



NASPO Fact Sheet: Solutions for Staffing and Retention Challenges

Issue Overview

The majority of state central procurement offices face the challenge of recruiting and maintaining optimal levels of quality staff, due to various factors. This can affect productivity, efficiency and other critical areas of state procurement office functions. Procurement Officials are continuously adopting innovative strategies in order to effectively deal with these challenges.

Staffing and Retention Challenges
Staff attrition due to retirement and competition from other employment sectors
Reduced staffing due to budget reductions/restrictions
Generational differences in regards to motivation and expectations
Loss of institutional knowledge and experience due to retirement
Inability to compete with private sector salary and benefits
Limited pool of qualified candidates

Strategies
Conducting workforce analysis and facilitating talent reviews in order to anticipate internal/external staffing patterns
Work with Division of Personnel on classifications and compensation
Support development and maintenance of succession plans
Adoption of nonmonetary retention strategies such as flexible work arrangements, job rotation, on-site fitness centers, participatory decision making, signature authority, leave options, and telecommuting
Diversify recruitment strategies, i.e. internships, social media, advertising through professional organizations
Promote knowledge transfer through training, higher education and mentoring programs

STATISTICAL INFORMATION: 2013 NASPO Staff Recruitment and Retention Survey:

- 40 percent of the 32 state central procurement offices surveyed described their offices as understaffed, as compared with growing workload expectations.
- 43 percent of the 32 state central procurement offices surveyed said that their organizational structure had changed in the last 12 months.
- Of 31 state respondents the majority reported turnover rates of 6-10 percent for the last 12 months.
- The top reasons for staff leaving were retirement, career advancement, transfer to another position, and better compensation/benefits, as reported by the 32 state central procurement offices surveyed.

- The biggest challenges to hiring were “limited pool of qualified candidates,” and “non-competitive salaries” as reported by the 32 state central procurement offices surveyed.
- Average staff retention time reported by the 31 state central procurement offices was 3-7 years.
- The top Incentives used to retain employees and increase the level of performance, commitment, and loyalty to the organization were “training,” “flexible working hours” and “retirement benefits.”

REFERENCES:

2014 NASPO State and Local Government Procurement: A Practical Guide; Chapter 1, 21 and 22

[Rising to the Challenge: Recruitment and Retention in State Procurement Offices](#) research paper (*April 2014*)

[Responding to an Aging and Changing Workforce: Attracting, Retaining, and Developing New Procurement Professionals](#) issue brief (*March 2008*)

Conclusion:

State central procurement offices are continuously asked to do more with less, making the importance of recruiting and retaining quality employees greater than ever. The impact of economic and social factors such as budget cuts, large scale retirements, and generational differences require procurement officials to adopt new strategies.