



The secret to retaining top talent in 2024

Organizations can often experience high employee attrition rates at the beginning of a new year. To lessen the risk of going into 2024 with a reduced workforce, businesses and HR professionals are working hard to foster a healthy, strengths-based culture of learning, but if they're not prioritizing language learning then they may be missing a trick.

To retain top talent in an increasingly competitive marketplace, all evidence points to developing communication and language skills.

Pearson's Skills Outlook Summary 2023

showed that communication skills including English language skills are the most in-demand power skills across the board. PwC's [Global Workforce Hopes and Fears Survey 2022](#) agrees: the top five predictors for employee turnover all had the same themes in common - communication, empathy and listening skills.

According to Gallup, a focus on developing employees' strengths (as opposed to focusing on fixing weaknesses) can lead to a [20-73% reduction in employee attrition](#). That's a startling statistic, and one that has the potential to transform your business.

So, the message is clear: by investing in your employees' existing communication and language strengths, you're helping them refine a comprehensive range of business power skills. In turn, this will make them feel more engaged, and therefore far more likely to stay with you.

Let's explore 3 ways to implement a language skills learning and development plan that underpins communication skills, refines business soft skills and makes your employees want to stay.

1 Find out what employees want

To tailor a culture of learning that supports the development of your employees' language and communication skills, you'll find it helpful to get their input first. Survey and interview your team to better understand current barriers to language-specific learning, skills gaps, preferred learning styles and current frustrations. For example, is it speaking, listening or reading English that they currently struggle with the most? The better you understand employees' needs, the more consulted and engaged with the process they'll feel.

2 Reward those who commit to language learning

In 2023, Forbes outlined [15 strategies to make your employees stay](#), and perhaps unsurprisingly, reward featured strongly. Your performance management system should include a structure that acknowledges employees who are committing to achieving their objectives and developing their skills, and demonstrates the career trajectory that might be possible with improved communication and language skills. What that looks like will differ from organization to organization, but it's important that employees understand the potential opportunities that come with refining their language skills.

3 Promote the link between language skills and career progression

Your employees may not naturally make the link between developing language skills and career progression, so help them understand how better language skills can help them move forward in their role, and how you will support them in this. When they see that language skills have been built into their development plans, they'll feel invested in staying with your organization and developing their skills with you.

In a world where communication-based soft skills are more valuable than ever before, the ability to confidently converse in different languages within a business context is an impressive skill that's transferable to a multitude of other business soft skills like teamwork, leadership and problem-solving. Once they understand the full range of benefits that come with developing their language skills, they'll be grateful that you're committed to helping them do that and will be more likely to stay.

It's clear that when employees feel that their communication skills are improving, they feel a sense of continued progression and engagement - not only in their language abilities but also across a range of other business power skills. The key to retaining talent lies in increasing engagement, and since [higher engagement rates are linked to 21% more productivity according to Gallup \(2013\)](#), there really is no better way to retain a happy workforce.

The three-point employee retention checklist

- ✓ Find out what your employees want
- ✓ Reward those who commit to learning and development
- ✓ Promote the link between language skills and career progression

Contact us today to learn more about how [Mondly by Pearson](#) can help you reinforce a culture of learning and retain top talent within your organization, with flexible English language learning solutions for your business.