

# Human Resources

Strategies for Recruitment, Retention, and Culture Development



## Human Resources in Higher Education

The role of Human Resources (HR) in higher education extends beyond transactional tasks like hiring and compliance. HR professionals are critical to shaping the culture, ensuring workforce alignment with institutional goals, and fostering an inclusive, engaging environment for faculty, staff, and students. This toolkit, inspired by insights from Andriel Dees, Vice President for Executive Search at Greenwood Asher & Associates, provides strategies for HR professionals to effectively recruit, retain, and support employees in higher education.

## Redefining HR's Role

- HR professionals should be seen as experienced creators who shape the institution's culture.
- They are integral in developing a positive and inclusive work environment that aligns with institutional values.
- HR should collaborate closely with leadership, faculty, and staff to reinforce a strong organizational identity.

## Understanding Institutional Stories

- Onboarding should include a historical and cultural briefing about the institution, highlighting key figures, traditions, and community values.
- Knowing and sharing institutional stories helps HR professionals align hiring with the university's mission and create a sense of belonging for new employees.



# HR as a Culture Creator

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## Strategic Workforce Planning

### Aligning Recruitment with Institutional Goals

- Conduct listening sessions with stakeholders to understand institutional needs.
- Develop strategic hiring plans that align with long-term academic and operational goals.
- Ensure job descriptions reflect not just qualifications but also cultural and strategic alignment with the university.

### Diversity and Inclusion in Hiring

- HR professionals should take an active role in ensuring a diverse and equitable hiring process.
- Intentional outreach and networking strategies are necessary to attract diverse talent.
- Data-driven decision-making, such as equity scorecards, can highlight disparities and inform hiring improvements.



# Employee Retention & Preventing Burnout

## Employee Retention and Preventing Burnout

### The Importance of Stay Interviews

- Conduct stay interviews instead of just exit interviews to address employee concerns proactively.
- Topics should include job satisfaction, work-life balance, professional development opportunities, and cultural fit.

### Fostering Career Development

- Establish clear career trajectories for non-faculty employees.
- Provide opportunities for professional development, such as fellowships, leadership training, and cross-training programs.
- Consider mentorship programs and job shadowing to encourage career growth within the institution.

### Preventing Burnout

- Implement wellness programs and flexible work arrangements where possible.
  - Encourage a culture of recognition and appreciation.
  - Partner with leadership to assess workloads and prevent staff from being overextended.
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# The Changing Landscape of Higher Ed HR

## Adapting to Workforce Trends

- The HR landscape in higher education is shifting due to factors such as declining enrollment, legislative changes, and evolving workplace expectations.
- HR professionals must remain agile and proactive in addressing these changes.

## The Role of AI and Technology

- AI and automation are becoming integral in recruitment, onboarding, and HR analytics.
- HR leaders should embrace technology while ensuring a human-centered approach to people management.

## HR Staffing Challenges

- HR departments often face high turnover and staffing shortages.
- Universities must invest in HR professionals and create clear pathways for career progression to attract and retain talent.

# The Changing Landscape of Higher Education Human Resources

# HR's Role in Inclusive Excellence

## HR's Role in DEI and Institutional Change

### Championing Inclusion

- DEI efforts should be embedded in all HR processes, from hiring to retention and professional development.
- HR professionals should use data-driven approaches to measure and improve DEI initiatives.
- Even as political and legal landscapes shift, HR can continue to prioritize inclusive and equitable practices.

### Intentional Hiring for a Reflective Faculty and Staff

- Faculty and staff hiring must intentionally reflect the changing demographics of the student body.
- Succession planning should consider diversity and inclusion as key factors in leadership transitions.



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## A Critical Role



HR professionals in higher education play a crucial role in shaping institutional culture, aligning workforce strategies with institutional goals, and ensuring an inclusive, thriving environment. By embracing their roles as culture creators, strategic planners, and change agents, HR leaders can help their institutions attract, retain, and empower top talent while fostering a more dynamic and diverse campus community.

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Toolkit based on an expert interview with Andriel Dees on Beyond the Quadcast. [Listen today on Spotify.](#)