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NHS returner programme: checklist and tracker

Ask, end well, keep in touch, fix, invite back, re-onboard, measure. A two-page checklist for an NHS trust or team.

1. Before people leave

- ☐ Our exit questionnaire asks every leaver whether they would consider returning
- ☐ It records, separately, consent to be contacted about future roles (and how)
- ☐ It records the reasons for leaving, so we know what would need to change
- ☐ Responses are collected independently enough that people answer candidly

2. Ending well

- ☐ Every leaver hears a thank-you from their manager and that the door is open
- ☐ They know how to join the bank, and who to contact about coming back
- ☐ Staff approaching retirement have been offered a conversation about retire and return, partial retirement or bank work

3. Keeping in touch

- ☐ One owner holds the alumni list; contact is only with consent and every message has an easy opt-out
- ☐ Agreed contact points (we suggest around 3, 6 and 12 months after leaving)
- ☐ Messages lead with what has changed, then with relevant vacancies

4. Fixing what drove them out

- ☐ Leaver reasons are reviewed by staff group at least quarterly
- ☐ Each group has one or two named actions with owners
- ☐ A “you said, we did” summary goes to staff and to alumni

The three reasons for leaving we most need to fix, and who owns each

5. Making the route back easy

Routes we offer

- ☐ Bank and temporary roles
- ☐ Fixed-term or project roles
- ☐ Retire and return / partial retirement
- ☐ Return to practice for lapsed registrants
- ☐ Flexible patterns from day one

Friction we have removed

- ☐ A named returner contact
- ☐ A short application route
- ☐ Checks re-run promptly (the NHS Employment Check Standards still apply)
- ☐ Pension questions referred to NHS Pensions early

6. Re-onboarding

- ☐ Systems access, rota and equipment ready on day one
- ☐ A briefing on what has changed since they left
- ☐ Week-one, 30-day and 60-day check-ins, as for any new starter

7. Tracker

Name / staff group	Left (date, reason)	Would return?	Last contact	Route offered	Outcome

Measures we suggest: would-return rate by staff group; returners per quarter; time from first contact to start; returners still in post after 12 months. Keep alumni records only as long as your privacy notice says, and store them securely.

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Does any of this sound familiar?

The organisations we work with rarely come to us asking for a survey. They come with something that is costing them money, time or people. These are the ones we hear most often.

MAKING MONEY

"We hire well on paper and still get it wrong in the role."

Personality, leadership and competency assessment matched to the job, so interviews test what matters and offers go to people who will perform. (FindingPotential)

"Our best people leave and we only find out why afterwards."

Exit intelligence in the leaver's final weeks: what was avoidable, who would come back, and what to change first. (LastOpinion)

"Leaders get feedback once a year and nothing changes."

Forward-looking 360 feedback that lands as development rather than judgement, with the actions built in. (FeedForward)

SAVING MONEY

"Too many new starters are gone inside a year."

New-starter surveys at the points the first-year leak opens, so you act at three months instead of reading about it at exit. (OnBoarder)

"References take weeks and tell us nothing."

Automated referencing with questions that predict, most returned within 48 hours. (ReferenceExpert)

"We run an engagement survey and the results sit in a drawer."

Engagement reporting down to team level in plain English, with the three moves each team's own people chose. (WinningFormula)

SOLVING PROBLEMS

"The board wants evidence on culture, conduct and speaking up."

A confidential always-on channel and a harassment-prevention audit that give you the evidence before a regulator asks for it. (SafeSpace)

"We publish an inclusion statement and cannot show whether it is true."

Inclusion measured at every stage from hire to exit, so you can see where the experience differs and act on it. (ED&I)

"We have the data and cannot turn it into a decision."

Twenty years of UK benchmark data and analysts who turn results into a board paper, not a dashboard. (Workforce intelligence)

Who we are

great{with}talent is a UK workforce-intelligence consultancy, founded in 2003. We help organisations hire better, keep people longer, improve leadership, strengthen inclusion and reduce workplace risk, with a connected set of tools that turn employee data into clear, fast action across the whole employee lifecycle. Independent, GDPR-compliant and Cyber Essentials certified, hosted on Microsoft Azure.

Not on the list? It will not always be. If you are working on something you think we might be able to help with, drop us a note describing what you are trying to do and we will come back to you.

On the list or not, let's talk.

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