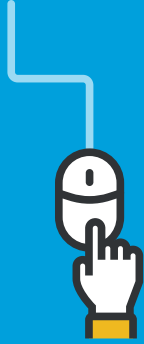


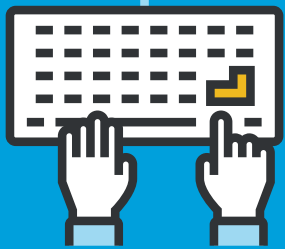
How to Attract and Retain Top Technology Talent



Contents



Attracting and retaining the best tech talent



It's as simple as 1s and 0s, right?

Why yes, if you're Mark Zuckerberg. But for the majority of us in the world of tech, competition for top talent is fierce. In fact, IT pros receive twice as many LinkedIn InMails versus the average LinkedIn member, and software engineers get more than **two-and-a-half times** as many!

As a technology leader in one of the most competitive job markets, it's your responsibility to hire, retain, grow and lead the most epic team possible. Technology talent is driving innovation and business transformation in the 21st century, making your leadership role all the more important.

So how do you attract the best tech talent? And get them to stick around? Well, we studied that exact issue, uncovering insights from your peers in the LinkedIn tech community. Here's what you need to know about attracting the best tech talent and keeping them from aborting mission.

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IT pros say they receive 32 job solicitations each week. *#winning*

[Career Builder](#)



Two words: career opportunity

It's the key to attracting and retaining top tech talent.

LinkedIn research found that the main reason a person leaves an organization and the main reason someone joins an organization are the same: career opportunity.

Why they left:

Concern for career advancement

Top reasons people left their old job (global average)

I was concerned about the lack of opportunities for advancement

45%

I was unsatisfied with the leadership of senior management

41%

I was unsatisfied with the work environment / culture

36%

I wanted more challenging work

36%

I was unsatisfied with the compensation / benefits

34%

I was unsatisfied with the rewards / recognition for my contributions

32%

Why they joined:

Hope for career opportunity

Top reasons people joined their new job (global average)

Stronger career path / more opportunity

59%

Better compensation / benefits

54%

The work sounded more challenging

47%

Better fit for my skills and interests

47%

More ability to make an impact

42%

I believed in the company's overall

39%

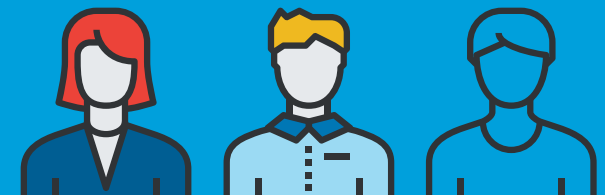
Source: [LinkedIn Job Switchers Report](#)

Compensation and benefits are no longer the *#holygrail* as job candidates decide whether to join an organization or leave a job. Opportunity to develop a career is clearly the most important factor.

As a technology leader, it's in your best interest to provide your tribe with career growth.

So how do you do this? We'll walk you through **five key ways** to show you care about your employees' careers. As an added bonus, we interviewed the former head of IT here at LinkedIn to get his inside scoop.

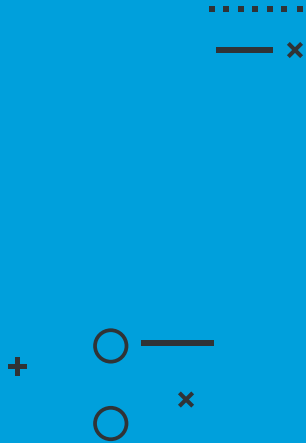
More than **two-thirds** of millennials believe it's the manager's job to provide development opportunities.¹



¹ Deloitte University Press, [Becoming irresistible: A new model for employee engagement](#)



Provide learning opportunities that help careers take off.



1 Provide learning opportunities that help careers take off.

As a technology leader who wants to retain talent, a good place for you to start is providing learning that inspires and engages. By investing in each employee's development, you're helping them get closer to achieving career goals. That's a good thing, as 78 percent of employees say they would remain longer with an employer that provided a clear career path.¹

Tips for providing learning opportunities to your tech team:

- Provide opportunity for hands-on experience outside of the day-to-day.
- Offer on-demand training resources that support ongoing development.
- Be transparent about organizational challenges and direction. Invite questions and suggestions on these issues.
- Coach with clear and constructive feedback during meetings and regular one-on-one conversations.
- When planning work, ask employees to identify how they can contribute and what they want to learn.

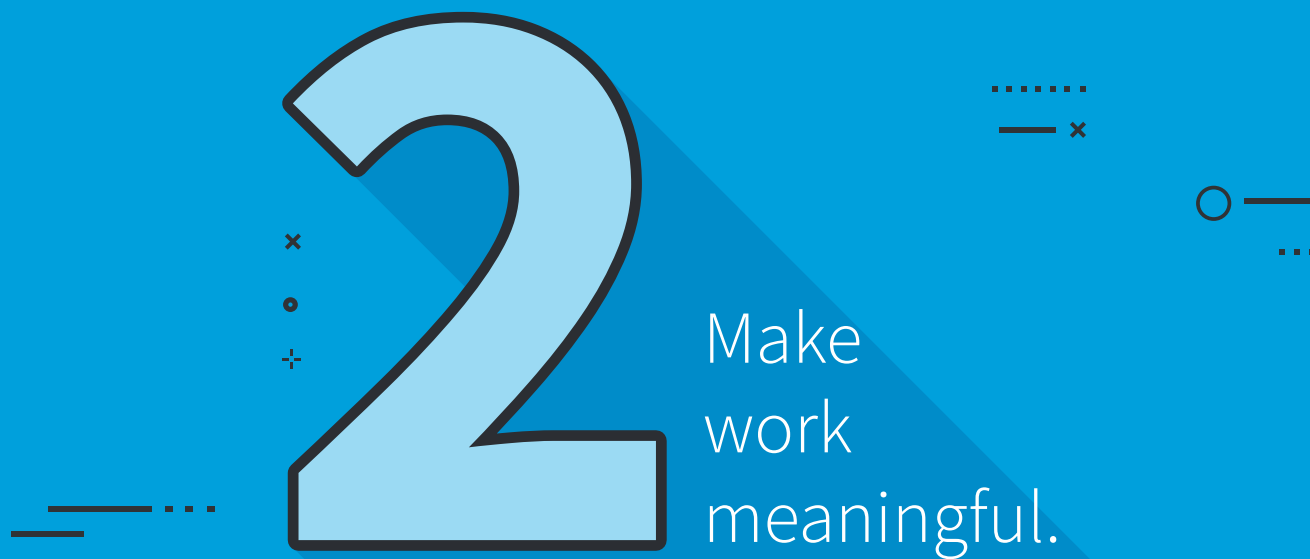


Employees who don't believe they can achieve their career goals with a current employer are **12 times** more likely to consider leaving.

With new employees the number skyrockets to about **30 times** more likely.²

¹ Mercer, [One in Three Employees Claim To Have A Job Rather Than A Career, New Mercer Survey Finds](#)

² SHRM



2 Make work meaningful.

Employees who understand their purpose and contribution to a company's mission are more committed. Passionate work brings clarity, drive and happiness. If work is meaningful, they'll be more likely to stick with it, which means your tech team is more likely to be successful.

Inspire employees with a vision, set challenging goals, and articulate a clear purpose. Don't rely solely on incentives like bonuses, stock options or raises to engage employees. In today's workplace, your employees want more than a fancy title and competitive paycheck. They want work that brings purpose and meaning.

But not everyone experiences the joy of meaningful work. According to State of the American Workplace, an annual report from Gallup, only 30 percent of workers in the U.S. are engaged in their work. This means 70 percent are either "not engaged" or "actively disengaged." *Yikes!*



6 in 10 millennials cite a "sense of purpose" as the reason they chose to work for their current employers.²



Mission-driven companies have 30% higher levels of innovation and 40% higher levels of retention.³

Purpose-driven employees

20%
longer tenures

50%
more likely to be in leadership positions

47%
more likely to give a "thumbs-up" to their employer

64%
higher levels of fulfillment

¹ Carol Cone on Purpose, Is "Purpose" Just Another Buzzword for Our Workplace?

² Deloitte Millennial Survey 2015

³ Deloitte University Press, *Becoming irresistible: A new model for employee engagement*

Quick tips for creating a meaningful workplace



Give employees decision-making power, and we're not just talking about picking which [Star Wars accent lamp](#) suits them best, although they are really cool.



Help employees create a clear career development path, and don't be shy about chatting often with them about career goals. Check out this 5 minute video [Developing career paths for employees](#), straight from our leadership expert Todd Dewett.



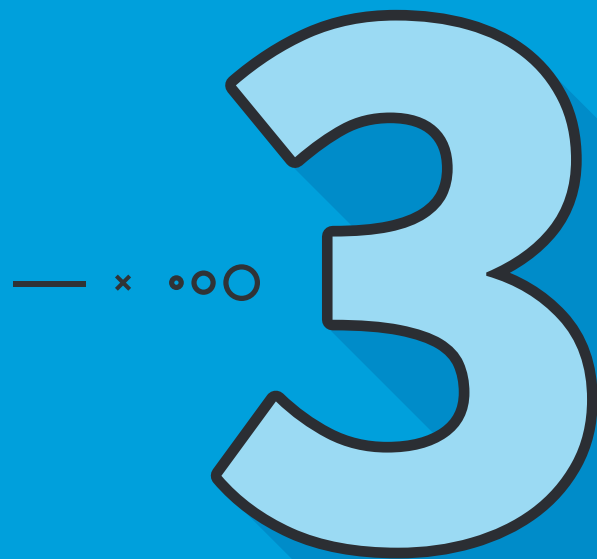
Build a community, one that is supportive yet values challenge. A little competition can be a good motivator. Internal hackathons are a great way to build community and foster innovation.



Create a connection between effort and reward to celebrate *#bigwins*. For example, if a software migration is completed on time with little change management, recognize the talent involved in making the project a success.



Throw a pizza party ... (because, c'mon. Pizza.)



Develop a culture that advances employees from within. It's a win-win.

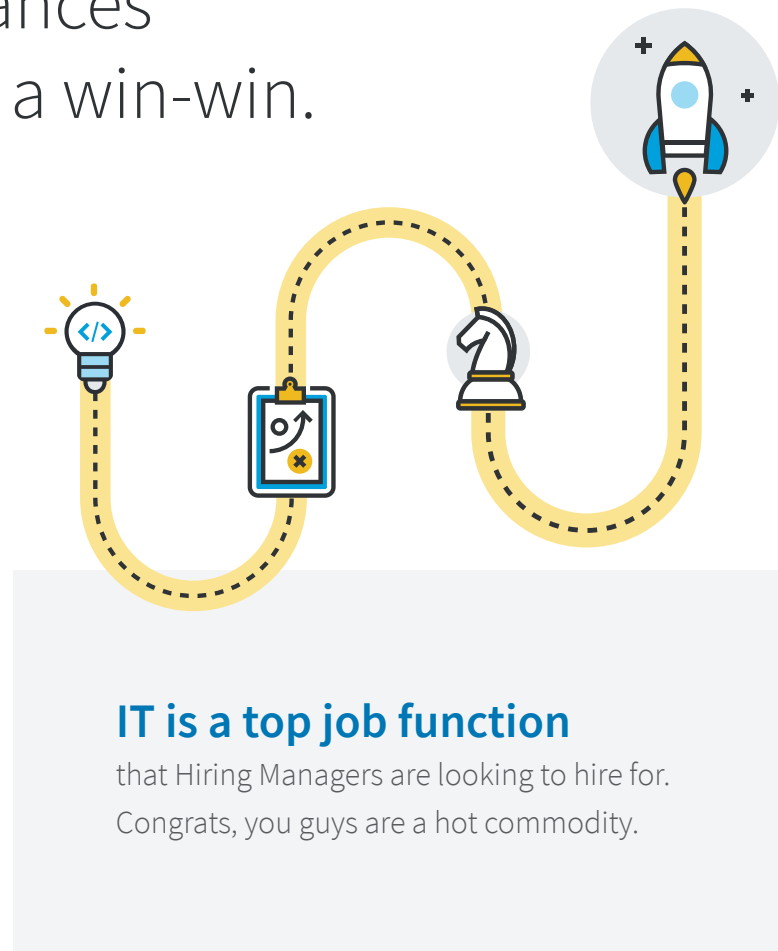


3 Develop a culture that advances employees from within. It's a win-win.

By adopting a team culture that values advancing employees from within, you'll be a superstar to employees and your organization.

A “promote-from-within” culture supports career opportunity for employees, leading to higher engagement and retention, and also helps keep an organization's leadership pipeline filled with strong internal candidates. It's a win-win.

Plus, it's ridiculously hard to fill technology and engineering positions. So why not grow competitive candidates from within?



To grow competitive candidates who are eligible to promote, you need a way to help them **develop in-demand skills**. That's where learning programs come into play.

An effective learning program empowers employees to gain competitive hard and soft skills. With a learning program in place, it just got a whole lot easier to build the most epic technology team possible.



Ownership (taking initiative) is the #1 soft skill Hiring Managers are looking for in IT professionals – but it's challenging to find.

72% of Hiring Managers trying to hire IT professionals agree that “The lack of soft skills among candidates is limiting my organization’s productivity.”¹

¹ LinkedIn Hiring Managers survey, 2016

It's expensive and time consuming
to recruit external candidates.

Save yourself time and money by hiring from within.



\$4,000

The average amount
U.S. companies
spend to fill an
open position

+

52 days

The average time
it takes to fill
an open position



¹ Bersin by Deloitte, [Talent Acquisition Factbook 2015](#)

On the flip side...

You may be thinking to yourself, wait if I'm promoting from within this means the junior level positions need to be backfilled – which also can be a challenge. Yes, this is true. However, learning programs are a great way to build a pipeline of junior level technology professionals as well as senior.

How do we accomplish this at LinkedIn? Through a kick butt internship program designed to build and retain **the best of the best**.

73%

of interns are offered full time positions post-internship.

85%

of these full time offers are accepted.¹



¹ National Association of Colleges and Employers, [2016 Internship and Co-Op Survey](#)



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Employ managers
committed to helping
employees grow.



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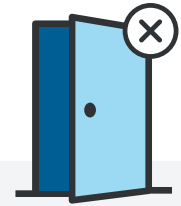
In the world of technology, where leaders are expected to be well equipped with technical and business skills, good managers have never been more critical. Not because employees can't function without direction, but because managers play a huge role in day-to-day morale and in determining whether the next step in an employee's career is reached.

Skilled managers are talent magnets.

They attract candidates and drive performance, engagement and retention. They play a key role in achieving business goals. On the contrary, poor managers cost an organization a ton of money in turnover costs – and wind up the target of a lot of nerf gun shots. So it's important to employ managers who care.

Just as important, managers who are 100 percent committed to helping employees grow should be rewarded for their efforts. Why? Because it's easy to de-prioritize this responsibility when things get busy.

To ensure managers stay committed, measure their performance in supporting employee development by including this as an area of focus on annual reviews, hold quarterly check-ins to track whether career conversations are taking place, and survey employees on their satisfaction of career conversations with their direct manager. When they succeed, be sure to reward them.



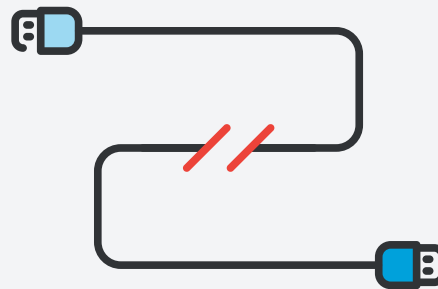
50%
of employees who
don't feel valued by
their boss plan to
look for another job
in the next year.¹

¹ Huffington Post, [8 Unsettling Facts About Bad Bosses \[Infographic\]](#)

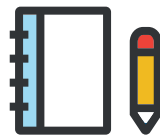
Bad managers cause employees to disconnect.

Developing effective managers is key to retain your tech talent.

A top reason employees quit their jobs is a negative relationship with their direct manager.¹



3 out of 4 employees say dealing with their boss is the worst and most stressful part of their job.²



¹ Gallup

² Huffington Post, [8 Unsettling Facts About Bad Bosses \[Infographic\]](#)

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INTERVIEW

How LinkedIn retains
its top tech talent

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How LinkedIn retains top talent by investing in employee career goals.

Let's emphasize this again: Organizations with leaders who value and encourage learning opportunities tend to attract and retain top talent. But what does this really mean? And how can you put it into action? We interviewed [Craig Williams](#), the former head of IT at LinkedIn, to find out how.



Our absolute first priority is talent. And that means more than just hiring great people. It means keeping those people inspired and engaged.

What's the key to doing that? It's literally taking a page out of our founder Reid Hoffman's book, *The Alliance*, and helping all of our IT employees reach their career goals – knowing that'll help us achieve our goals as well.

In other words, rather than just focusing on what our IT employees can do for us, we focus on what we can do for them. So if one of our IT workers wants to lead a team of people, perhaps get into engineering or even become

a basketball referee as one of my former employees wanted, we'll do everything we can to make that happen.

And in return, they stay engaged, inspired and focused. It's a win-win that helps us retain the great people we work so hard to hire in the first place.

Career development plans are the starting point. This isn't just a philosophy we talk about. We have a formal practice in place that helps us make this happen, one focused on a simple philosophy: the power of writing it down.

While they aren't obligated, all of our IT employees here at LinkedIn are strongly encouraged to draft "career development plans." And the point here isn't just to say, "I want to get promoted" or "I want to make more money."

Instead, we push our employees to write what they are truly passionate about — perhaps it's a transition from help desk technician to a network engineer, or leading their own team — and then work with them to make that happen.

As part of these plans, we ask our employees to identify two skills they need to get better at to push their career further. Maybe they need

to learn a certain programming language or a specific soft skill to reach their career goal. We'll provide training (such as this LinkedIn Learning course, [Up and Running with Java Applications](#)) that'll bring that skill to life. We call this the "Top 2" program, which was the brainchild of one of my managers, Lars Enderlein.

Again, this is completely optional. But what I've found even in my own personal career journey is that writing down exactly where you are and where you want to go drastically increases the chances you'll get there. So I highly recommend all of our IT employees to take part.

Provide opportunity for hands-on experience outside of the day-to-day. One common theme we see with our IT employees is that they want to get more into network engineering. We know that their day-to-day

jobs alone won't provide them with all the skills they need to make that transition, so we'll give them opportunities for hands-on experience outside of their core duties.

Often, that means setting up a shadow program for our IT employees to learn from our engineering team. We'll offer them training opportunities in engineering, and on their own time.

Why did our IT team adopt this philosophy?

Some of my peers might question why we'd put resources toward helping our employees reach their career goals. They'd argue the company should come first and its culture should be solely focused on how the worker can help it.

I respectfully disagree. The reality of work today is that most people you hire are going to spend four or five years with you and then likely jump to another job. How you treat

those people in the time you spend with your company is going to drastically affect their performance as well as your ability to hire more great people.

Knowing that, we want to do everything we can to make the time our workers spend here as productive as possible. And that means not just focusing on how they can help us, but also how we can help them.

The bottom line is I believe that the more we can do for our employees, the more they'll do for us. And if we can help them achieve their career goals, there's a good chance they'll help us achieve ours as well.



Conclusion

Let's recap. Career opportunity is what your employees are looking for. It's the key to attracting and retaining top tech talent. By providing ongoing learning opportunities, creating an environment that advances employees from within, making work meaningful, and investing in managers that are focused on helping employees grow, you'll be *#winning*.

An organization is only as strong as the collective talent of the people who work there. They're worth the investment.



About LinkedIn Learning

LinkedIn Learning is a transformative learning solution that enables individuals and companies to achieve more. Our goal is twofold: to identify the precise skills you and your organization need to excel in their career, and to efficiently deliver relevant, expert-led courses. The combination of our digital content library of 9,000+ courses and data-driven personalization delivers a powerful learning experience that transforms how learners acquire and hone in-demand skills.

Learn more about how LinkedIn Learning can help your technology team develop new skills and be more productive.

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