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How to Retain Your Best Faculty Members

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How to Retain Your Best Faculty Members

As department chairs, we devote a great deal of time and energy to *recruiting* excellent faculty members, but we spend far less time and energy trying to retain them. Superb college professors are vital to a department's success, but they are also highly competitive in the marketplace. They have options and, if they begin to think that they can do better (financially or otherwise) elsewhere or even outside of academia, they'll start *looking* elsewhere.

No one, of course, would suggest that a department chair should ever "trick" a faculty member into staying or "guilt" a person into remaining in the department when he or she would actually be better off at another school. But we also frequently lose truly excellent colleagues who could have a long, happy, and successful career in our programs simply because we don't take steps to make them feel "at home" at our institutions.

We've learned a great deal about how to retain *students* in recent years, but we don't apply many of these same lessons to our faculty members. We give students a First Year Experience, but still cram faculty orientation and onboarding into a day or two. We take steps to promote student engagement, but don't even think about *faculty* engagement.

In this best practices workshop, we'll explore how to apply certain strategies to our work at the departmental level so as to increase the likelihood that more of our best faculty members will choose to remain with us.