

Education Strategies to Reduce Attrition

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**Complete the
Retention Readiness Checklist.**

Because self-evaluation is good!

Terminology

- **Attrition**

- The reduction in student numbers based on withdrawal from a course of study (including transfers or leaves of absence).

- **Retention**

- When a student remains at the same institution and completes a course of study.

- **Resilience**

- The ability to recover from or adjust to challenges, misfortunes, or change.

- **Persistence**

- The voluntary continuation of a goal-directed action in spite of obstacles, difficulties, or discouragement.

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Good Drop

- I broke my pelvis and I can't do massage for six months.
- I don't like touching people and I'm crystal clear that I don't want to be a massage therapist.

Bad Drop

- I failed my anatomy exam and I'm too stupid to pass the class.
- My boyfriend doesn't want me to touch other men's butts.
- No one in my class likes me and I can't find a partner for exchanges.

The Cost of One Student Drop

- Tuition \$9000 a year
- 1 student = \$750 a month of revenue
- The student starts in September and drops in November
- Represents a loss of \$7500
- Represents a loss of staff investment
- Leads to low classroom population – waste of resources
- Lower student morale / bad PR
- Leads to combined classes and less work for instructors

Why Retention is Everyone's Focus

- Protects the school's business.
- Dropping out often equals another academic failure that becomes part of a student's educational legacy.
- High attrition rates are a direct reflection on the strength or weakness of the Education Department and the institution.
- Good drops account for between 3% to 5% of attrition – anything above 5% requires attention.

Factors Influencing Retention

- **Cognitive Factors**

- The knowledge and academic ability a student brings to the training program.

- **Social Factors**

- Includes family and peer support, career goals, educational legacy, ability to cope in social situations.

- **Institutional Factors**

- The school's responsiveness to student needs.

Group Break Out Project!

1. Review the student Persistence and Retention Table.
2. Review your answers on the Retention Readiness Checklist.
3. Pretend that the group at your table represents a school's retention team.
4. Use the Student Retention Plan worksheet to develop four strategies for reducing attrition at your imaginary school.
5. Prepare to share your findings with the larger Forum group.

Identify the common obstacles that students face while in your school.

What is one way your group
brainstormed to overcome an
obstacle?

What is one student need, which if met, could improve student retention?
What ideas did you have for ways that your school could help students to meet this need?

Would your group identify the role that Presidents, Directors of Education, and Program Managers play in student retention?

Would your group identify the role that faculty plays in student retention?

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What are some of the tasks associated with this strategy?

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Are there any strategies, which have not already been described that a group would like to share?

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What data will your group collect to track attrition and retention rates?

How will you capture and analyze this data?

Other Comments?
