

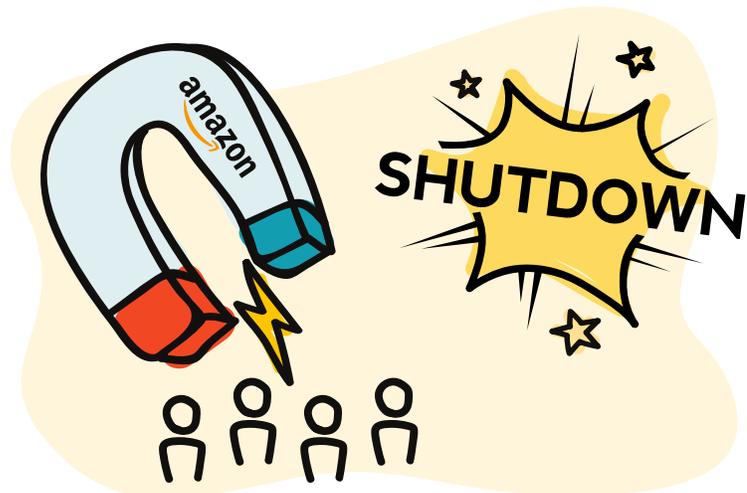


EAGLE HILL
unconventional consulting

GUERRILLA RETENTION TACTICS FOR KEEPING FEDERAL WORKERS

How to hold on to talent despite the shadow of the shutdown and Amazon's arrival

There's a double whammy making it harder to retain federal workers in the Metropolitan DC area. Stability has always been a draw. But in the wake of the longest government shutdown in United States history, federal workers are understandably re-evaluating just how stable their jobs are today.



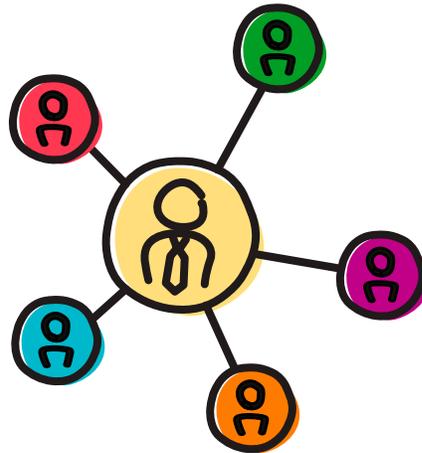
There's also a goliath coming to town. Amazon will be a magnet for top federal talent when it moves into National Landing, bringing thousands of new job opportunities to the region. And the workforce is interested. Just over half of all workers in the area would consider leaving their current job for Amazon.

If your agency is worried about a mass exodus of talent, stop. Federal employees want to be challenged and inspired. They want to be connected to something larger than themselves, which is why the mission-oriented aspect of federal work is so appealing to them. And, there are concrete ways to remind the federal workforce about what's truly unique and positive about their jobs. Start with these four guerilla retention tactics.

TEAM MEMBERS'
ENGAGEMENT WAS

57%

higher when the team leader
checked-in with them frequently.



Source: The Marcus Buckingham Company

1. *Have their backs*

A strong boss who has their teammates' best interests in mind and advocates for their career success plays a critical role in motivating people to stay in your organization. In fact, effective leaders always know what their employees are working on and how they can help them.

-  **Take the pulse of your people** often by asking questions and encouraging conversations about top-of-mind issues. Listening goes a long way here.
-  **Surround people with strong teammates and managers** and never assume that the ability to manage projects and people are the same. Separate these competencies.
-  **Accept the fact that people naturally leave.** Plan to get the most out of employees while they are with your organization and develop ways to influence the best ones to "boomerang" back.

TWO OUT OF THREE

63%

of federal workers who say their agency doesn't effectively channel the creativity of its workforce are likely to leave.



But when federal workers feel that their creativity is effectively channeled, only

24%

SAY THEY ARE LIKELY TO LEAVE.

Source: Eagle Hill Consulting Federal Ideas Survey 2017

2. Create an ideas culture

Ideas are the lifeblood of an organization, and not tapping into this can be as toxic to your organization's competitiveness as it is your ability to retain employees. That is why it is so critical that you create an ideas culture where all ideas are welcomed and failure is embraced as part of the process. After all, no one wants to work in a place where their ideas are not heard and valued, even if they are not always implemented.



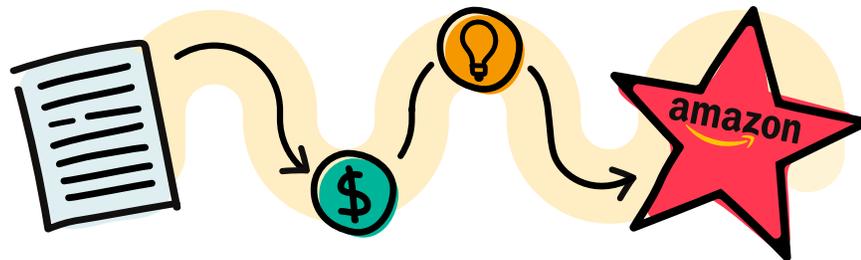
Create a concrete way for employees to share their ideas and support out-of-the-box thinking with friendly competition and gamification strategies.



Thread idea generation and innovation into professional development to give people the tools they need to free their thinking and improve problem solving skills.



Do more than reward the stand-out ideas that work. Recognize everyone submitting ideas on internal social media streams or in person at special ideas award events.



BEHIND SALARY, “MORE INTERESTING WORK” IS THE HIGHEST CITED REASON THAT EMPLOYEES WOULD CONSIDER LEAVING THEIR JOBS FOR AMAZON.

Source: Eagle Hill Consulting Amazon HQ Survey 2018

3. *Jazz things up*

If employees are unengaged, or if they see no growth opportunities, they will naturally start looking elsewhere. On the other hand, the more interesting your workplace is, the more of a magnet it is for talent. A “sticky” workplace is one where it is crystal clear that people are valued and that the employer will invest in improving day-to-day experiences and supporting future career paths.

- **Set crystal clear expectations** so people know what success looks like and celebrate good performance so workers feel valued and motivated.
- **Show people they are valued** by asking what they think about how to improve the business and culture. Recognize and act on their contributions.
- **Champion people’s passion projects** with carve-out time for side projects and sabbaticals that allow them to pursue their pet interests, build skills or recharge.

COMPANIES IN THE TOP QUARTILE OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT EXPERIENCE NEARLY 60 PERCENT LESS TURNOVER AND ARE 17 PERCENT MORE PRODUCTIVE.

Source: Gallup Meta-Analysis, 2017

4. *Bring culture to life*

A strong culture helps you keep your people. It also drives the health of the organization and its ability to deliver the mission. As foundational as it is, however, culture is not something you can physically see or touch. If you get intentional about how the culture is embodied in recruitment, performance management, incentives and more—and measure it—you create an engaging environment that people crave.

-  **Live your core values**—the most actionable part of culture—by taking them off the wall and infusing them consistently into all workplace activities.
-  **Make culture somebody's job** by creating a head of culture position that guides the direction, engages leaders and employees, and measures culture.
-  **Infuse culture into the hiring process** by hiring for culture and values, not the job. Evaluate candidates against the core values to get cultural fit right from the beginning.

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