

Public Health Workforce & Retention



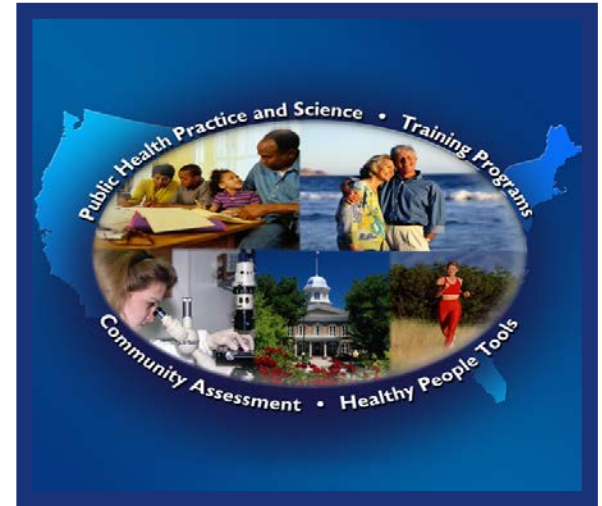
Virginia Public Health Preparedness Summit
September 27, 2022

Public Health Foundation

Mission:

We improve public health and population health practice to support healthier communities

www.phf.org



Experts in Quality Improvement, Performance Management, and Workforce Development

Session Overview

- ↵ Current State of Public Health Workforce
- ↵ Looking Back at Recent History
- ↵ Challenges and Opportunities
- ↵ Addressing Our Challenges





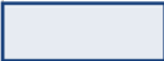
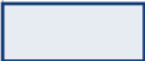
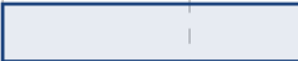

Your Thoughts

- ↵ Why do people take jobs in public health?
- ↵ Why do people leave jobs in public health?




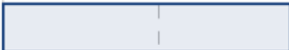



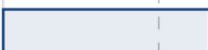


Public Health Workforce Interests and Needs Survey – PH WINS

- Provides data on workforce demographics, job characteristics, training needs, intent to stay or leave, professional engagement and satisfaction, and other areas
- Fielded September 2021-January 2022
 - ▷ Nearly 42,000 responses
- Similar surveys conducted in 2014 and 2017
- 47 state health agencies; 29 big city health departments; 259 local health departments (>25 employees; >25,000 population served)

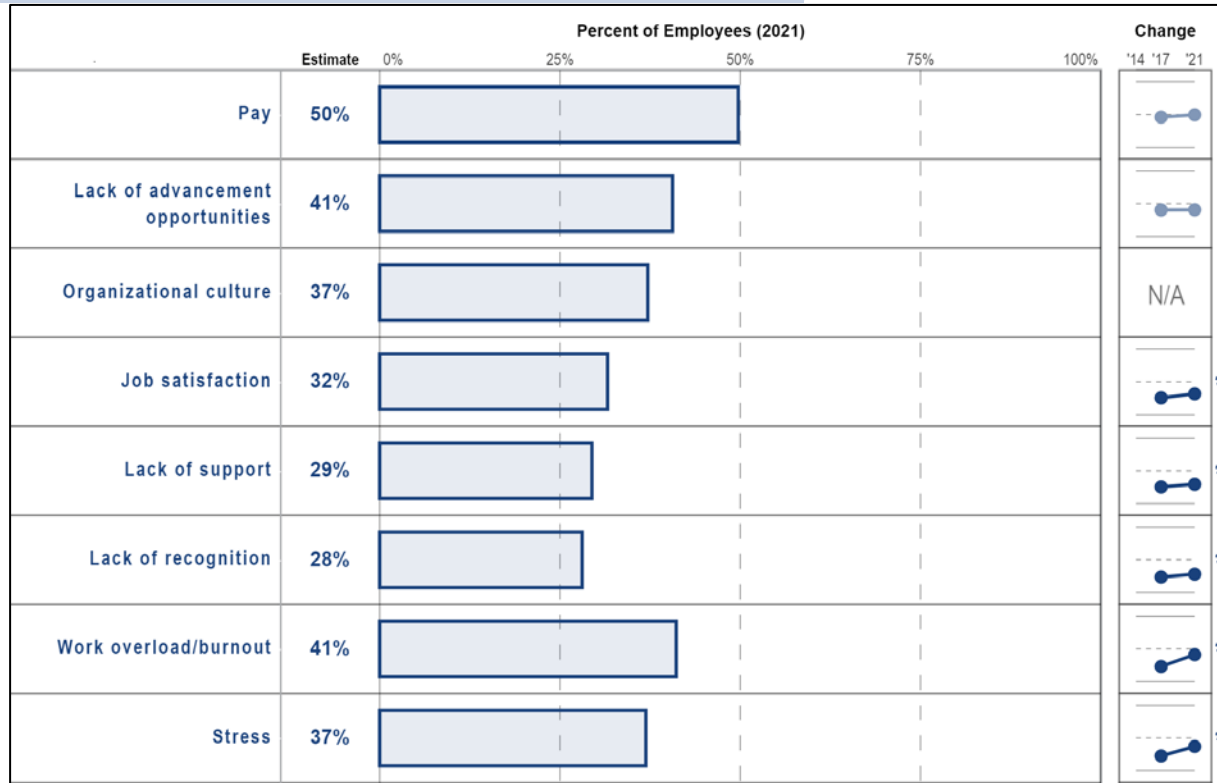
Reasons for Staying – PH WINS

	Estimate	Percent of Employees (2021)					Change		
		0%	25%	50%	75%	100%	'14	'17	'21
Pay	24%						N/A		
Advancement opportunities	17%						N/A		
Organizational culture	19%						N/A		
Job satisfaction	43%						N/A		
Support	22%						N/A		
Recognition for work	19%						N/A		
Organizational pride	40%						N/A		
Lack of stress	11%						N/A		

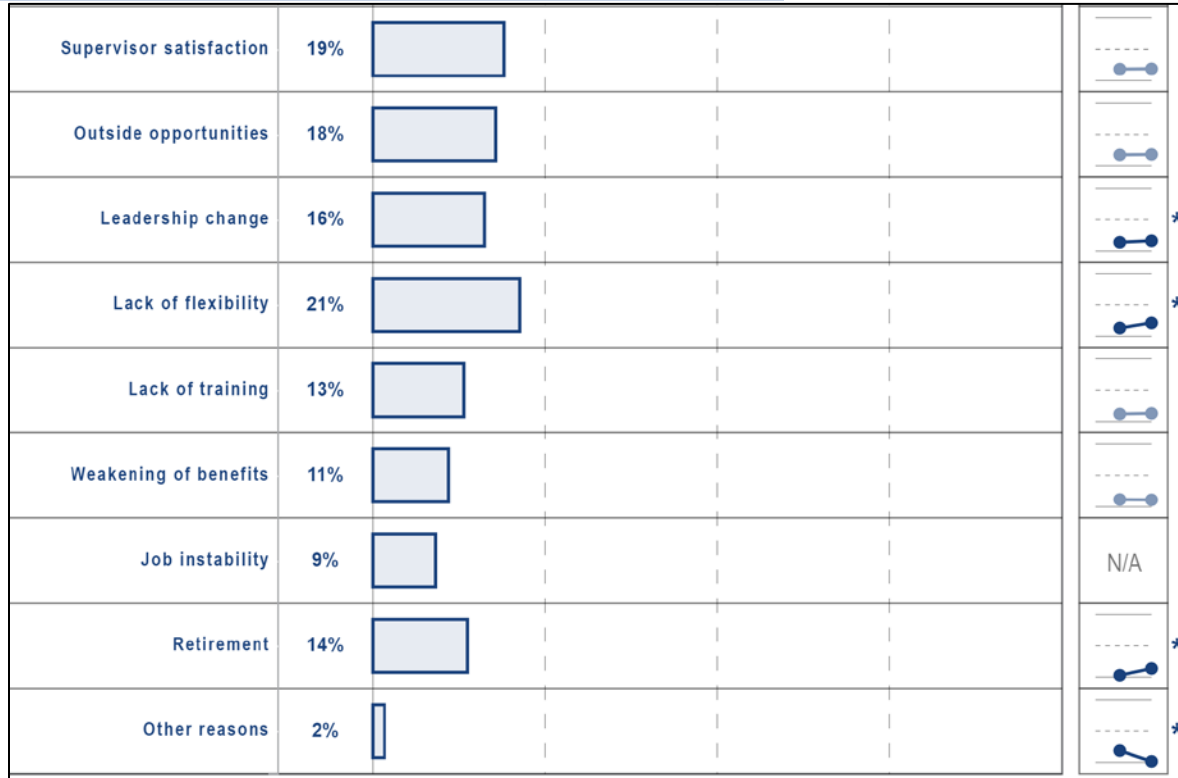
Reasons for Staying – PH WINS

Supervisory satisfaction	45%		N/A
Lack of outside opportunities	8%		N/A
Leadership satisfaction	18%		N/A
Flexibility	46%		N/A
Training opportunities	15%		N/A
Benefits	66%		N/A
Job stability	56%		N/A
Exciting work	33%		N/A
Mentorship opportunities	7%		N/A
Other reasons	7%		N/A

Reasons for Leaving – PH WINS



Reasons for Leaving – PH WINS



COVID-19 Impact – PH WINS



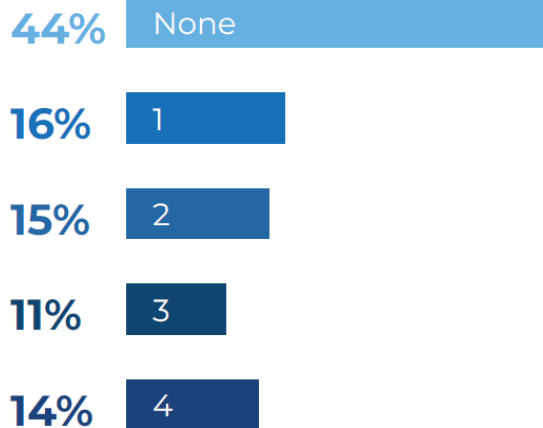
56%

of public health workers reported at least one symptom of PTSD.

Has the coronavirus or COVID-19 outbreak been so frightening, horrible, or upsetting that you:

- Had nightmares about it or thought about it when you did not want to?
- Tried hard not to think about it, or went out of your way to avoid situations that reminded you of it?
- Were constantly on guard, watchful, or easily startled?
- Felt numb or detached from others, activities, or your surroundings?

Number of reported post-traumatic stress symptoms



COVID-19 Impact – PH WINS

In general, how would you rate your mental or emotional health?



Setting

% reporting “fair” or “poor” mental health

State health agency	22%
Big-city health department	25%
Other local health department	20%

Supervisory Status (nationally)

Executives	24%
Supervisors & managers	22%
Non-supervisors	21%

Disaster Management Workforce – Deloitte 2022

Deloitte.

Strategic Plan Review: Workforce Concerns and Priorities of Emergency Management Organizations



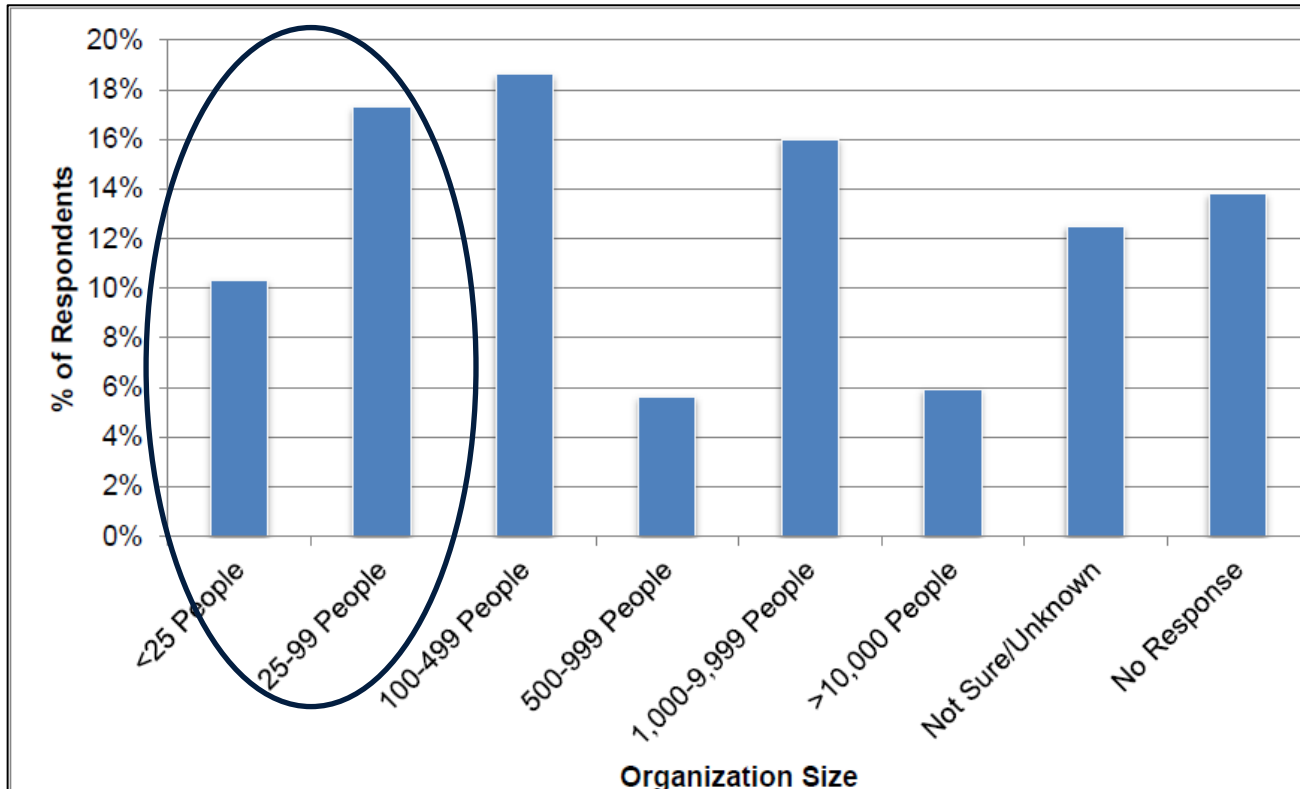
What Do You Think?

- Does any of this resonate with you? Anything in particular?

Looking Back

- Recruitment and Retention: What's Influencing the Decisions of Public Health Workers?
 - Council on Linkages Between Academia and Public Health Practice (COL)
 - Drivers rather than enumeration
 - Explored:
 - Demographic information about individual public health workers
 - Factors that initially attracted workers to public health and impacted their decisions to remain working in the field
 - Perspectives on factors related to organizational leadership, management, and professional development
 - Conducted in 2010 – Nearly 12,000 responses

Organization Size – COL



Highest Level of Education – COL

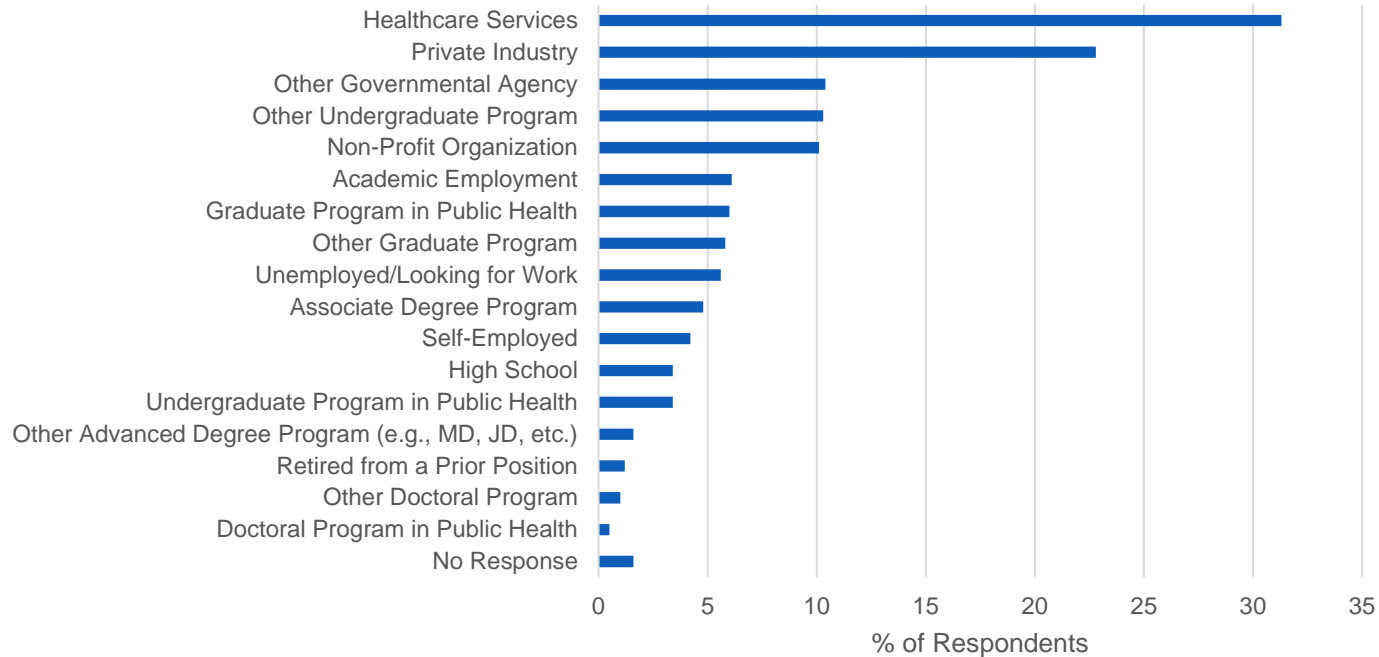
	Entry	Time of Survey
High School	15%	12%
Associate Degree	18%	17%
Bachelor's Degree (Other than Public Health)	33%	29%
Master's Degree (Other than Public Health)	12%	16%
Public Health Degrees	Total – 10%	Total – 11%
Bachelor's	4%	3%
Master's	5%	7%
Doctoral	1%	1%

Who's a Public Health Worker?

- Do you have an academic degree in public health?
- Are you a public health worker?

Prior to Governmental Public Health – COL

Setting Prior to Governmental Public Health



Factors Influencing Recruitment & Retention – COL

FACTORS	Recruitment	Retention
Specific Work Functions or Activities Involved in Current Position	1	2
Job Security	2	1
Competitive Benefits	3	3
Identifying with the Mission of the Organization	4	4
Future Opportunities for Training/Continuing Education	5	6
Flexibility of Work Schedule	6	5
Ability to Innovate	7	7
Competitive Salary	8	9
Future Opportunities for Promotion	9	10
Autonomy/Employee empowerment	10	8
Immediate Opportunity for Advancement/Promotion	11	11
Ability to Telecommute	12	12

Organizational Leadership – COL

	Strongly Agree or Agree	Strongly or Somewhat Disagree
High Professional Standards	65%	22%
Atmosphere of Trust and Respect	56%	33%
Constructive Feedback	55%	28%
Shared Vision	55%	31%
Appropriate Performance Evaluations	53%	28%

Addressing Employee Concerns – COL

	Strongly Agree or Agree	Strongly or Somewhat Disagree
Safety and Security	64%	14%
Tools Needed to do Job	63%	22%
Professional Development	60%	24%
New Employee Support	48%	22%
Autonomy/Employee Empowerment	47%	28%
Leadership Issues	45%	32%

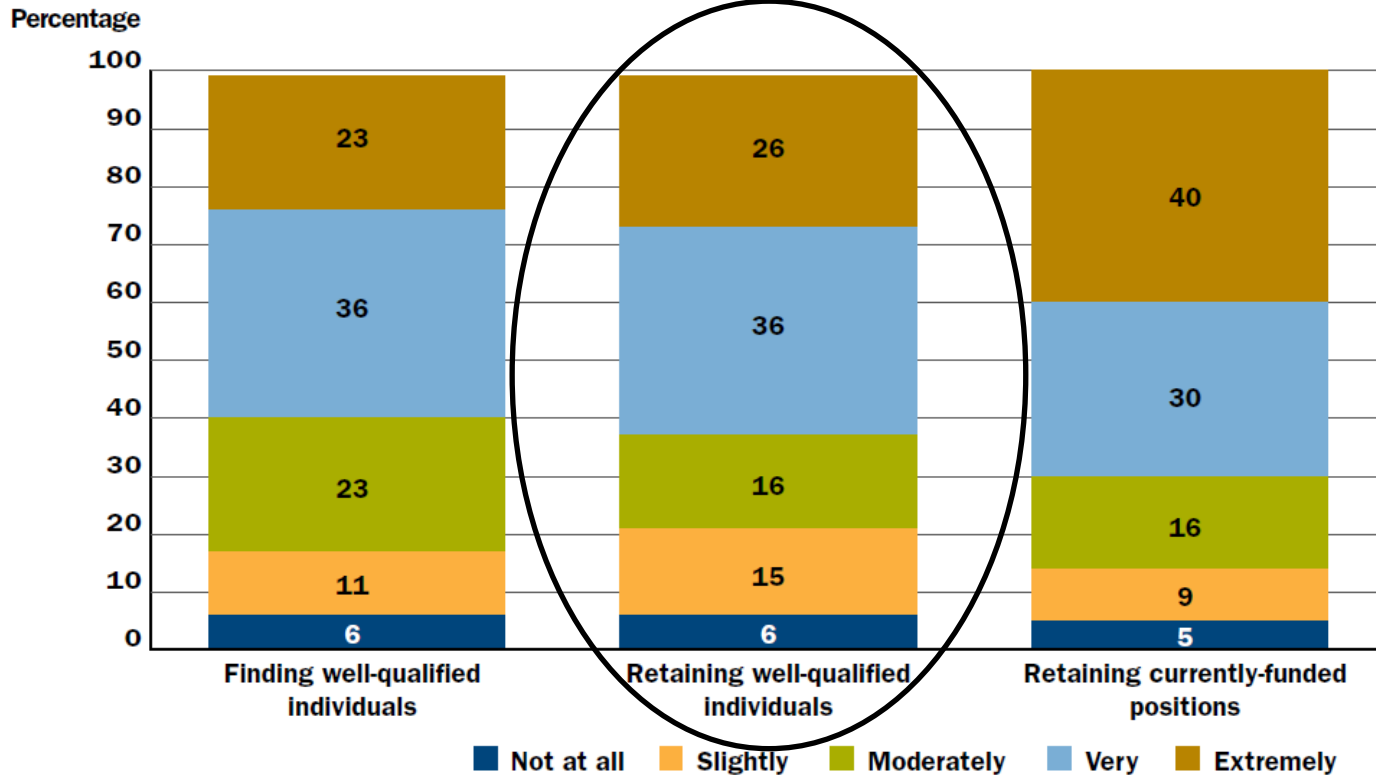
Professional Development – COL

	Strongly Agree or Agree	Strongly or Somewhat Disagree
Opportunities to Learn from One Another	66%	18%
Provides Employees with Most Needed Knowledge and Skills	66%	21%
Training to Fully Use Technology	48%	28%
Adequate Time Provided	45%	38%
Resources Available for Employees	36%	51%

Responses to Open-Ended Questions

- *“There needs to be more of a career ladder for employees to be able to advance.”*
- *“It’s not just about earning a paycheck, it’s the sense of satisfaction of contributing to those in need in your community.”*
- *“This has been the most wonderful job experience I could have asked for. The pay stinks; financially I’ve made it work because I would rather look forward to going to work each day than be miserable.”*

Recruitment and Retention Concerns – Based on NACCHO 2010 Profile



Addressing Recruitment and Retention

- ↵ Has your agency been taking action?
- ↵ Has your agency seen success?
- ↵ Are there opportunities to do and achieve more?

Addressing Our Challenges: Recruitment

- 7 Develop Academic Health Department and Other Partnerships
- 7 Recruit from Other Industries (e.g., healthcare)
- 7 Promote Loan Repayment
- 7 Engage Public Health AmeriCorps
- 7 Articulate Mission
- 7 Demonstrate Value
- 7 Engage Schools K-12 and Community Colleges
- 7 Use Social Media/PSAs

What's Been in the News.....

- ↵ COVID-19 deaths
- ↵ Monkeypox outbreak
- ↵ Reemergence of Polio
- ↵ Tuberculosis and sexually transmitted infections on the rise
- ↵ The list goes on.....

What the Public Doesn't Know About Public Health

- Millions of lives saved
- Millions of preventable deaths
- Improved health and well-being

- Are you proud to be a public health worker?
- Let the public know about the true **IMPACT** of public health!!



Addressing Our Challenges: Retention

- Promote Greater Autonomy
- Create Career Ladders
- Provide Professional Development Opportunities
- Engage Management and Supervisors in Training and Coaching
- Encourage Creativity and Innovation
- Address Employee Wellness
- Update Data and Computer Systems
- And Yes, Salaries and Benefits

Considerations for Leaders, Managers, and Others

- Start with what is right, not what is wrong
- Set a positive tone
- Show appreciation
- Acknowledge people's unique skill sets
- Involve people in all levels of decision making
- Provide and encourage appreciative feedback

Source: Research to Action program – de Beaumont Foundation, Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, National Association of County and City Health Officials, Big Cities Health Coalition

Other Ideas to Try

- Implement a reward/recognition system
- Conduct regular “stay” interviews as part of performance review and planning processes
- Conduct exit interviews
- Implement flexible work hours
- Build a strength-based initiative to facilitate engagement
- Implement wellness policies and programs

Source: PH WINS Learning Collaborative Change Package –
Retention and Succession Planning

Next Steps

- ↵ What can you directly impact?
- ↵ What do you control?
- ↵ What can you influence?

Next Steps

When you come to the fork in the road, take it!



Addressing Our Challenges

- ↵ Don't let the perfect be the enemy of the good
- ↵ Try and try again
- ↵ Employ quality improvement methods and tools

Resources

- ↗ Academic Health Department Learning Community: www.phf.org/ahdlc
Supports the development, maintenance, and expansion of AHD partnerships
- ↗ Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals: www.phf.org/corecompetencies
Consensus set of foundational knowledge and skills for the broad practice of public health
- ↗ TRAIN Learning Network: www.train.org/virginia
Quality training opportunities for professionals who protect and improve the public's health
- ↗ Studies and Reports (hyperlinked):
 - [*PH WINS findings*](#)
 - [*Recruitment and Retention: What's Influencing the Decisions of Public Health Workers?*](#)
 - [*PH WINS Learning Collaborative Change Package: Retention and Succession Planning*](#)
 - [*Research to Action blog post*](#)



THANK YOU!!

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