

# Are You Flexing Enough to Retain Your Associates?

## 3 Key Strategies.



Experienced, knowledgeable and cheerful associates are the backbone of an exceptional customer experience. However, workforce retention and satisfaction are major hurdles for retailers, with 49% of store staff lacking loyalty to employers. Given the high-attrition nature of the retail industry, it's crucial for brands to grasp how flexible workforce management practices can inspire, satisfy and retain top-notch employees.

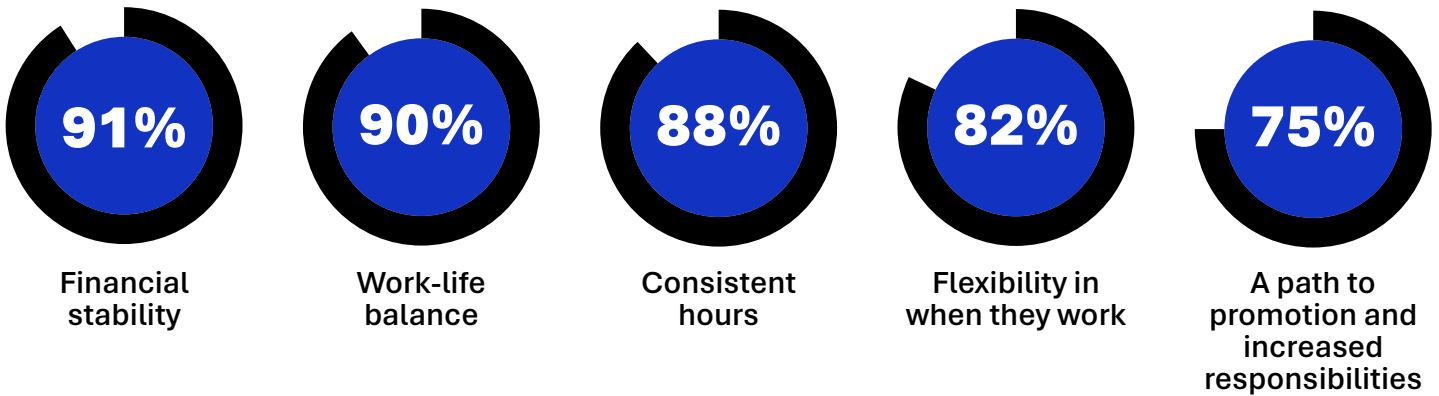
“

No other industry's employees rank lack of flexibility as the top driver of attrition. Ironically, the nature of frontline-retail work makes offering flexibility quite challenging. Can retailers create a more flexible workplace for store staff? The best frontline retail employers are innovating to do so – for example by offering shift swapping among peers and more autonomy for employees to decide what role they would like to play in the store on any given day.

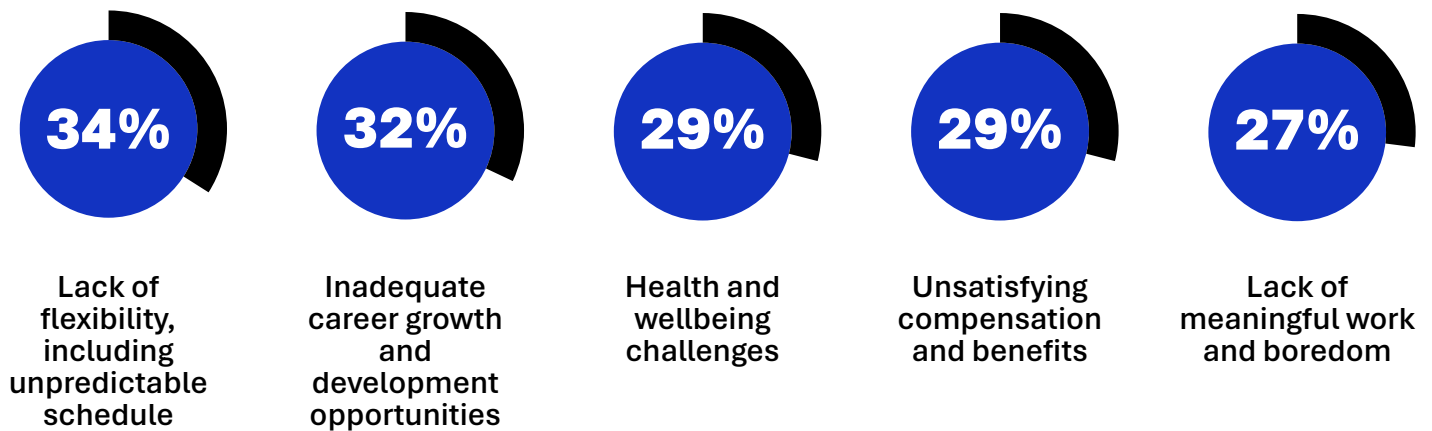
– McKinsey & Company<sup>1</sup>

# Why Retail Associates Stay - or Go

U.S. employees identify these job attributes as important priorities:<sup>2</sup>



Here are the top five reasons retail employees consider quitting:<sup>3</sup>



Flexibility in shift scheduling allows retail managers to accommodate employee preferences, such as part-time hours, flexible start and end times, or alternating workdays. But retail employers should also consider flexibility in cross-training opportunities – enabling retail employees to gain skills in different departments or roles within the store – on-demand shift-swapping, and leave policies.

# 3 Ways Retailers Use Tech to Flex the Workplace

An intelligent retail workforce management solution uses predictive analytics and forecasts to deliver a data-driven approach to workforce flexibility without risking productivity or customer experience. Here are three areas retailers can transform with flexibility to improve retention:



## 1 FLEXIBLE SCHEDULING

Traditional scheduling techniques are rigid, and employees want more flexibility and control over when they work. Automated scheduling technology supports work-life balance by allowing associates to pick their own shifts while ensuring workload coverage for the store. Mobile employee self-service lets associates view their schedule from home, request leave, and select shifts. For even more flexibility, gig scheduling allows associates or flex workers to bid or request shifts posted by the store.

**38%**

of workers – 64 million Americans – engaged in freelancing gig work in 2023.<sup>5</sup>

**73%**

of gig economy workers say they do it to have flexibility in their schedules.<sup>6</sup>

“

We've seen really high engagement with our flex (gig) scheduling efforts, both with our current in-store teammates and with our department managers and store managers. As well as really high enjoyment and high excitement from our existing teammates that are signing up for flex shifts, working in stores that are closer to their house and being able to have the option to pick up more hours when it suits their needs and when it fits their schedule.

– Adrian Salazar, Senior Manager, Operational Excellence, Schnuck Markets, Inc.



## FLEXIBLE LEAVE POLICIES

Life happens – associates value flexibility to help them balance family responsibilities with work priorities. A flexible workforce management platform with self-service empowers colleagues to request time off or swap shifts with coworkers (with management approval) to improve their ability to take care of themselves, their children, and their parents.

**44%**

of women

**37%**

of men

will likely need to change jobs to balance childcare and work.<sup>7</sup>



“

The colleagues have the opportunity to use things such as the shift-swap functionality and can change their availability week to week. Someone who is in education with limited availability during term time and then has more availability can submit those changes, submit holiday requests, and all sorts of things via the Logile Connect app.

– Chris Thompson, Labour Planning Manager, Booths



## FLEXIBLE CROSS-TRAINING

Frontline workers want meaningful and interesting work assignments. Retailers benefit from the agility and resilience that comes from cross-training employees to perform multiple tasks. Store execution and task management technology make it easier to cross-train employees and move them around the store to maximize productivity and improve employee engagement.

**44%**

of employers believe workers' skills will be disrupted in the next five years.<sup>8</sup>

**81%**

of organizations plan to adopt more on-the-job learning and training.<sup>9</sup>

“

Cross-scheduling has taken things to another level. Associates have absolutely loved it. It breaks up their day, gives them an opportunity to learn more around the store and other departments.

– Phil McElfresh, Director of Labor and Process Improvement, Heinen's

# Complimentary Report: Future of the Frontline

Get more tips to help leverage technology and position your brand as an innovator in flexible workforce management. This complimentary report explores key trends in AI, flexible work, mobile technology, and learning and development.

<sup>1</sup>McKinsey & Company, August 2022.

<sup>2</sup>Forbes, "Work Life Balance."

<sup>3</sup>McKinsey & Company, "[How retailers can attract and retain frontline talent amid the Great Attrition](#)," David Fuller, Bryan Logan, Pollo Suarez, and Aneliya Valkova, August 2022.

<sup>4</sup>Chain Store Age and Logile, "[The Future of the Frontline: Top Tech Tactics for Effective Retail Workforce Management](#)," Maia Jenkins, 2023.

<sup>5</sup>Upwork, "[Freelance Forward 2023](#)."

<sup>6</sup>Upwork, 2023.

<sup>7</sup>Harris Poll for Catalyst, "[Survey Finds Four in Ten Working Mothers Likely to Change Jobs Due to Childcare Issues](#)," October 5, 2023.

<sup>8</sup>World Economic Forum, "[Future of Jobs Report 2023](#)," 2023.

<sup>9</sup>World Economic Forum, 2023.