

# How High-Performing Organizations Retain Talent in 2026

## THE RETENTION GAP

### Organization Investments

1. Recruitment Technology
2. Employee Branding
3. Comp Benchmarking
4. Workplace Analytics

### Root Cause of Turnover

1. System Failure
2. Unclear Expectations
3. Stakeholder Misalignment
4. Manager Ambiguity

Retention is **not** a downstream HR responsibility.  
It is a **leadership system** designed upstream, reinforced daily, and collectively owned.

## IMPACT

**40%**

of **employees** leave their job within **1 year**

**31%**

of **employees** leave their job within **6 months**

**\$2.0T**

lost in **productivity** due to employee **disengagement**

## KCG Search RETENTION STRATEGY FRAMEWORK

### 1. Intentional Recruitment

**Controls:** Strategic Role Alignment

- Define success before candidate evaluation
- Align stakeholders on priorities & tradeoffs
- Confirm readiness to support the role
- Communicate pace, ambiguity & decision context

**Rationale:** Misalignment at hiring compounds quickly and drives early disengagement.

### 2. Onboarding Direction

**Controls:** Role Clarity

- Establish role direction, not orientation
- Define priorities, authority, and success
- Reinforce alignment via structured meetings
- Position the role within broader objectives

**Rationale:** Direction accelerates contribution and stabilizes early engagement.

### 3. Leadership Clarity

**Controls:** Execution Priorities Trust

- Set clear expectations for people leadership
- Reinforce performance via feedback/correction
- Make decision logic and constraints explicit
- Correct misalignment before it compounds

**Rationale:** Clarity keeps teams focused on execution, not interpretation.

### 4. Role Evolution

**Controls:** Sustained Role Alignment

- Acknowledge role shifts explicitly
- Reprioritize as scope expands
- Reset success metrics as expectations change
- Scale support with responsibility

**Rationale:** Unaligned role evolution is a leading cause of disengagement.

### Transparency Across All Levers

**Controls:** Right Information at the Right Time with Clarity

Clearly explain role and decision-making • Address change directly • Correct misalignment when it surfaces

**Transparency is not a cultural preference. It is a leadership discipline that builds trust, stabilizes performance, and strengthens retention.**

Retention is not a downstream outcome.

It reflects leadership decisions made before performance concerns surface.

When those decisions are aligned, retention stabilizes and execution follows.

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