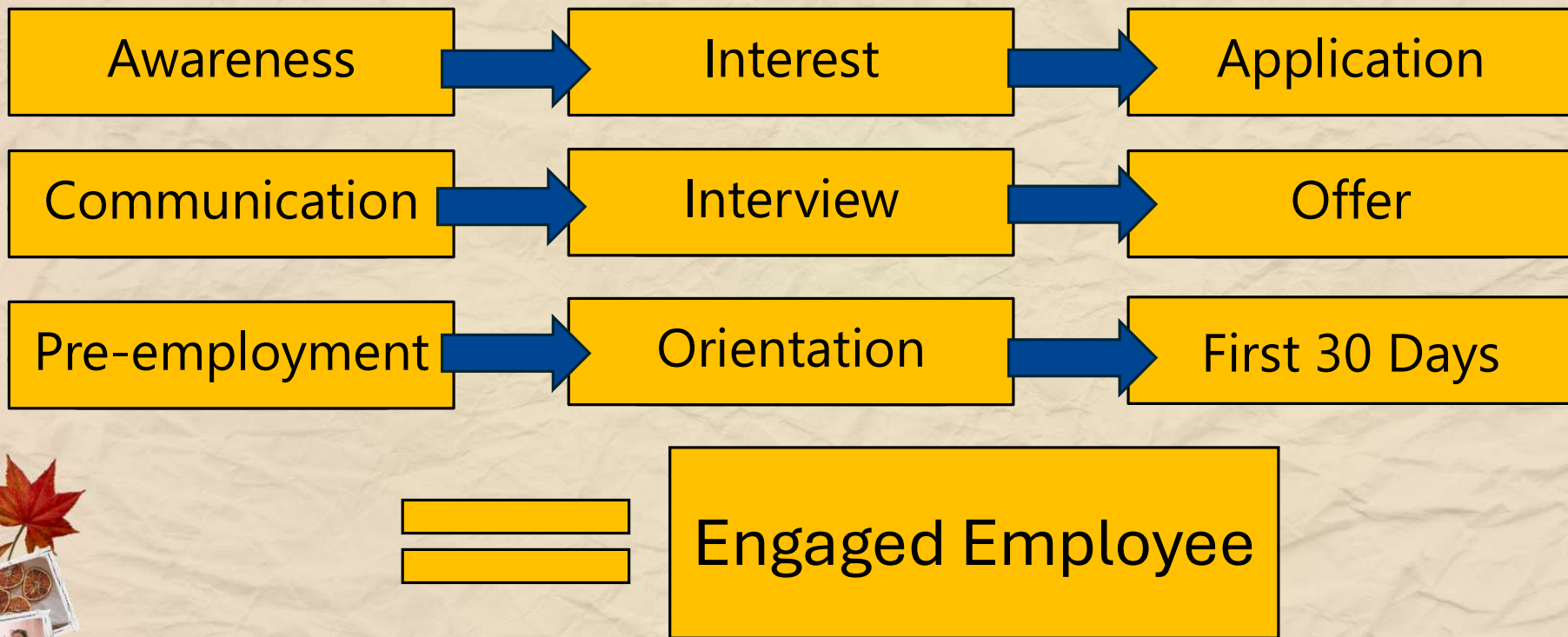
What Does This Mean for YOU?

- Millennials and Gen Z's are changing the game!
- Leaders must start changing and doing things differently-- thinking outside-the-box
- Candidates are choosing environments and experiences- not just jobs



Improving Candidate Experience with Modern Hiring Strategies

Every Interaction Shapes Your Brand



Recruitment Reimagined



- Proactive Recruiting
 - Build talent pipelines year-round
 - Create community relationships
 - Recruit continuously
 - Build employer awareness
 - Maintain candidate relationships
 - **Recruiting is a continuous process—not an event**



- Reactive Recruiting
 - Position opens
 - Post a job
 - Wait for applicants
 - Fill vacancy
 - Repeat

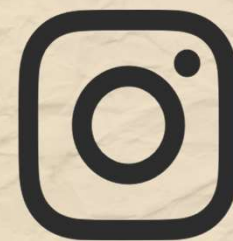
Recruitment Reimagined

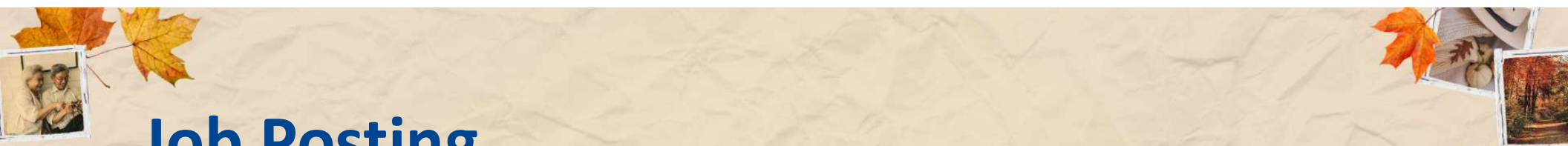
- Must move on from the “post and pray” model; recruiting reacts to applicants, while sourcing creates them
- Passive job posting is no longer effective on its own
- Must have active sourcing and outreach strategies
 - Indeed Smart Source, LinkedIn Recruiter, etc.
 - Employee referral programs
 - Community partnerships with trade schools
 - Social media groups



Social Media Engagement

- Never underestimate the power of Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram
- Make your WHY visible on every social media platform- showcase real people and culture, not graphics
- The next-gen worker is choosing a job emotionally
- Encourage team members to interact with posts
- Post employee success stories, employee engagement and appreciation, tenured staff stories, show off your community's vibe



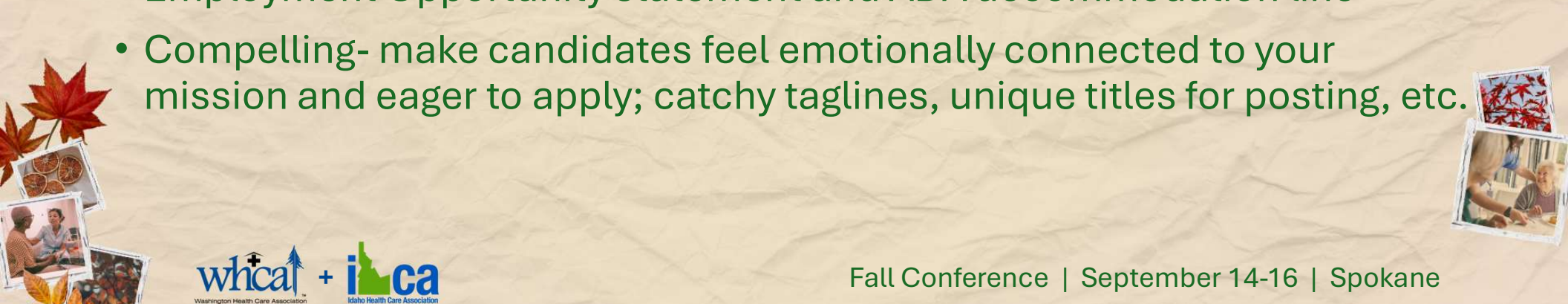


Job Posting

- Your job posting is not just a job description– it is an invitation into your community; painting a picture of what it is like to work there
- The words you choose directly impacts who applies, how they perceive your culture, and whether they feel a sense of purpose before even walking in the door-- they have already evaluated you long before they reach your front door
- High competition for all jobs– why would someone click on your post over your other competitors? What benefits make you different?



Components of Modern Job Posts

- Clarity- setting real and honest expectations; be specific; list the population you serve, shift type, and avoid medical/corporate jargon
Evening shift LPN for a 60-bed skilled nursing center with strong rehab focus
 - Compliance- stay protected and inclusive; avoid gendered words or age-biased phrases like young and energetic; always include Equal Employment Opportunity statement and ADA accommodation line
 - Compelling- make candidates feel emotionally connected to your mission and eager to apply; catchy taglines, unique titles for posting, etc.
- 



Application Experience

- Speed is the number one competitive advantage in today's workforce
 - Can candidates apply in 3 clicks or less?
 - Can candidates apply easily from their mobile device
 - Candidates expect a response to an application within 24 hours
 - If it takes you a week to schedule an interview, you have already lost the candidate
 - Expect and prefer communication via text
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Texting is NOT Unprofessional

Use texting for:

- Interview reminders
- Schedule changes
- Quick confirmations
- Directions
- Follow-up

Always:

- Obtain permission
- Maintain professionalism
- Protect confidentiality



Communication preferences have changed

Shifting the Interview Mindset

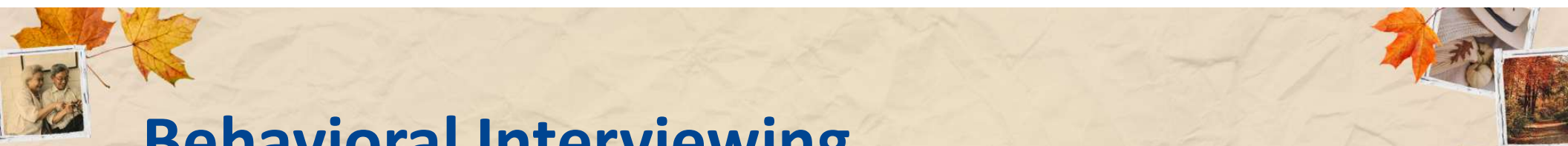
- Gone are the days when interviews were one-way; the candidate is interviewing you just as much as you are interviewing them
- High competition and staffing shortages mean your interview process is also a sales opportunity
- The best interviewers know how to both evaluate and inspire



The Interview Starts Before the Interview

- Candidate experience begins when they arrive
- Ask yourself:
 - Is parking clearly marked?
 - Is reception welcoming?
 - Are candidates greeted by name?
 - Does the interview begin on time?
 - Does anyone apologize for delays?
 - Is the environment organized?



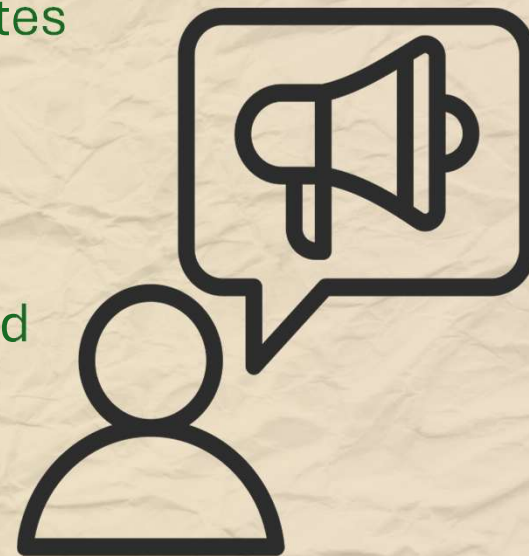


Behavioral Interviewing

- Interviewing training for any hiring manager
- Know how to hire for culture through value-based questions, rather than task
 - *“Tell me about a time you went out of your way for someone—even when it wasn’t required.”*
 - *“What does ‘great service’ mean to you in your role?”*
 - *“If you’re having a busy day and a resident wants to talk, what do you do?”*
 - *“Why did you choose to work in senior living?”*
- Shifting hiring from can they do the job to how will they do the job

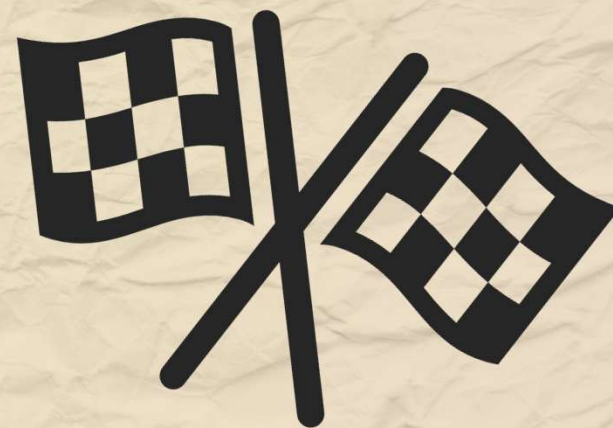
Interviewing is Marketing

- Sales tactics for senior living interviews starts with knowing your “Why Work Here” pitch to candidates
 - Unique staffing ratios
 - Resident engagement programs
 - Longevity of leadership
 - Training, CEUs, promotion pathways
- Know how to discuss compelling benefits beyond the basics
 - Flexible scheduling
 - Tuition reimbursement
 - Wellness perks



The Offer Isn't The Finish Line

- Many organizations think: Offer Accepted = Success
- Reality: Offer Accepted = Beginning of the Next Phase
- Between acceptance and Day One candidates are asking:
 - Did I make the right decision?
 - What happens next?
 - Will this organization be organized?
 - Am I excited to start?
 - Does anyone remember I'm coming?
- **Acceptance does not equal commitment.**



Efficient Onboarding

- How long is your days-to-hire?
- How quickly can new hires get into orientation?
- How many different places do they need to go for physicals, background checks, drug tests, etc.?
- Is there consistent communication with new hire?



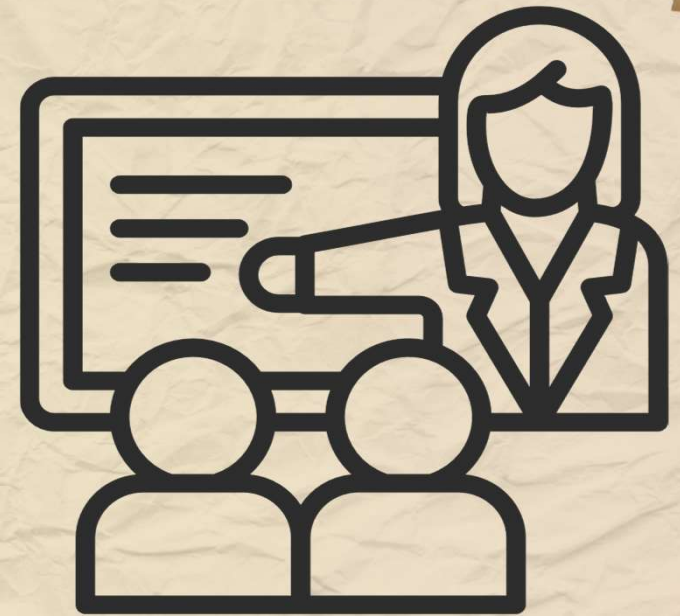


Orientation

- The first day onsite is when everything you promised is put to the test and reality sets in (just like when a new resident moves in)
 - A disconnected or rushed orientation signals disorganization
 - Orientation is not just paperwork, it is culture onboarding
 - This is your opportunity to show them that they joined something special
- 

Orientation

- Orientation should be scheduled weekly on the same day and same time with a consistent schedule
- Every manager should have a part and scheduled time to attend for that part
- Demonstrate that engagement begins with leadership visibility and accountability
- Builds early relationships across departments



Let's Talk Benefits

- Next-Gen wants...
 - Career development- tuition reimbursement, CEU support, growth tracks
 - Work-life balance- mental health days
 - Wellness stipends, therapy access, gym memberships





Real-World Scenarios

- Maria is a nurse aide who works 3-11pm shift. Her car broke down last week, and the bus doesn't run late enough for her to get home. An Uber to work and back would cost \$48. That's about three hours of her pay- money she planned to use for groceries for her kids. She stares at the rideshare app, then at the nearly empty fridge. Tonight, she calls off.
 - Jake is scheduled for an 8-hour shift. The daycare charges him \$55 for the day, but after taxes, his take-home pay will be about \$80. That leaves him \$25 before gas. When his neighbor offers to let him watch her kids for \$100 cash, he calls off work.
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Real-World Scenarios

- Tiffany has two shifts left before payday, but her gas tank is almost empty. Filling it will take about \$45- nearly all she has left in her account. If she drives to work today, she won't have enough gas to make it to the store for groceries later. She calls her supervisor and says she is not feeling well.
 - Kyle has been late on rent twice this year. When he is offered a last-minute moving job that pays \$200 cash, he knows it will mean missing his shift. He thinks about the attendance points, but also about the eviction notice that could come if he is short on rent, again. He calls off.
- 



Real-World Benefits

- Does a 401K really matter for staff and younger generations that are just trying to make ends meet?
- Let's try new ideas!
 - Transportation support- gas cards and/or stipends for good attendance, subsidized or discounted Uber/Lyft rides with partnerships, organize staff transportation from central pickup points
 - Weekly or daily pay options
 - Childcare assistance- on-site or partnered childcare, stipends or vouchers
 - Basic needs support- employee food pantry, free or discounted staff meals during shifts, clothing/uniform assistance

Real-World Benefits

- Let's try new ideas!
 - Financial wellness programs- budgeting and credit counseling, negotiate employee discounts for phone bills, utilities or groceries
 - Attendance incentives
 - Support for emergencies- helping pay for a flat tire (much less than the cost of turnover), employee hardship fund (offering interest-free loans), community resource connection



Example of a Successful Benefits Portfolio

- Competitive Wages
- Health, Vision, and Dental Insurance
- Short-Term and Long-Term Disability
- 401K with Ignite Match
- Innovation Ignited: Technology for Providing the Best Patient Care
- Employee Engagement Committees
- Hospitality & Customer Service Focused Culture
- Superheroes in Scrubs Initiative
- CNA Reward Program
- High Performance Uniforms
- 50% Off at Our LuxeCafé and Fireside Grille
- On Demand Pay
- Verizon Wireless Discounts
- Free Planet Fitness Membership
- Free Dashpass from Doordash
- Employee-Appreciation Services at Our On-Site Spa

The First 30 Days: Employee Experience and Recognition

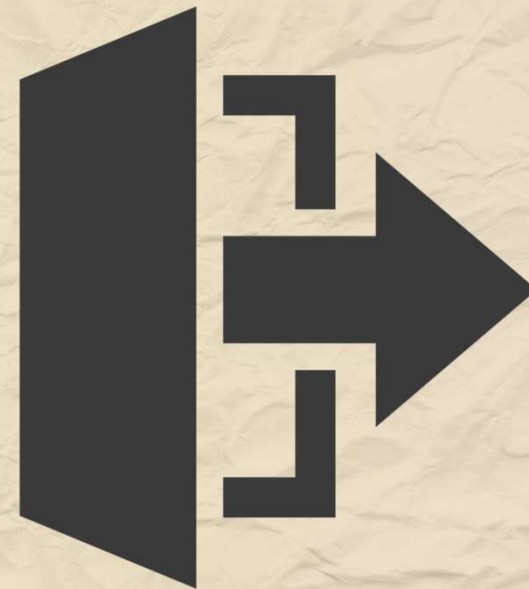
Training Experience

- Structured employee mentorship programs
- Training pay should be offered for employees that are being asked to train new hires
- Establish clear touchpoints with new hires:
 - Day 1- welcome, connection, clarity
 - Week 1- support and feedback
 - Weeks 2-4- check-ins and reinforcement



Why Do People Leave

- Most employees don't leave because of one bad day; they leave because of repeated experiences
- Common reasons include:
 - Feeling unappreciated
 - Lack of communication
 - Poor leadership
 - Limited growth opportunities
 - Burnout





Defining Retention and Culture

- Retention- keeping great people through purpose, connection, support, and opportunity
- Culture- the lived experience of your employees- what does it feel like to come to work everyday ; being a respite for our employees
- The current reality of culture in senior living: burnout and compassion fatigue, leadership gaps/turnover, inconsistent culture across shifts, and generational disconnect

Recognition That Matters

- Recognition is about helping people feel:
 - Seen
 - Valued
 - Respected
 - Connected to the mission
 - Proud of their contribution
- Recognition is not just an annual event. It should become part of your daily leadership routine. People rarely leave organizations where they consistently feel appreciated.



Different People Need Different Recognition



Public Recognition:

- Team meetings
- Staff newsletters
- Bulletin boards
- Social media
- Award ceremonies



Private Recognition:

- Handwritten notes
- Personal conversations
- One-on-one thank you
- Email
- Text message



Tangible Recognition:

- Gift cards
- Extra PTO
- Flexible scheduling
- Lunch
- Organization swag



Generational Differences

- While every person is unique, generational trends can influence recognition preferences.

Generation

Baby Boomers

Generation X

Millennials

Generation Z

Recognition Often Appreciated

Respect, loyalty, years of service, formal

Independence, trust, flexibility, sincere

Frequent feedback, coaching, growth

Immediate recognition, digital



Measuring the Success of Recruitment and Hiring

Tools for Tracking

- Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS)- can filter by age group and demographic, can filter by how they found out about the job, etc.
- Hiring dashboards- track trends in offer acceptance rate, retention rate through first 30 days, etc.
- Exit interviews and stay interviews- uncover patterns and trends
- Pulse surveys- quick way to measure engagement and onboarding effectiveness





Tools for Tracking

- **Use the information to create intentional action plans
 - Example- statistics show a 60% drop off rate after offer was accepted post-interview to orientation; action- shorten onboarding and increase communication
 - Example- statistics show a 60% drop off rate after week 1 of training on the floor; action- improve training experience and increase touch points
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Conclusion

Action Steps

- Audit hiring process- where are our gaps?
- Identify 2-3 changes that you can make quickly
- Be intentional and start small; focus on speed, experience, and culture
- Your breakdowns = your opportunities



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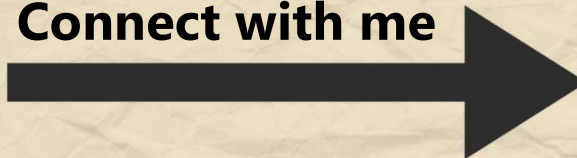
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