

**Title:** Drawing In & Drawing Up: Combatting Industry Turnover through Internal Development Programs



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**Background:** The United States healthcare workforce lost an average of 50,000 workers per month in 2022. Many factors, including changing perspectives on career progression, a competitive employment market, and economic headwinds, have led to challenges in identifying staff interested in pursuing leadership roles.<sup>1</sup> Healthcare organizations have exhausted staff with decreased desire for discretionary effort and chronic short-staffing while opportunities for increased wages in less-stressful environments outside of healthcare become more attractive. A significant impact of this culture shift is increasing difficulty in identifying those wishing to pursue formal leadership roles.

**Objective of Program:** Opportunities exist for innovation in leadership succession efforts in an uncertain labor market. Focusing on training, creating opportunities for flexible work arrangements (e.g. remote working), and internal career investment programs can accelerate these efforts. It is in the best interests of healthcare organizations to develop a cadre of motivated employees for promotional positions, while simultaneously fostering an environment that strengthens the skills and passion of future leaders.

**Planning/Research Methods:** One of the largest departments at Mayo Clinic is the Office of Access Management (OAM). OAM partners with clinical practice leadership to develop and implement strategies and tools to optimize patient scheduling experiences. This department has a robust remote hiring and training program that leads to a consistently well-trained workforce. Given its size (approximately 830 employees), and importance to the clinical practice, identifying strategies to develop staff leadership interest and capabilities is a priority for Mayo Clinic.

While OAM focuses on a variety of strategies to develop leadership capabilities, two specific programs stand out:

1. A formalized succession development program focused on empowering staff, creating a culture around professional growth, and identifying novel pathways to leadership positions.
  - a. The OAM leadership development team formed with the goal to *“better prepare the next generation of OAM leaders by empowering staff, creating a culture around professional growth, and coaching colleagues to be comfortable being uncomfortable.”* OAM leaders work directly with frontline staff to conduct career development check-ins, create stretch opportunities, headline leadership workshops, and conduct brown bag leadership sessions.
2. A career investment program sponsored by Mayo Clinic for all staff, with formal degree and certificate programs in business, healthcare leadership, healthcare administration, and project management. As part of this enterprise-wide effort, OAM reserved over 100 priority slots for its staff.

This effort focused on the success of these programs to gauge their impact on identification and growth of leaders.

#### **Results:**

- **Stronger leadership bench and improved internal promotions**

When compared to a similar department at Mayo Clinic, the OAM group promotes their employees at a rate 2-3 times higher than the comparison department. Additionally, the comparison department sees 2-3 times as many staff leave their department for promotional opportunities.
- **Improved overall retention**

Industry turnover rate for similar positions is 31%. OAM's turnover rate was 11.4% in 2022.
- **Positive feedback on associated efforts**

Feedback collected demonstrated that 100% of respondents agreed the Leadership Workshop was valuable, and they have been able to act on the content, while 74% of staff felt the workshop was worth the time away from their desk.

**Key Lessons:** The pandemic created challenges for retaining staff across all industries including healthcare; however, compared to the industry, the Office of Access Management performed strongly on staff retention. Through these programs, OAM created pathways for improved job opportunities, demonstrated the value it places on its staff, and supported them to succeed in their careers. The long-term efficacy is yet to be determined; however, these types of staff investment provide tangible evidence of effective methods for developing successful leaders.