

Souls entrusted, *not assets retained.*

> *What if we train them and they leave? What if we don't and they stay?*

Two kinds of leaders exist. One gives people room to grow, even beyond the company. The other treats a good employee as an asset to retain, promising advancement but never delivering, because the person is too valuable where they sit. People notice the gap.

Promises are not promotions.

One company saw its people as souls entrusted to them. When they learned a valued employee dreamed of becoming a pilot, they encouraged flight school and helped him earn his license. He left to fly full time.

Critics ask why anyone would do that. But people are entrusted to you for a season; median tenure is 3.9 years (BLS, 2024). The difference is trust.

The evidence favors leaders who advance their own. In a seven-year study of 5,300 employees in financial services, Matthew Bidwell found that people hired from outside commanded salaries nearly 20 percent higher, yet trailed on performance reviews for their first two years and were 61 percent more likely to be dismissed.

There is a hidden cost as well. When a capable insider is bypassed and then asked to train the newcomer, the message lands hard. Many start looking for the exit, however strong the new hire proves to be.

Advance people as they earn it, even if they leave, and your reputation draws more capable people. Good soil grows good seeds. Who on your team are you holding back?

Boaz Strategic helps leaders develop people for the season they have them.

Sources: Snell, Morris & Bohlander, Managing Human Resources; Bidwell, ASQ (2011); U.S. BLS, Employee Tenure (2024)