

The New Retention Frontier

What It Takes To Become A Talent Leader

Four interventions separate retention risk from retention advantage.

Great Place To Work®

The image features two black silhouettes of people in profile, facing each other. They are positioned in the lower half of the frame against a solid red background. The person on the left is slightly taller and has curly hair, while the person on the right is shorter and has straight hair. The overall composition is minimalist and impactful.

CEO foreword

Retention is built through trust, growth and meaningful work.

Balbir Singh

Chief Executive Officer
Great Place To Work® India



Talent retention has long been measured through attrition rates. Latest research at Great Place To Work reveals that the challenge facing organisations today is no longer simply about reducing exits. As overall attrition moderates, retention is becoming more concentrated around critical talent, scarce capabilities, and the roles that drive growth, innovation, and execution. The question for leaders is shifting from “How do we reduce attrition?” to “How do we create compelling reasons for our best talent to stay?”

To understand how organisations are navigating this shift, Great Place To Work® India conducted an exclusive Voice of CHROs study, capturing the perspectives of CHROs and senior HR leaders across industries. The findings reveal that retention risk is often concentrated within specific functions, tenure groups, and employee segments. More importantly, they demonstrate that the strongest drivers of attrition and retention are often two sides of the same coin. In situations where expectations do not match reality, or manager relationships fall short, employees choose to leave. When

organisations create trust, growth opportunities, and a meaningful employee experience, people choose to stay.

Through this report, we simplify the retention conversation by identifying four interventions that distinguish talent leaders from the rest. As talent markets continue to evolve, organisations that deliberately create environments where people can grow, contribute, and build meaningful careers will continue to lead. We hope the insights and practical actions in this report help leaders move beyond managing attrition and towards building lasting talent advantage.

Voice of CHROs on hiring and retention trends in India

01

Retention risk is concentrated

91%

of function-specific attrition hotspots identified by CHROs sit in Sales, Technology and Operations.

02

The most vulnerable population sits close to the work

73%

3 in 4 CHROs identify Individual Contributors as the role level experiencing the highest attrition, compared with:

18%

Frontline managers

4%

Mid-level leaders

3%

C-level leaders

03

Retention is often decided in the first two years

58%

Nearly 6 in 10 CHROs identify employees with up to two years' tenure as the primary attrition hotspot. This is when expectations are tested, manager trust develops and employees form a view of their future growth.

04

The causes of exit are also the levers for staying

68%

of CHROs cite a mismatch between role expectations and job reality as a driver of early exits.

64%

Say manager or team fit follows.

54%

cite career growth and the manager relationship.

The retention story

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Section 01

State of talent retention in India

What is changing in India's talent market?

Overall attrition has reduced, but talent pressure has not

Lower attrition has reduced the quantity problem.
Talent scarcity remains the quality problem.

For much of the period following the pandemic, India's talent market is entering a different phase. Overall **attrition has moderated** from the post-pandemic highs, and **4 in 10 CHROs** report decreased voluntary attrition over the past two years.

Yet easing attrition does not mean easing talent pressure.

CHROs' view of attrition over the past two years

4 in 10 CHROs report lower attrition, while a majority see levels remaining stable.

40%



Decreased Attrition

51%



Remained Stable

7%



Increased Attrition

1%



Insufficient Data

91%

of CHROs report attrition has either remained stable or decreased.

Based on CHRO perceptions over the past two years.

Organisations continue to compete for skills that create revenue, differentiation and future capability. As AI changes roles and skill requirements, younger employees become increasingly mobile, and Indian talent competes in a global market, organisations need to solve two challenges simultaneously:

- Hire the capabilities the business needs.
- Create an experience that gives those people reasons to stay.

Not every exit matters equally

CHROs are moving from reducing attrition to protecting critical talent

Talent retention remains firmly on the CHRO agenda.

CHRO priorities reflect an increasingly complex talent mandate. Organisations are simultaneously navigating AI-led transformation, productivity expectations, capability building, leadership readiness and changing workforce expectations.

Within this agenda, **attracting and retaining the right talent remains an important business priority. But the retention challenge is becoming more nuanced.**

Organisations are becoming more selective about hiring and investing disproportionately in capabilities important to growth. In this environment, not every vacancy is equally difficult to fill and not every exit carries the same business consequence.

Losing scarce or business-critical talent can affect more than replacement cost. It can disrupt capability, customer relationships, institutional knowledge and execution continuity.

How do we reduce attrition?



Which talent can we not afford to lose?



Retention remains a priority.

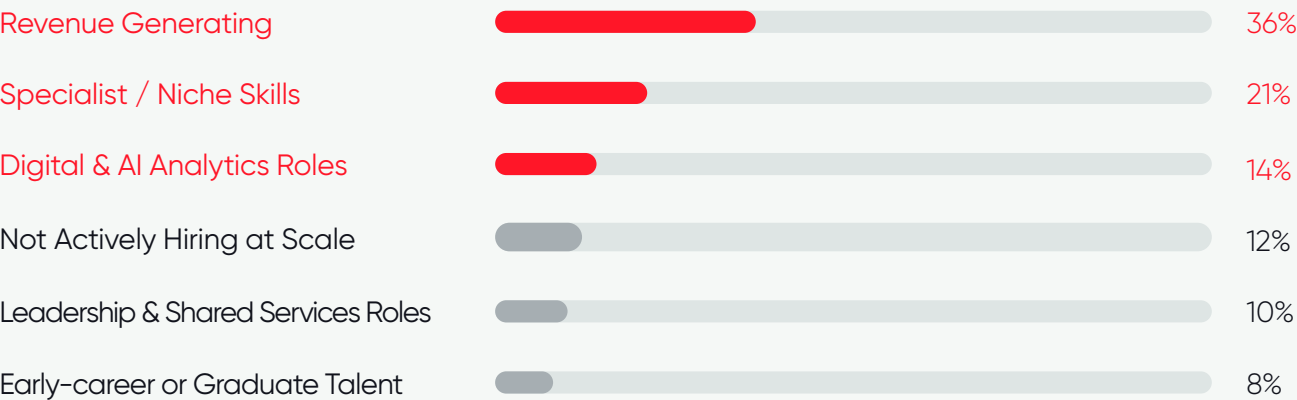
What has changed is where leaders focus.

Organisations are hiring for impact

Priority hiring is concentrated in capabilities that are hardest to replace and most important to business performance.

CHROs' Perspective on On-Demand Roles

Hiring demand is concentrated in roles that drive revenue, specialist expertise and future capability.



Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

CHROs' hiring priorities point to a workforce increasingly being built around **business impact and differentiated capability**. Revenue-generating roles lead hiring demand, while specialist and digital capabilities together represent another significant share of priority hiring.

These are also roles where capability can take time to build, skills can be difficult to replace, and the impact of an exit can extend beyond the vacant position to customer relationships, institutional knowledge and execution continuity.



Section 02

Where is retention risk concentrated?

CHROs identify attrition as being **concentrated across specific functions, levels and tenure cohorts**, rather than occurring uniformly across the workforce.

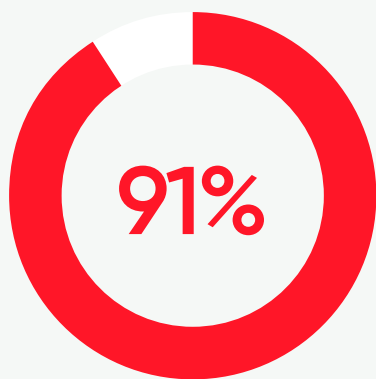
This matters because an organisation can have an acceptable overall attrition rate while simultaneously losing disproportionate capability in a population that matters significantly to customers, revenue, technology or future growth.

Talent loss is concentrated where business value is created

The functions most affected by attrition are the same functions that organisations depend on for growth and execution.

Attrition becomes more consequential when it strikes the parts of business that matter most. Together, **Sales, Technology and Operations account for 91% of the function-specific attrition hotspots** identified by CHROs.

CHROs' view on function-specific attrition hotspots



of attrition hotspots are concentrated in Sales, Technology and Operations.

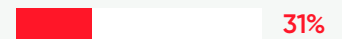
Sales

Direct revenue and growth impact



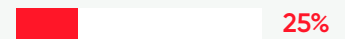
Technology

Core capability and innovation engine



Operations

Delivery, efficiency and execution



Enabling Functions

Support that keeps the business running



Analytics

Insight and decision intelligence



Attrition in these functions carries the greatest business risk.

These roles influence growth, customer outcomes, innovation and operational performance.

These functions sit at the heart of revenue, **innovation and delivery**, which makes losing people here a far greater business risk than attrition in any other roles.

An exit therefore creates two potential consequences:

- **Talent consequence:** How difficult is this capability to replace?
- **Business consequence:** What revenue, customer relationship, knowledge or execution continuity is affected while it is being rebuilt?

Within role levels, individual contributors are most likely to leave

Nearly three-quarters of CHROs identify Individual Contributors as the role level experiencing the highest attrition.

Early-career individual contributors appear to be the most vulnerable point in the retention journey. This is the layer that executes: the people who carry client relationships, write the code, run the process and hold the day-to-day knowledge.

CHROs' view on concentration of attrition within role levels

73%

Employee / Individual Contributors

Frontline talent driving results for the business

18%

Frontline Manager

Team execution and day-to-day enablement

4%

Mid-Level Manager

Implementation and people development

4%

Executive / C-Level Leader

Strategic direction and enterprise outcomes

Attrition risk is most acute at the base of the organisation.

Losing talent here impacts execution, customer relationships and future leadership depth.

However, across industries, **3 in 4 CHRO's identified individual contributors** as the **employee group experiencing the highest attrition** far ahead of Frontline Managers at 18% and Mid-level and C-level Leaders at 4% each.

There is also a structural career question. In many organisations, the clearest symbol of progression continues to be promotion into people management.

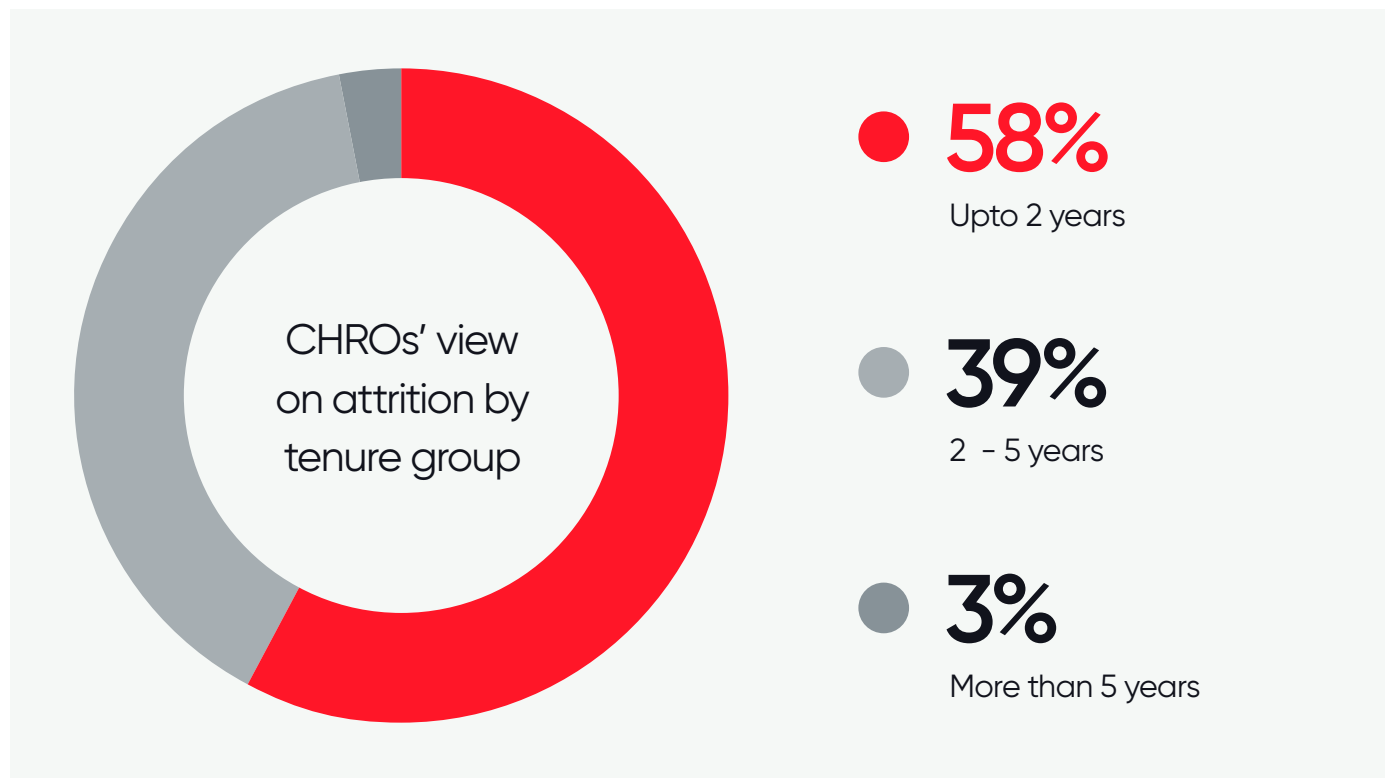
Yet high-performing specialists may want greater expertise, complexity, influence, compensation or ownership without necessarily wanting larger teams. If those possibilities are easier to see outside the organisation than within it, leaving can become the clearest route to career movement.

The retention windows are shorter than most think

The first two years are critical for retention

Nearly 6 in 10 CHROs identify employees with up to two years' tenure as the primary attrition hotspot.

The first two years are when the employee relationship is still being formed. Expectations are being tested against reality, trust in the manager is developing, employees are building social connection and confidence and their view of future growth is taking shape.



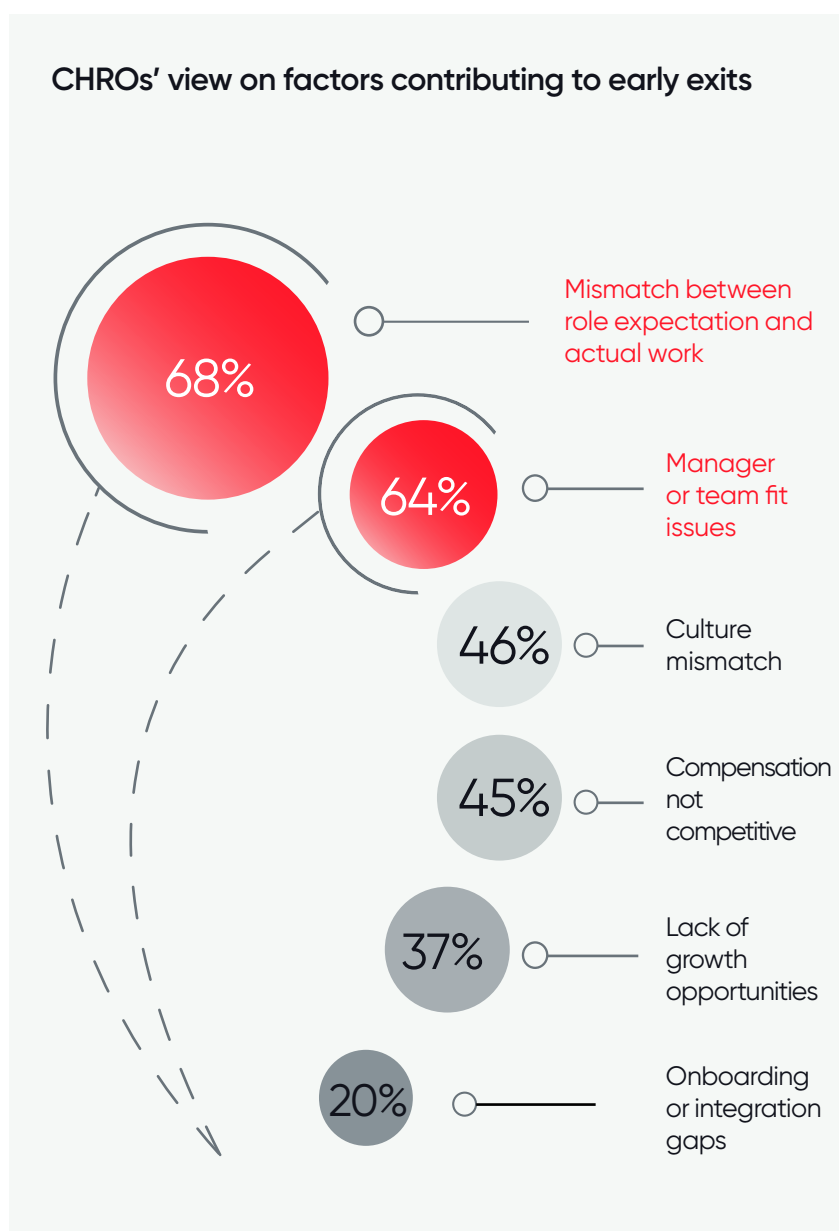
This is also the period when employees are becoming more capable and more marketable. As their skills and experience increase, the external market may begin to offer more visible alternatives.

Organisations are therefore simultaneously **building employee capability and competing to retain it.**

Many organisations concentrate attention on onboarding or respond once employees become visibly at risk. The bigger opportunity is to deliberately shape the experience between these two points.

Expectation gaps and manager experience shape early attrition

CHROs point to unmet expectations and manager experience as the strongest predictors of early exits.



Early attrition can begin before an employee's first day. The expectations created during hiring become the benchmark against which the actual employee experience is judged. Employees who feel welcomed are more likely to attach early. Employees in Certified organisations are 21 percentage points more likely to feel welcomed when they join. Gaps between the role employees expected and the work, manager, team or culture they encounter can surface quickly and weaken early attachment.

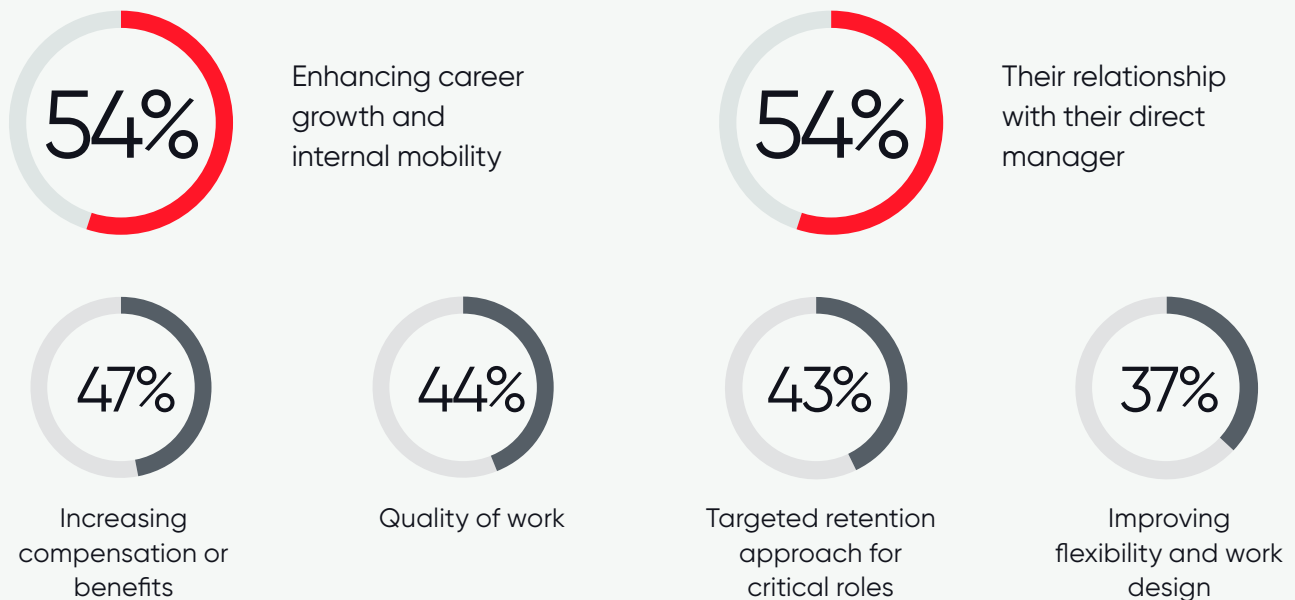
When asked what drives early exits, **68% of CHROs cited a mismatch between role expectations and the reality of the job**, making it the most frequently identified factor. Manager and team fit followed at 64%. Compensation and benefits, while still important, were cited by 45% below expectation mismatch. This also reflects in exit interview data that career-related concerns remain the leading cause of employee turnover.*

*Source - <https://www.shrm.org/topics-tools/news/talent-acquisition/career-development-gaps-frequently-drive-employee-turnover>

Career growth and manager relationships matter most

CHROs rank growth opportunities and manager relationships above compensation and flexibility as the strongest drivers of retention.

CHROs' view on most effective initiatives for retention



Retention efforts have taken many forms across organisations, from pay revisions to redesigned onboarding. What rises to the top is not a program at all, but two things employees experience directly in the course of their work.

CHROs believe, employees are less likely to leave when they can see a credible future inside the organisation and have a manager they trust to help them get there. Our research reveals, career growth and the quality of the manager relationship emerge as the strongest levers CHROs see for reducing attrition. In Certified organisations, 74% of employees agree

they can ask management any reasonable question and receive a straight answer, compared to 44% in non-certified organisations.

Career growth and the manager relationship tie at the top, cited by 54% each.

Retention, then, is not simply about keeping people satisfied in their current roles it is about creating reasons to stay and reasons to grow. For CHROs, that means making internal mobility easier, career growth visible and equipping managers to have better, more frequent career conversations before employees begin looking elsewhere.

Career Pathways

Best Practices



standard
chartered

Standard Chartered GBS India Private Limited

Financial Services & Insurance

Talent Marketplace

Objective: To ensure internal career growth opportunities to employees and ensure transparency around the same.

About the Practice: Standard Chartered GBS launched Talent Marketplace to build a workplace for the future. Talent Marketplace is a virtual marketplace for talent where people can connect their skills, experience, and passion with purposeful work opportunities across the network. Talent Marketplace helps colleagues upskill and reskill as the world of work changes. Using this platform, the organisation has enabled the deployment of diverse talent in areas where it matters most, while also helping them create a future-ready workforce, using innovative technology that enables fast-paced matching of knowledge, skills, and aspirations with short-term experiences and projects.

Colleagues utilize Talent Marketplace voluntarily to opt for projects for skill development, networking, exposure to a different business or function, and for mentoring. They participate in cross-functional short-term projects alongside a mentor to gain aspirational skills or exposure.

There is also a network of mentors available on the platform, which AI, after matching, recommends for mentoring based on the skill sets of mentors and mentees. Mentoring is an option available for all to utilize, with sessions and timings designed according to their convenience. This platform has empowered colleagues to take charge of their learning and experience, firmly establishing trust between colleagues and people leaders.



Amara Raja Energy & Mobility Limited

Manufacturing & Production

AR Switching Lanes Program

Objective: To offer career development opportunities to employees

About the Practice: AR Switching Lanes Program is a formal program that accelerates the professional growth and development of employees, enabling them to take on greater responsibilities and advance to leadership roles within an organisation. It offers talent the opportunity to set their own pace for career growth within the organisation through a standard track (Left Lane) or fast track (Right Lane). Those in the fast track take up special objectives that helps to demonstrate their potential. Participants are evaluated at the end of the year, and promotions are determined based on their scores. Thus, this helps in creating a pipeline of leaders for future roles in existing and new businesses. The impact of the program is measured through movement from Left to Right Lane due to the structured interventions.

What it takes to become a talent leader today

From Retention Risk to
Four Levers for Action



01

Attract Better

Close the expectation gap



02

Strengthen Experience

Strengthen belonging and growth



03

Empower Managers

Support managers to retain and grow talent



04

Act Earlier

Turn listening into timely action



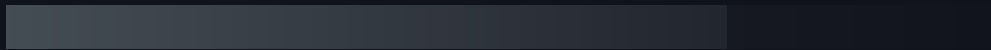
Attract Better

Close the gap between the experience promised and the experience delivered

Root Causes

Most organisations are not yet ahead of the risk

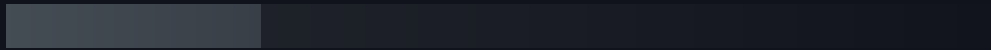
68%



of CHROs cite mismatch between role expectations and job reality as the biggest factor contributing to early exits.

Post-hire outcomes are not measured

24%



of CHROs measure whether hiring success translates into employee success.



Ask yourself:

If a candidate spoke to someone doing the job today, would they hear the same story about the role, manager and work environment that they heard during hiring?



01

How CHROs can address this?

01

Make the employee promise realistic before joining

For roles with high early attrition, give candidates visibility into the actual work, performance expectations, ways of working, manager context and pressure points, not only the EVP and job description.

02

Let candidates experience the workplace before they choose it

Create meaningful interaction with the future manager, team or peers so candidates can understand the environment they are entering while the organisation assesses capability.

03

Treat the first 90 days as the final stage of hiring

Use **early-tenure listening** to establish whether the role, manager and team experience match what employees understood before joining.

04

Close expectation gaps while they are still recoverable

Where a new hire reports a material gap, trigger an early manager conversation and agreed action rather than allowing disappointment to become disengagement.

05

Measure whether hires succeed, not simply whether they join

For priority roles, complement time-to-fill and offer acceptance with expectation alignment, early performance and 6 to 12-month retention.

Attract better

Best Practices



Niva Bupa Health Insurance Company Limited

Financial Services & Insurance

Project Hire-Right

Objective: To establish a standard process for right hiring

About the Practice: 'Hire Right', a scientific model based on data-based decision-making was conceptualized & launched to address attrition at NBHI. It emphasized getting the basics right, i.e., placing the right people in the right jobs. This started with the identification of success profiles for revenue-generating roles, defining competencies (functional, behavioral, and role-specific), and building structured competency-based interview guides. The process involved significant work with internal and external partners, including attrition analysis, focused group discussions (Leadership Team, National heads, regional leaders, and first-line managers), and a job analysis survey to address the deeper issues. This resulted in the creation of detailed success profiles, the introduction of a new feature – Value Assessment, including certification of the Talent Acquisition team on this tool, the establishment of assets such as competency-based interview guides for all hiring managers, etc. Train-The-Trainer workshops were conducted by Leaders of the Hire-Right Program.



ACG Associated Capsules Private Limited

Manufacturing & Production

Innovative Social Media Hiring

Objective: To provide insights into job roles in a video format

About the Practice: The organisation began creating "Interviewer Video Content" on LinkedIn, offering insights into job roles and responsibilities directly from the perspective of the Hiring Manager. This innovative approach provides a more engaging and dynamic way to share job descriptions, allowing candidates to hear firsthand from leaders about the expectations and culture of the role, enhancing the overall recruitment experience.



Rainbow Children's Medicare Limited

Health Care

Innovative Social Media Hiring

Objective: To receive real time feedback from candidates

About the Practice: When a candidate attends an interview through a referral, walk-in, or any other sources, they are shared a link or can personally scan a QR code displayed in the interview areas and in the HR department to submit feedback on the interview experience. Questions pertaining to waiting time and interest in joining the organisation are part of the feedback. Online Interview Feedback is a first-of-its-kind initiative designed to improve the candidate experience. Every feedback is captured and tabulated automatically on a real-time basis and is immediately reviewed by the Cluster HR and Head HR, with any corrective action deemed necessary being taken. This helps the HR to understand the pulse of every person willing to work in the organisation or already working.

Interview Feedback (Online) also serves as a platform to help the HR team understand the strengths and identify any loopholes in the interview process. It also assists in tracking the number of candidates interviewed on a weekly or monthly basis. Questions involving interaction with Team Rainbow, clarity on next steps, the smoothness of the process, and recommending friends to Rainbow are included in the questionnaire.

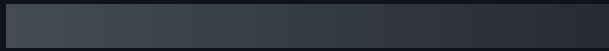
Strengthen Experience

Build belonging and make growth visible

Root Causes

The retention window extends beyond onboarding

58%



of CHROs report their highest concentration of attrition within the first two years. Yet structured new-joiner attention can reduce significantly after the first few months.

Employees need to see what comes next

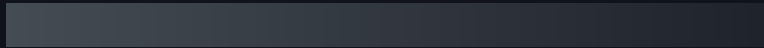
54%



Career growth and internal mobility are the joint-highest retention lever at 54%. Growth becomes a retention issue when employees can see today's role but not tomorrow's opportunity.

Not every career should lead to management

73%



CHROs identifying ICs as the role level with the highest attrition, organisations need credible ways for people to grow in expertise, complexity, influence and reward without necessarily becoming people managers.



Ask yourself:

If a high-performing 24-year-old joined us today, could we clearly show them why staying here for the next three years would accelerate their career more than leaving after 18 months?



How CHROs can address this

01

Turn critical roles into career propositions:

For critical roles in areas such as Sales, Technology and Operations, make the 2–3-year career proposition visible: the skills employees can build, experiences they can gain, opportunities they can move into and what progression could look like. Employees should be able to see not only what they will do here, but what they can become here.

02

Build a visible “career runway” for Individual Contributors:

Create clear progression paths that do not require employees to become people managers to grow. Show employees: “Here is where you start → here is what you can become → here is what you need to demonstrate to get there.” Recognize progression through greater expertise, complexity, influence, ownership and reward, not title alone.

03

Give early-career employees reasons to invest in the organisation:

Deliberately use the early-tenure period to increase employees’ access to meaningful work, learning, stretch assignments, internal opportunities, senior-leader exposure and visible ownership. The goal is for employees to feel that each year with the organisation is increasing their capability, contribution and career value.

04

Make managers career sponsors, instead of task managers:

Move career conversations beyond performance and promotion. Ensure every manager knows the career ambition of their ICs and actively create opportunities that move them towards it. The conversation should shift from “Are you performing?” to “What do you want to become, and what experience can we give you to get there?”

05

Create a reason to choose “stay” over “switch”:

Identify the points at which critical talent becomes more externally marketable, particularly during the 12–24-month window and make the next challenge visible before employees need to look outside. This could be a new project, expanded ownership, a specialist pathway, a new skill, an internal gig or a lateral move. The objective is not simply to persuade people to stay, but to ensure staying continues to offer progress.

Strengthen Experience

Best Practices



Gera Developments Private Limited

Construction, Infrastructure and Real Estate

Early Engagement Experience Program

Objective: To foster connect with new employees

About the Practice: Through Early Engagement Experience Programme, Gera Developments Private Limited focuses on building inclusivity in diverse hiring. Hiring managers are trained to connect through special sensitization workshops and a note from the Managing Director, emphasizing the importance of creating a positive interviewing experience. This fosters a sense of connection even before Day 1, ensuring a comfortable integration experience and focuses on supporting new joiners to imbibe the organisational culture and values. From Day 1, new hires engage in experiential learning, fostering authentic self-expression. The Chief People Officer conducts post-30-day and post-90-day catch-ups to gather feedback and make course corrections, promoting a quality experience and facilitating growth opportunities.



F5 Networks Innovation Private Limited

Information Technology

555 Program

Objective: To foster connect with new employees

About the Practice: The HR team conducts a "555 Program," ensuring regular touchpoints with employees on the 5th day, 5th week, and 5th month of their tenure. Since employees are on a six-month probation, it is crucial for HR to gather feedback by the 5th month to address any potential issues before the probation period ends. Feedback is collected through a survey, with results shared with managers for further action. Additionally, HR follows up with employees who provide comments to better understand their concerns and offer necessary support.

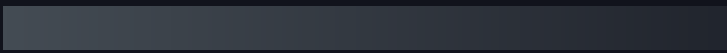
Empower Managers

Make managers a reason employees choose to stay

Root Causes

Managers are accountable for retention, but not equipped for it

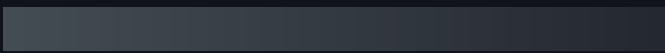
70%



Managers drive 70% of team engagement, yet many are leading larger teams with less support, training, and resources. As Manager Engagement fell eight points in a single year.*

Manager relationships influence early exits

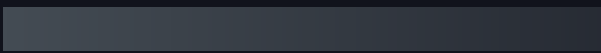
64%



of CHROs cite manager/team fit among factors contributing to early exits.

First two years are most dependent on manager

58%



of CHROs who report the first two years as the most attrition-prone tenure period identify manager fit as a key driver of early employee exits

People leadership can compete with delivery



Managers are expected to deliver business outcomes while also creating the everyday employee experience. Yet the latter may not be defined, measured or reinforced with the same discipline.



Ask yourself:

If two equally talented employees joined us tomorrow under two different managers, how confident are we that both would experience the same quality of support, fairness, recognition and opportunity to grow?



*Source - <https://www.gallup.com/workplace/349484/state-of-the-global-workplace.aspx>

How CHROs can address this

01

Define the manager behaviors that make people stay:

Translate "good people management" into 4–5 observable non-negotiables such as regular 1:1s, clear expectations, meaningful feedback, recognition and career conversations. Managers should know exactly what employees should consistently experience from them.

02

Help managers know the person, not just the performance:

Give managers a structured way to understand each employee's strengths, career ambitions, frustrations, motivations and reasons for staying. Use periodic career conversations, particularly for critical talent, so managers know what may strengthen or weaken an individual's reasons to stay.

03

Treat manager effectiveness as a retention lever:

Look at manager effectiveness alongside early-tenure attrition, regrettable exits and employee experience. Where a manager or team consistently shows higher loss of critical talent, improving that team experience should become a specific leadership priority, not just an engagement issue.

04

Make people leadership part of manager accountability:

Managers are accountable for business outcomes; make the quality of the team experience visible alongside them. Bring relevant indicators such as employee experience, development, internal movement and regrettable attrition into manager reviews so that how talent is led and grown matters alongside what the team delivers.

Empower Managers

Best Practices



Coaching as a tool to drive performance Conversation

Objective: To Develop employees through coaching from managers

About the Practice: Performance reviews, assessments, and ongoing coaching conversations help employees and leaders identify opportunities, recognize successes, and address capability gaps. Managers act as coaches, supporting employees with the skills, training, and guidance needed to achieve individual and team goals. Continuous performance enablement focuses on individual development, team effectiveness, and future workforce planning. CSG has moved away from traditional ratings, emphasizing ongoing conversations around outcomes, behaviors, and career potential.

Managers and employees jointly set role-specific goals, review performance against business objectives and leadership expectations, and discuss future development opportunities. Team performance, succession readiness, and bench strength are evaluated through an assessment process and a Performance-Values Matrix is used to identify gaps and support future planning.



Future Fit Manager Certification Program 101 and 201

Objective: To ensure people manager capability building

About the Practice: The Future Fit Manager Certification Program invests in building future-ready managers through two development tracks: 101 for Band A managers and 201 for Band B managers. Spanning four months, the programs strengthen the managerial talent pipeline and prepare managers for future responsibilities. The program focuses on expanding leadership impact, deepening business understanding, refining management approaches, and building future-fit capabilities. Training needs are identified through discussions with leadership and HR teams, with skill application monitored through managerial feedback as part of the certification process.

Managers develop skills in communication, collaboration, feedback, handling difficult conversations, cross-functional problem-solving, emotional intelligence, and empathy through simulations, role plays, and case studies. The program also prepares managers to collaborate effectively across global teams and navigate complex interpersonal dynamics.

Act Earlier

Turn Listening into timely action

Root Causes

Most organisations are not yet ahead of the risk

39%



of CHROs describe their use of workforce data as proactive. 35% are largely responsive and 26% remain reactive or reporting-led.

75% of Employee Exits Remain Voluntary*

75%



of CHROs describe their use of workforce data as proactive. 35% are largely responsive and 26% remain reactive or reporting-led.

Attrition tells you after the fact



Attrition is a lagging indicator. The opportunity lies in identifying and addressing risks before they result in exits.

Nobody owns the intervention



Risk identification creates little value without a clear owner and action playbook.



Ask yourself:

If a strong employee were six months away from resigning today, what would we know about their experience now, and would anyone be expected to act on it?



*Source - <https://www.scribd.com/document/1010781147/Aon-Annual-Salary-Increase-and-Turnover-Survey-2025-2026-Phase-1-1>

How CHROs can address this

01

Build an early-warning view of talent risk:

Move beyond reporting exits to identifying where risk may be building. Bring together a focused set of signals such as tenure, manager and team experience, role, engagement, career movement, internal applications, absenteeism and workload to identify teams, roles and talent populations that may need attention before attrition rises.

02

Look beneath the data to understand what is changing:

Attrition trend tells leaders where to look, not necessarily what to fix. When a hotspot emerges, use targeted employee and retention conversations to understand whether the underlying issue is growth, manager experience, workload, fairness, recognition, compensation or something else. This prevents organisations from treating every retention risk with the same solution.

03

Give managers a risk score and action guide:

Identifying risk is only useful if managers know what to do next. Give managers clear guidance based on the issue identified: how to hold a retention or career conversation when growth is the concern, review workload when pressure is rising, explore internal mobility when employees feel stuck, or seek HR support when manager or fairness issues surface. The aim is not to make managers solve every problem themselves, but to help them recognize the root cause, take the right first action and know when to escalate.

04

Close the loop and learn what works:

Track what happens after an intervention, not simply whether the employee eventually stays or leaves. Look at whether the underlying experience improved, whether employees accessed new opportunities, whether the hotspot persisted and whether attrition subsequently changed. Over time, this helps organisations understand which trends genuinely matter and which actions are most effective in their context.

05

Put forward-looking talent risk on the leadership agenda:

Make emerging talent risk part of regular business and people reviews, particularly for critical capabilities. Instead of focusing the conversation primarily on who has already left, ask where risk is emerging, what may be driving it and what the organisation is doing now to address it. This shifts retention from retrospective HR reporting to a forward-looking leadership conversation.

Not every exit carries same weight

Retention requires choice

Not Every Retention Risk Needs the Same Response

Not every exit carries the same business consequence, and not every retention risk warrants the same response. While retention matters across the workforce, different talent segments require different interventions.

Understanding both retention risk and business impact helps organisations determine where to act, how quickly to act, and what response is most appropriate.



What to consider

Business criticality:

Skill scarcity, revenue or customer impact, replacement time, institutional knowledge and future capability needs.

Retention risk:

Employee experience, early-tenure attrition, regrettable exits, internal movement and availability of alternative talent.

Act earlier

Best Practices



Gera Developments Private Limited

Construction, Infrastructure & Real Estate

Exit Experience

Objective: To provide a smooth exit experience

About the Practice: 'At GDPL, the offboarding program is designed to ensure a positive separation experience while generating insights to strengthen employee practices. The process begins immediately after an employee resigns, with HR and managers conducting discussions within seven days to understand concerns and explore retention opportunities.

Where retention is not feasible, a structured transition process is initiated, including knowledge handovers, clearance support, and employee recognition activities. GDPL also captures insights on employees' reasons for leaving and potential reasons to stay, using these findings to strengthen future people practices.

The program concludes with formal appreciation for employees' contributions, including organisation-wide recognition and outreach to employees' families in acknowledgement of their support throughout the employee's tenure.

Sustain the relationship

The Talent Relationship Does Not Have to End at Exit

Exit well

Make respect, appreciation and closure part of the final employee experience.

Learn later

Reconnect with selected regrettable exits after 60–90 days. Distance may reveal insights that an exit interview did not.

Stay connected

With consent, maintain purposeful relationships with strong alumni through opportunities, referrals and professional communities.

Make returning easy

Leaving should not automatically close the door. Strong former employees can become future hires when the right opportunity emerges.

A former employee can still be an advocate, referrer, customer, partner or future colleague. How someone leaves can therefore matter long after the final working day.

Practice to try 90-Day alumni check-in

Leaving should not automatically close the door. Strong former employees can become future hires when the right opportunity emerges.

The Talent Flywheel

How better hiring creates better retention

For majority of CHROs, the change is in approach of managing the workforce reactively to actively designing the conditions in which talent chooses to join, grow and build a career.



How the Flywheel Creates Value Across Industries

IT & Technology

Better hiring improves skill-role alignment, reducing early-tenure attrition and accelerating productivity in critical digital talent.

Manufacturing

Better hiring strengthens frontline attachment, supervisor fit, and operational continuity, supporting workforce stability.

BFSI

Better hiring improves role readiness and customer-facing capability, helping employees build confidence and remain longer in role.

About the research

The current edition explores four interconnected themes:

- 01 | Strategic Priorities for FY26–27
- 02 | 5 Culture Conditions that Turn AI Adoption into Value
- 03 | India's CHROs face the reality of a four-generation workforce
- 04 | The New Retention Frontier | What It Takes To Become A Talent Leader

About this report

This report looks at how India's talent challenge is changing as attrition moderates. The focus is moving from reducing exits to protecting critical talent. It covers:

1. Where retention risk is concentrated across functions, role levels and tenure groups
2. What causes early attrition
3. Which levers CHROs see as most effective for retention

It then sets out four interventions that separate talent leaders from the rest: Attract Better, Strengthen Experience, Empower Managers and Act Earlier. It ends with what these findings mean for organisations that want to turn retention risk into a lasting talent advantage.

Research methodology

The questionnaire consisted of multiple-choice, ranking, multiple-response and open-ended questions across four workforce themes.

This report draws mainly on questions about hiring priorities, attrition trends, attrition hotspots, drivers of early exits, retention levers and the use of workforce data. Where relevant, it also includes findings from other sections of the Voice of CHRO study and from Great Place To Work® India's Voice of India survey data, such as the comparisons between Certified and non-certified organisations.

How to read this report

Percentages represent the share of respondents selecting each response unless otherwise stated.

Multiple-response questions allow respondents to select more than one option. As a result, totals may exceed 100%.

Percentages have been rounded and may not total exactly 100%.

Open-ended questions are included for qualitative context.

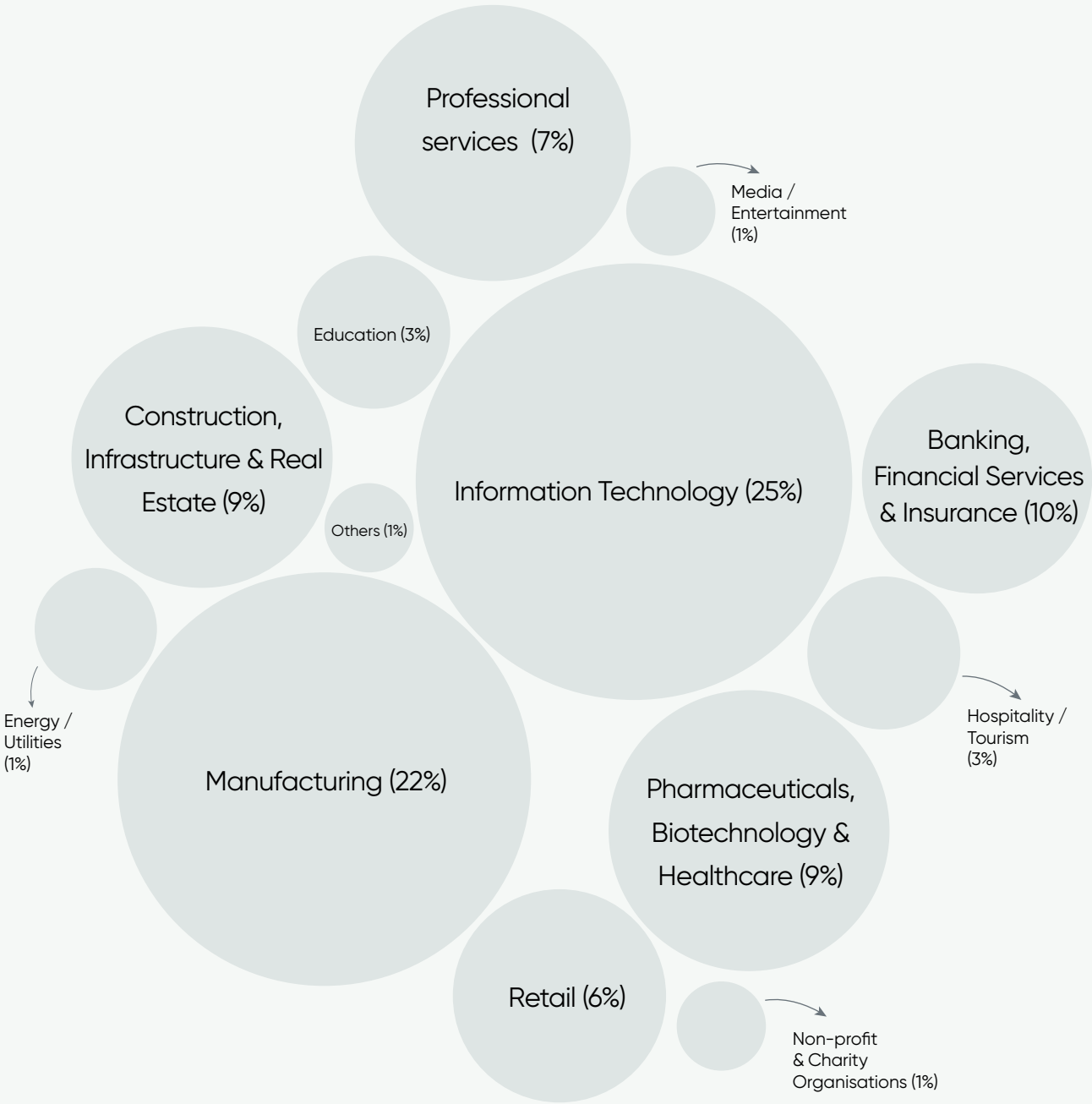
Findings reflect the perspectives of participating respondents and should be interpreted as directional rather than representative of all organisations in India.

Respondent snapshot

135+
Participants

10+
Industries

CHROs, HR Leaders, HR Managers
and Business Leaders
Audience



Great Place To Work®

About us

Great Place To Work is the global authority on workplace culture. Our mission is to help every place become a great place to work for all. We give leaders and organisations the recognition and tools to create a consistently and overwhelmingly positive employee experience, fostering cultures that are proven to drive business, improve lives, and better society.

Turn Insights Into Action

Understanding your employees is the first step. Creating meaningful change is what drives results.

Great Place To Work helps leaders translate employee insights into measurable business outcomes. By combining the experiences of millions of employees with proven benchmarks and workplace culture expertise, we help organisations identify the factors that strengthen performance, accelerate innovation, improve retention and build resilience in a changing world.

From understanding the leadership behaviours that drive trust to identifying the workplace experiences that influence productivity, agility and discretionary effort, we help leaders focus on the actions that matter most.

Whether your goal is to strengthen organisational performance, build leadership capability, improve workforce effectiveness or create a culture ready for the future, Great Place To Work provides the insights, benchmarks and guidance to help you get there.

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