

EVALUATION OF THE STAFF RETENTION ISSUES FACED BY A
MEDIUM-LARGE SIZED SERVICE DELIVERY CHARITY.

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requirement for the degree of MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

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ABSTRACT

Evaluation of the staff retention issues faced by a medium-large sized service delivery charity

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The conundrum of employee retention and turnover and its subsequent impact on an organisation's performance is not a new phenomenon. People moving on can result in employers losing knowledge, experience and organisational memory; not to mention the time and cost; and this is the premise from which organisations attempt to do things differently. Either through employee engagement strategies, talent management pathways, understanding the employer value proposition, pouring over exit interviews, and/or attempting to analyse organisational behaviour. There is also the view that new people can bring fresh perspective, new ideas and expertise to the workplace and that a healthy turnover is important for efficiency (Houghton & Bodey, 2019).

This research is an evaluation of the staff retention issues faced by a medium-large sized service delivery charity. The three objectives aim to evaluate the issues of staff retention, to evaluate retention within one charity in particular and to lead to the development of a framework for understanding the optimum staff retention cycle in that charity.

The review of the literature revealed how the drivers for job satisfaction, job embeddedness and perceptions of human resource practices (participation in decision making, fairness of rewards, and growth opportunities) are all considerations for employee retention, underpinned by the influencing factor of the employee as an individual born into a specific generation. The question "why employees stay" has become as important to improving retention as understanding why they leave compounded by the suggested impact of generational differences (Holtom, et al., 2008) (Anderson, 2020). Using BeyondAutism, a medium-large sized service delivery charity as a case study, the findings led to the development of a proposed Retention Hierarchy Model (Fig. 18).

The themes and issues of staff retention were evaluated through the analysis of a research questionnaire, drawing on quotations from open text questions; in addition to analysis of secondary data - exit interview reports and annual staff survey reports from BeyondAutism for the period 2016 to 2020. Quantitative data was used to evaluate staff retention specifically within BeyondAutism, drawing on turnover figures within a defined interval (2016 – 2020) to analyse historical trends.

To critically evaluate staff retention at BeyondAutism a thematic analysis approach was taken, to enable analysis of key themes and patterns, and to draw and verify conclusions (Saunders, et al., 2019) (Clarke & Braun, 2017). Key phrases (stress, burnout, pay, leadership, benefits, support, job satisfaction, career development and external factors such as moving or family issues) were sought from the historic collated reports and aligned with the BeyondAutism demographic data of the period 2016 – 2020.

The data indicated that, at BeyondAutism, there are key factors driving employees to leave: lack of career development, lack of support and training and not feeling valued. In addition, the key factors underpinning the reasons employees stay were: enjoying their work, feeling like they are making a difference and enjoying working in their team, alongside the desire for career progression within the organisation. The findings led to the development of the Retention Hierarchy Model (Fig.18) to inform practice and improve staff retention.

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

There appears to be a widely held view that turnover can have a negative impact on an organisation's performance (Green, 2019). People moving on can result in employers losing knowledge, experience and organisational memory; and this is the premise from which organisations attempt to do things differently. Either through employee engagement strategies, talent management pathways, understanding the employer value proposition, pouring over exit interviews, and/or attempting to analyse organisational behaviour.

There is also the view that new people can bring fresh perspective, new ideas and expertise to the workplace and that staff turnover can offer opportunities (Houghton & Bodey, 2019) (Sheedy, 2018). However, McKinsey & Company report that “companies go through cycles of initiatives to improve their talent processes. Yet they reap only incremental improvements, and the vast majority of leaders report that their companies neither recruit enough highly talented people nor believe that their current strategies will work” (Keller & Meaney, 2018) and the data from the BeyondAutism annual staff survey (2019, 2018 and 2017) certainly corroborates this.

Recruiting and training new people costs time and money so surely it is better to improve retention, though retaining people that are inefficient or incompetent is counterproductive to the organisations outcomes. There is a school of thought that people behave in a way that suggests incompetence due to the environment in which they are working (Daniels, 2016). That the effect of a workplace culture and the leadership that drives it will naturally create an environment that either supports the recruitment and retention of the staff an organisation actually wants to keep or will detrimentally enhance turnover (Sinek, 2014).

There is a growing body of work that considers the generational differences in the workplace as an additional dimension that impacts employee's motivation and can underpin the drivers for retention (Twenge & Campbell, 2008) (Silletto, 2018). This study will research a medium – large size service delivery charity, BeyondAutism and within this context it is worth noting that the demographics of the staff group indicate that at least 65% are in the “Tutor” job role (Fig. 1) and of those at least 85% are Millennials or Gen Z (Fig. 5). BeyondAutism, with a turnover of circa £6m at the time of the research (BeyondAutism, 2019), could be categorised as a medium-large size, local charity, and is based predominantly in London (Hornung, 2019).

Since 2015 BeyondAutism has undergone a remarkable transformation, growing exponentially in response to need; there are now 2 schools educating over 100 pupils; an Early Year's Service that met the needs of over 70 families in 2019; two Post-19 hubs enabling up to 30 young adults to learn by accessing their local communities and an outreach and training provision that responds to need across London and the home-counties supported by the Research and Learning hub (BeyondAutism, 2019).

The charity employed over 200 staff in 2020 and this continues to grow in response to the increasing numbers of school pupils and the expansion of other services (BeyondAutism, 2019). The spread of employees is illustrated as:

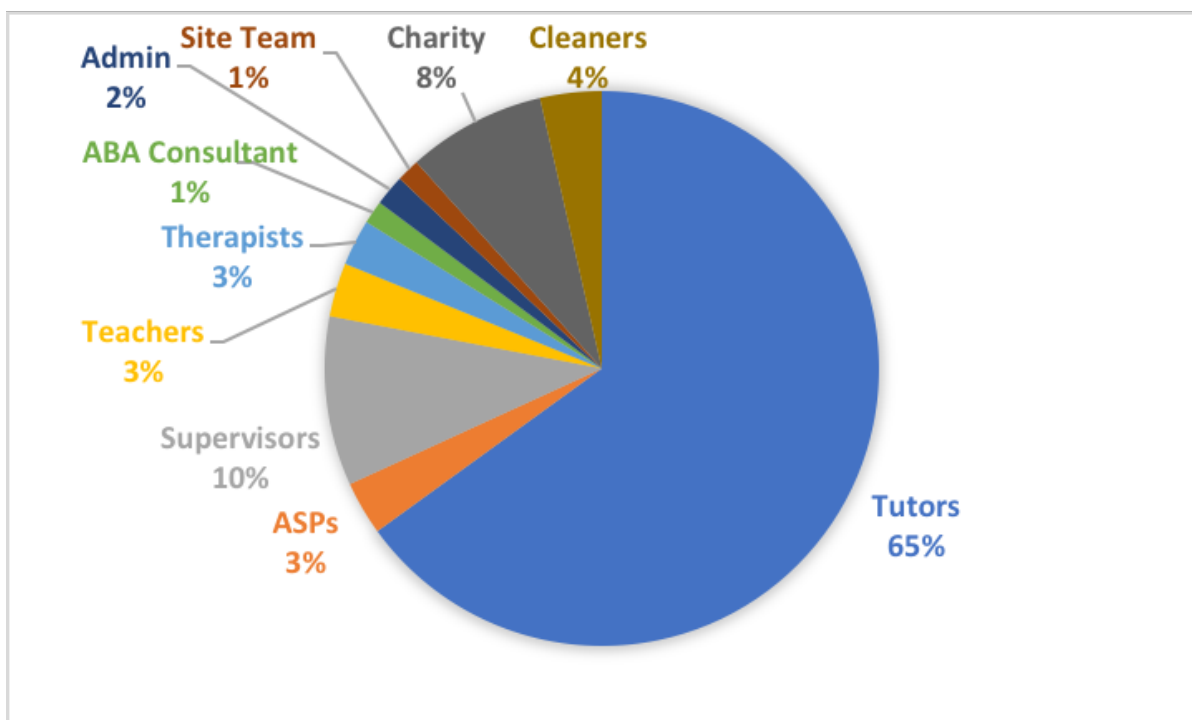


Figure 1 - BeyondAutism 2020

The data over time represented in BeyondAutism's internal HR reports 2016 – 2020 (Table 3), highlights that annual staff turnover, whilst an improving picture has been approximately 47%. This and the fact that the BeyondAutism annual staff survey results (2016-2020) and exit interviews (2016-2020) resonate with the widely understood notion that people leave an organisation in one of three categories: "...interpersonal issues... workload problems... or a lack of recognition" appears to correlate in part with the discourse around the Millennial generation (Hall, 2019) (Silletto, 2018) (Twenge & Campbell, 2008).

BeyondAutism operates within a specific field – service provision, including schools, for people with autism and their families and this can add a degree of complexity to the environment in which employees are challenged to stay (Powell & York, 1992).

Teacher turnover in general is explored by Gibbons et.al (2018) where they give an account of the potential benefits to turnover namely that teachers gain a variety of experiences and new ideas are brought into schools. They do also highlight the specific issues with teachers leaving: new arrivals take time to assimilate, they take school-specific knowledge with them, different teaching styles resulting in a lack of continuity for the learner. Within the field of special education, the impact of turnover has been found to be further compounded, though much of the literature discusses the impact of teaching within Special Educational Needs (SEN) on the employee's job satisfaction and subsequent turnover rates, rather than on the effect to pupils (Stempien & Loeb, 2002)

It is also worth considering the effects on staff working within an environment where children and young adults with autism can demonstrate challenging behaviour; and the cyclical effect of reinforcing behaviours which the literature indicates may lead to staff leaving the organisation (Hastings, 2005). Kelly et.al (2007) looked specifically at the experience of stress and the effect of challenging behaviour on staff in special schools in Ireland and their findings are helpful when framing the considerations for BeyondAutism. They cite Jenkins et.al (1997) when describing "staff were found to have higher levels of anxiety, feelings of being less practically supported and less clear about identifying risk situations, and had lower job satisfaction, than those who were not exposed to challenging behaviour". (Kelly, et al., 2007). They found that staff rated challenging behaviour as the most significant source of stress and were often more emotionally exhausted. This concept, when linked to the Bakker et.al (2014) study of burnout and work engagement provides an interesting insight into why a BeyondAutism employee may decide to leave. The demands of working with children who present challenging behaviours could contribute to burnout as described by Bakker, et.al. (2014) where the job demands of role stress, stressful events, workload and work pressure are important predictors of burnout, especially of exhaustion and cynicism (Hastings, 2005) (Bakker, et al., 2014). Twenge and Campbell (2008) counsel against aiming to reduce all stress as it can positively challenge employees to produce a sustained level of high performance. This balance is a delicate one and can be inextricably linked to the psychological contract's employees make with the organisation.

"The term 'psychological contract' refers to individuals' expectations, beliefs, ambitions and obligations, as perceived by the employer and the worker." (CIPD, 2020). Research has considered the relationship of the psychological contract between employer and employee (Kickul & Lester, 2001) (Sandhya & Sulphay, 2020) (Bal, et al., 2013). Overall positive attitudes towards the job and the organisation (engagement and intention to remain with the organisation) are enhanced by employer fulfilment of the psychological contract among those

early in their career with the organisation, thus supporting Weinstein (2013, p.51) “it is important to retain employees throughout their career, but never more so than in the first months after they are hired”. This is important when drawing parallels with employees working within the field of SEN as employees with strong intentions to leave the organization exert less effort and end up with lower expectations, which can have a cyclical effect on burnout for the remaining employees (Twenge & Campbell, 2008).

The puzzle is this: that despite a wide number of initiatives and interventions, for example having an attractive employer value proposition through employee benefit schemes, employee support programmes, organisational pension scheme, ill health packages, staff recognition programmes, BeyondAutism has been unable to improve staff retention. This is proving to be problematic financially, to maintain quality and to grow in a sustainable way; therefore, the research will examine the literature and research in relation to staff retention, compare this to the differing views of what makes staff want to stay, underpinned by an understanding of the staff retention trends at BeyondAutism to develop a model to understand and improve staff retention.

Chapter 2 - Literature review

This chapter draws together the literature exploring staff retention: why is retention important, why do employees stay, why employees leave, how do generational factors influence retention and what models exist to improve retention.

The view that turnover can have a negative impact on an organisation's performance is covered extensively in the literature (Green, 2019) (Gupta-Sunderji, 2004) (Hall, 2019) (Mitchell, et al., 2017) (Porter, 2004). People moving on can result in employers losing knowledge, experience and organisational memory (Larkin & Burgess, 2013). The turnover cycle also bears a cost both financially and in management resource (Porter, 2004) (Slack, et al., 2016). This is the premise from which organisations attempt to do things differently either through employee engagement strategies, talent management pathways, understanding the employer value proposition, pouring over exit interviews, and/or attempting to analyse organisational behaviour.

There is also the view that new people can bring fresh perspective, new ideas and expertise to the workplace and that “retaining staff, while maintaining a healthy turnover, is important for efficiency” (Houghton & Bodey, 2019). This is further supported by the notion that staff turnover can offer opportunities for others within an organisation, through promotion (Sheedy, 2018). However, McKinsey & Company report that “companies go through cycles of initiatives to improve their talent processes. Yet they reap only incremental improvements, and the vast majority of leaders report that their companies neither recruit enough highly talented people nor believe that their current strategies will work” (Keller & Meaney, 2018)

There is much to consider: generational factors in the workforce (Ng, et al., 2010), why staff stay (Mitchell, et al., 2017) and whether this is a good thing. Charities need to operate as businesses in order to be sustainable and viable to achieve their mission, in pursuit of a vision that underpins their purpose. Sustaining competitive advantage and performance is arguably as crucial for not-for-profits as for global business, so that income can be generated through a variety of sources, whilst meeting the needs of a diverse group of *customer/beneficiary* (Mintzberg, et al., 2009) (Porter, 2004). However, whether the drivers are the same for retention in Charities is a subject that does not appear to be widely researched.

2.1 Importance of retention.

Starting with the well documented paradigm that people/human resources are crucial to the success of business strategy, staff retention refers to the ability of an organisation to keep its employees (Porter, 2004) (Needle, 2015) (Slack, et al., 2016) (Conerly, 2019). Losing staff doesn't simply have a financial cost to the organisation, it can affect the culture and atmosphere for those still working there and the progress made towards achieving business objectives (Fox, 2014). The loss of organisational memory and expertise and the impact on recruitment due to the profile/perception of the organisation with high turnover further drives the imperative for retention (Larkin & Burgess, 2013).

BeyondAutism operates within a specific field – service provision, including schools, for people with autism and their families. This adds a degree of complexity to the environment in which employees are challenged to stay, for example stress, burnout and the need for social support. (Powell & York, 1992) (Hastings, 2005) (Demerouti, et al., 2001).

Teacher turnover in general is explored by Gibbons, et.al (2018) where they give an account of the potential benefits to turnover in that teachers gain a variety of experiences and new ideas are subsequently brought into schools. They do also highlight the specific issues with teachers leaving: new arrivals take time to assimilate, they take school-specific knowledge with them and different teaching styles that can result in a lack of continuity for the learner. Within the field of special education, the effect on the learner has been found to be further compounded; however much of the literature discusses the impact of teaching within SEN on the employee's job satisfaction and subsequent turnover rates, rather than on the effect to pupils (Stempien & Loeb, 2002).

2.2 Why employees stay

Theories from as long ago as the 1960's suggest that there are a range of underpinning drivers that determine why employees stay: motivation and hygiene factors (Herzberg, 1966), employee goal alignment with the organisation (Vroom, 1964), a sense of equity (Adams, 1963) and whether an employee feels a connection with the organisation (Holtom, et al., 2008)

On first consideration one might assume that why staff stay and why staff leave are two sides of the same coin: you stay because you like your job, you leave because you don't. However, it would appear that it is not that simple. Literature covers the reasons why employees want to stay: job satisfaction (Locke, 1970) (CIPD, 2020) (Holtom, et al., 2008) (Silletto, 2018), job

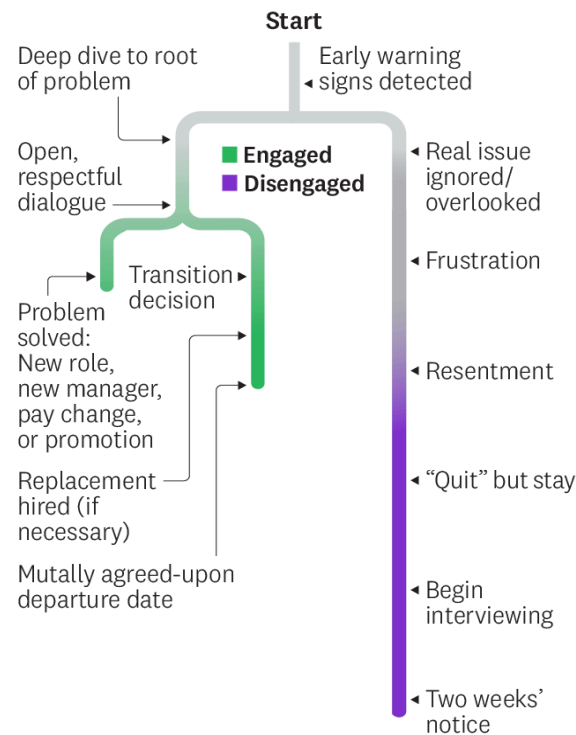
embeddedness (Mitchell, et al., 2017) (Yao, et al., 2004) (Zhang, et al., 2019) and *perceptions of supportive* (POS) human resource practices (participation in decision making, fairness of rewards, and growth opportunities) (Allen, et al., 2003). Which, when considered together, create an environment in which the decision to stay is as much the employees as it is the employers (Qazi, et al., 2015).

Job satisfaction is widely understood to have strong overlaps with the theories explaining human motivation for example, Maslow, Herzberg, and Locke, and is often measured by five categories: pay, opportunities for advancement, recognition, autonomy and meaning (Blackstone, 2019). Each of these elements have been discussed in the literature in a bid to understand why employees stay, or at least how to make them want to stay.

The development of job embeddedness theory has updated the theories of the 1960's. The motivator factors for retention of Herzberg's Theory: recognition, achievement, work, growth and advancement combined with his hygiene factors of relationship with the boss, supervision, salary, relationship with colleagues, work conditions and company policies. These appear to underpin the notion that to stay there needs to be a connection of the employee to the organisation, taking into consideration knowledge, skills, favourable work environments and connection within the community (Yao, et al., 2004)

Qazi et al (2015, p.599) argue that "employees are not machines...they are social beings having certain expectations, apprehensions, emotional and physical needs and appreciation necessities" which would support the notion of job embeddedness, "the forces that keep a person from leaving his or her job" (Yao, et.al. 2004, p.159).

Employers are looking to increase the probability that valuable employees stay, and less valuable employees leave, leading to a process of understanding why they stay, rather than simply considering traditional exit interviews (Holtom, et al., 2008). When recruiting the aim is to employ people who will want to stay, who will align with the organisation's vision and values and who add value to the organisation (CIPD, 2020) (Mintzberg, et al., 2009). This long held notion has been challenged by Glazer (2019) who shares a theory that "leaders need to make discussions about career transitions and job opportunities less taboo in the first place" (Glazer, 2019 p.3) He goes on to explain that discussing how it is expected that an employee will depart the organisation can begin in the onboarding process and that this, coupled with structured conversations will improve employee engagement and reduce stressful turnover. Figure 2 gives a simple model to consider when addressing staff retention issues.



Source: Robert Glazer

HBR

Figure 2 - Staff retention considerations (Glazer 2019)

Where Herzberg (1966) argues that employees are motivated to stay by internal values, underpinning the internal influences of job embeddedness, there is also the view that external factors can play a role in whether or not an employee stays: where someone lives, family responsibilities and financial pressures (Paille, 2013) (Sinek, 2019). These are factors broadly beyond the control of the organisation though can be supported through retention strategies, for example company policies (e.g. maternity, home relocation and flexible working).

The idea that why employees stay is influenced by both intrinsic and extrinsic motivating factors was explored by Samuel and Chipunza (2009). They concluded that training and development, sense of belonging, challenging/interesting work and freedom for innovative thinking influenced retention. They found that there was some variation between public and private sector employees when it came to pay, promotion, reward and recognition - arguing that public sector organisations are service driven and not dependent on profits to survive.

Whether employees are more likely to stay working in a charity could be linked to intrinsic motivators of autonomy, task variety and greater influence on the job, with an understanding that these therefore need to be nurtured (Mirvis & Hackett, 1983). Benz, in comparing non-

profit employees with for-profit employees, extends this notion highlighting that when considering pay differential and job satisfaction, non-profit employees were generally more satisfied and tended to be driven by what they were doing rather than the monetary reward for doing it (Benz, 2005).

2.3 Why employees leave

As already highlighted, this is not a simple question to answer. Qazi. et.al state that “salary structure discontent, low job satisfaction and overall job dissatisfaction lead to turnover intentions” (Qazi et.al., 2015 p.600). However, in her book, Silletto cites Stern & Wagner (2016) when stating that the answer to retention is not pay and that work force studies have shown that staff will stay in lower-paying positions if they felt valued, appreciated and well-managed.

The view that employees leave due to burnout (Demerouti, et al., 2001), high job demands with low job resources (Bakker, et al., 2014) and lack of job satisfaction (Holtom, et al., 2008) is of particular interest within a service delivery charity like BeyondAutism. This can be linked to literature about the sector that highlights the additional stress of working in services for people with special educational needs and disabilities, leading to employees leaving (Kelly, et al., 2007) (Hastings, 2005).

Literature also covers the notion that high staff turnover can become a self-fulfilling prophecy if considering the importance of employer brand. If the organisation is not known as an *Employer of Choice* due to the reputation promulgated by exiting employees, then recruiting new employees and/or retaining others can become more difficult (Tanwar & Prasad, 2016) (Kashyap & Verma, 2018).

Paille (2013) describes a number of typical behaviours that can be observed when an employee is withdrawing from an organisation, citing Rose (1998) Johns (2002) Berry, Lelchook and Clark (2011) he lists lateness, absenteeism and turnover. He also highlights that poor citizenship and poor job performance can also be included. Holtom, et.al (2008) raise the question of early turnover citing Hom & Griffeth’s (1995) research that identified “turnover often occurs early on in an employee’s tenure”.

An interesting dimension to predicting when an employee might leave could come from understanding how career orientation shapes the job satisfaction – turnover link. Tschopp, et.al (2014) suggest that “employees with an independent career orientation are ready to

move on at any time regardless of how good any particular job is” (Tschopp, et.al, 2014, p.155). This could suggest that adopting Glazer’s (2019) approach would give this insight to the employer

It is also worth considering the effects on staff working within an environment where children and young adults with autism can demonstrate behaviours perceived to challenge. Hastings (2005) researched the causal effects of the staff’s own behaviours in response to dealing with pupils who present challenging behaviours. He suggests that the cyclical effect of this reinforcing behaviour may lead to staff leaving the organisation, due to stress and the impact on their wellbeing at work (Hastings, 2005). Hasting (2005) also highlights that the organisational environment (policies and line-management), coupled with aspects such as team working relationships, affects how staff cope with children and young adults presenting challenging behaviour.

Kelly et.al (2007) looked specifically at the experience of stress and the effect of challenging behaviour on staff in special schools in Ireland and their findings are helpful when framing the considerations for BeyondAutism. They cite Jenkins et.al (1997) when describing “staff were found to have higher levels of anxiety, feelings of being less practically supported and less clear about identifying risk situations, and had lower job satisfaction, than those who were not exposed to challenging behaviour” (Kelly, et.al 2007, p.163).

In specialist settings staff rated challenging behaviour as the most significant source of stress and were often more emotionally exhausted (Hastings, 2005). This concept, when linked to Bakker, et.al’s 2014 study of burnout and work engagement provides an interesting insight into why a BeyondAutism employee may decide to leave. The demands of working with children who present challenging behaviours could contribute to burnout as described by Bakker, et.al. The job demands of role stress, stressful events, workload and work pressure are important predictors of burnout, especially of exhaustion and cynicism (Bakker, et al., 2014).

Twenge and Campbell (2008) counsel against aiming to reduce all stress in the workplace as it can positively challenge employees to produce a sustained level of high performance. This balance is a delicate one and can be inextricably linked to the psychological contract’s employees make with the organisation.

2.4 Generational factors in the workforce

A dynamic that exists for BeyondAutism is the demographic of the frontline delivery staff team (Trainee Tutors and Tutors). A vast majority of this group are university graduates (BeyondAutism internal equality monitoring data 2017-2019), in their first job, they are Millennials. Millennials are considered to have been born between 1981 and 1996. There is now the new Generation Z, those born between 1997 and 2012, who are beginning to enter the workforce (Anderson, 2020).

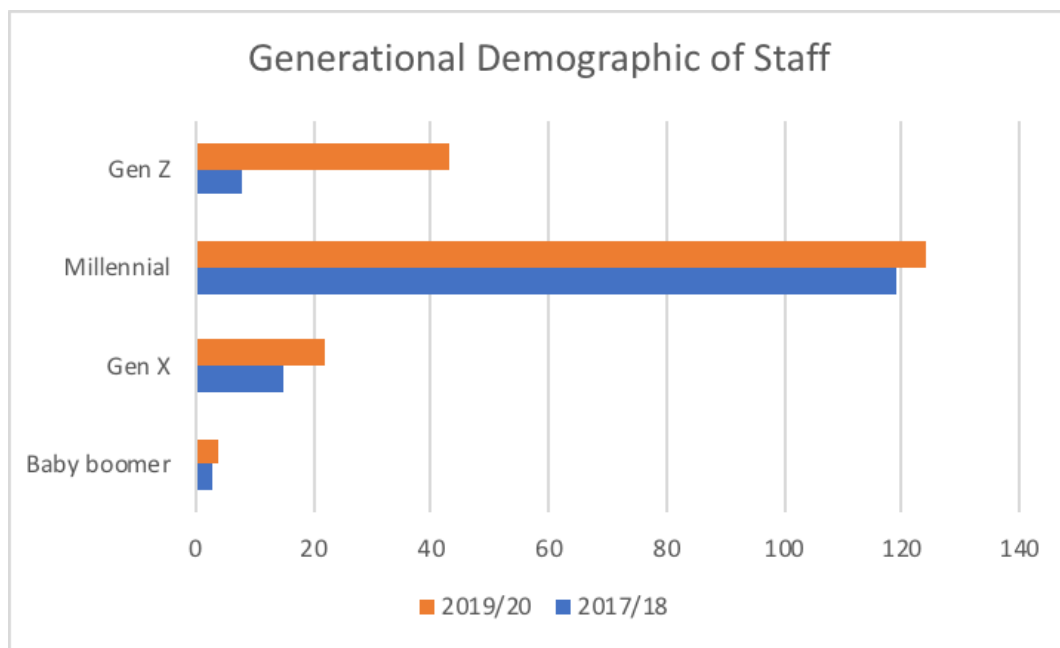


Figure 3 - Generational demographic at BeyondAutism

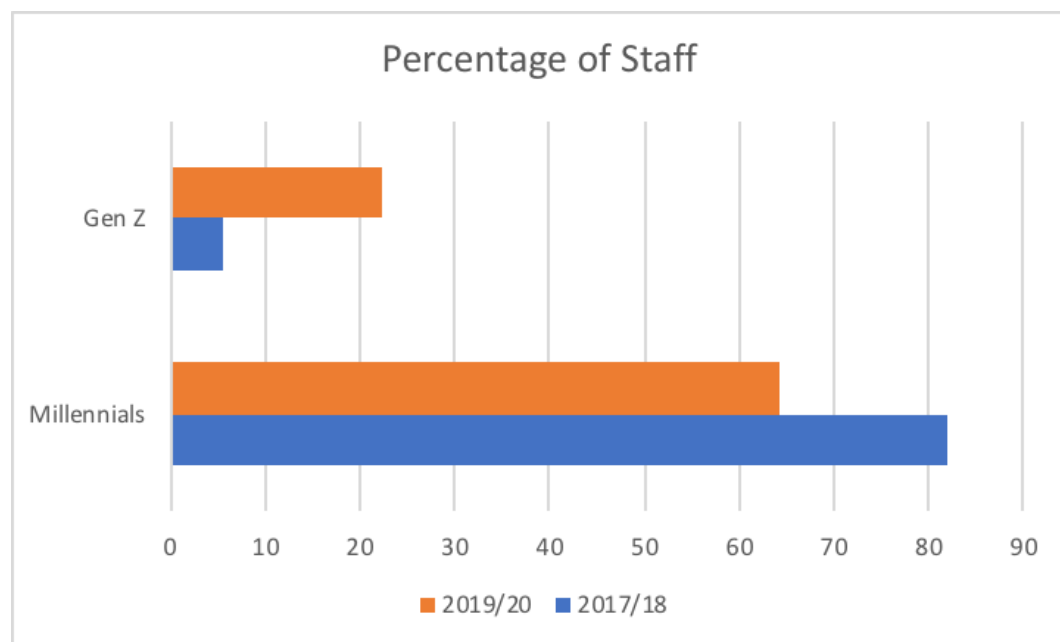


Figure 4 - Millennial and Gen Z at BeyondAutism

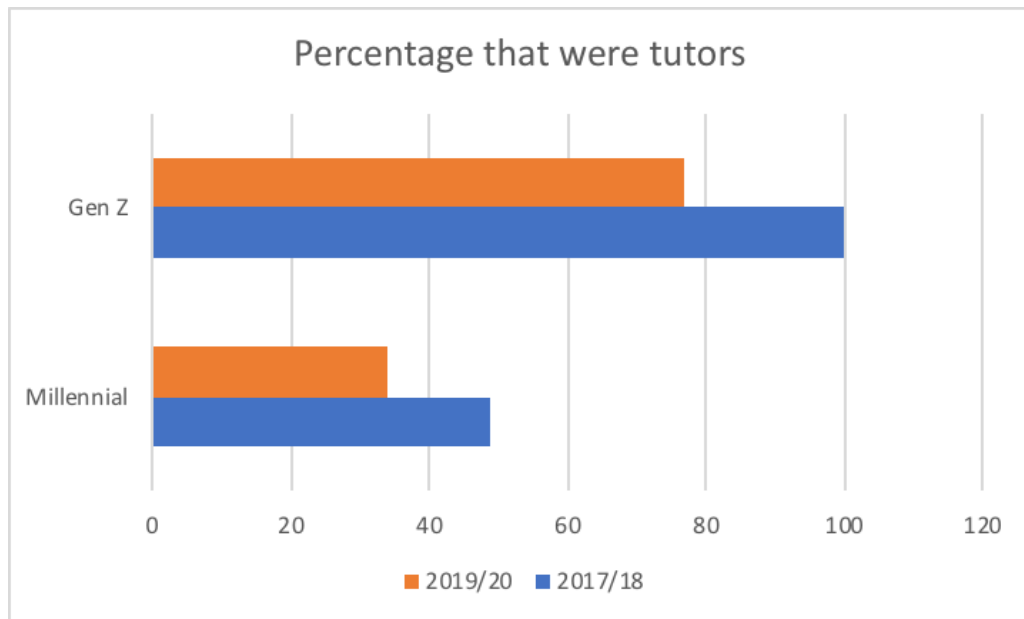


Figure 5 - Generational demographic for Tutors at BeyondAutism

There is a growing body of literature that attempts to explain the psychology of Millennials and their impact on the workplace (Blain, 2008) (Ng, et al., 2010) (Gorman, et al., 2004). The literature cites their need for fulfilment, to be heard, to have the digital tech that makes their job “easier” and their ability to decide quickly to leave a job that doesn’t live up to these expectations. (Twenge & Campbell, 2008) (Silletto, 2018)

Haserot (2013) gives an interesting insight into the multigenerational workforce where usually an earlier generation will be hiring a more recent generation. She highlights that of the generations considered (Baby Boomers, Gen X and Gen Y(Millennials)) all are looking for the same factors: meaningful work, opportunity to learn and grow, financial compensation, non-financial rewards and relief from intense stress; however different generations elicit different behaviours, expectations and perceptions of those factors being satisfied.

Silletto extended her book to include the Millennial dynamic, explaining why this generation value factors like open door policies, performance management meetings and town-hall style gatherings where they feel their voice matters and how this can rub against leadership and management who are Baby Boomers or Gen X (Silletto, 2018). Simon Sinek, in his book *Leaders Eat Last*, explains that Millennials get frustrated with their employers because they believe that their managers don’t understand them or their lifestyles, don’t give enough feedback, don’t take full advantage of their skills and don’t show appreciation of their work. He also highlights that their self-esteem is impacted by the fact that their employers don’t shower them with praise and aren’t always there to guide them or explain everything as their parents had done (Sinek, 2017).

The article by Twenge and Campbell highlighted that generational differences are psychological and that by understanding the differences, employers will be more successful (Twenge & Campbell, 2008) Figure 6 illustrates where the generational disconnects could occur, for example, if the recruiting manager is a Baby Boomer and they don't promote employee training then they are unlikely to attract Millennials or Gen Z.

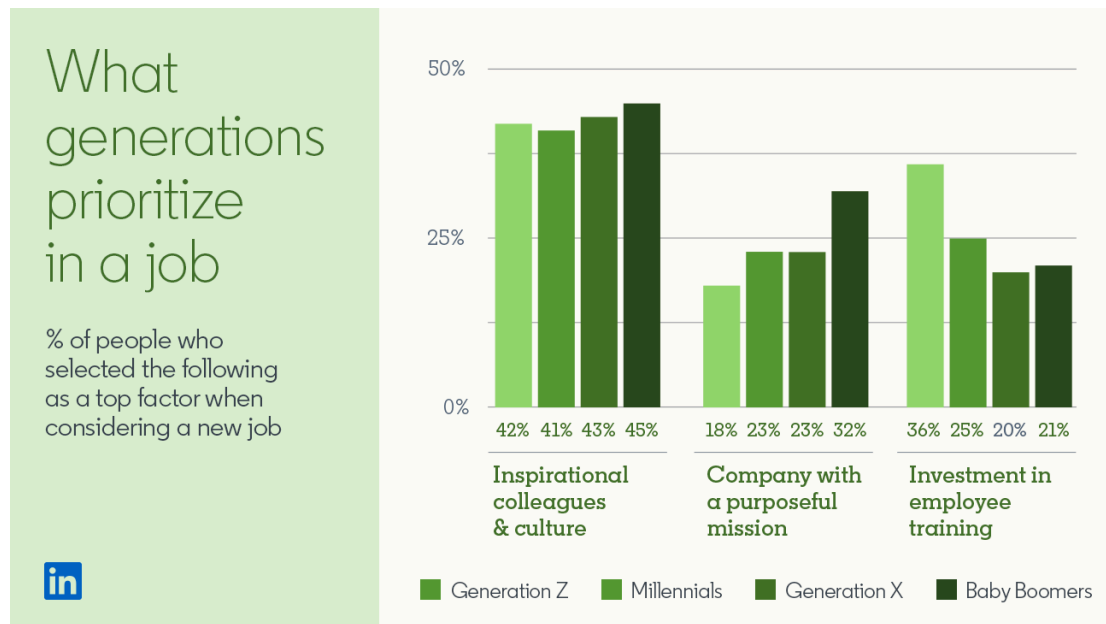


Figure 6 - A Guide for the Ages (Anderson, 2020)

2.5 Models of employee retention

Though there is no evidence to suggest that the understanding and knowledge of any particular sector could help to predict its retention/turnover, research and authors across the internet highlight “Top 5 Reasons for employee turnover” (Google, 2020) or “Top 3 motivators for retention” (Gupta-Sunderji, 2004) with a suggestion that if the employer can pinpoint these then there is at least a starting point.

The CIPD website invites us to “Learn how to recruit, grow and retain the right employees with topics on recruitment and induction, employee pay and benefits, performance management and people development”. Ronda, et.al (2018) discuss how attracting employees in a highly competitive global environment is underpinned by “brand attractiveness”. Smither (2003) concluded employees at every phase of the life cycle need to believe that the work they do is important and meaningful. From the literature already considered this appears to challenge employers when trying to retain the right staff, for the right amount of time, in the right roles. In an attempt to counter turnover, organisations adopt an extensive toolkit to entice an employee to stay including benefits packages, further

training opportunities, access to wellbeing activities like counselling, staff social committees, and favourable policies for sickness absence. Over the years there have been numerous models, many of which tend to focus on one dimension or aspect of the retention/turnover conundrum; for example, only considering internal factors; or turnover intention linked specifically to job performance. Long, et.al's (2012) analysis of turnover models, in relation to employee loyalty as a key driver for retention, highlighted the complexity of the issue for organisations of retaining staff without being able to recommend any particular model. Their analysis again only considered the one lens – employee loyalty.

In an attempt to address the complexity, Zheng, et.al., (2010) discuss the unfolding model of voluntary turnover (Mitchell and Lee, 2003), highlighting that job coupling plays a role equivalent to that of job satisfaction and organizational commitment. *Job Coupling* represents a broad cluster of factors that influence an employee's decision to stay in an organisation. Under certain conditions, job coupling is viewed as a more decisive factor directly leading to employees' voluntary turnover (Zheng, et al., 2010). They go onto argue that the model put forward by Allen and Griffeth (1999) is more insightful when considering the turnover from organisations of high performing employees i.e. the ones that should be retained. The review of these models led to a proposed integrated model, with job coupling as the pivotal element:

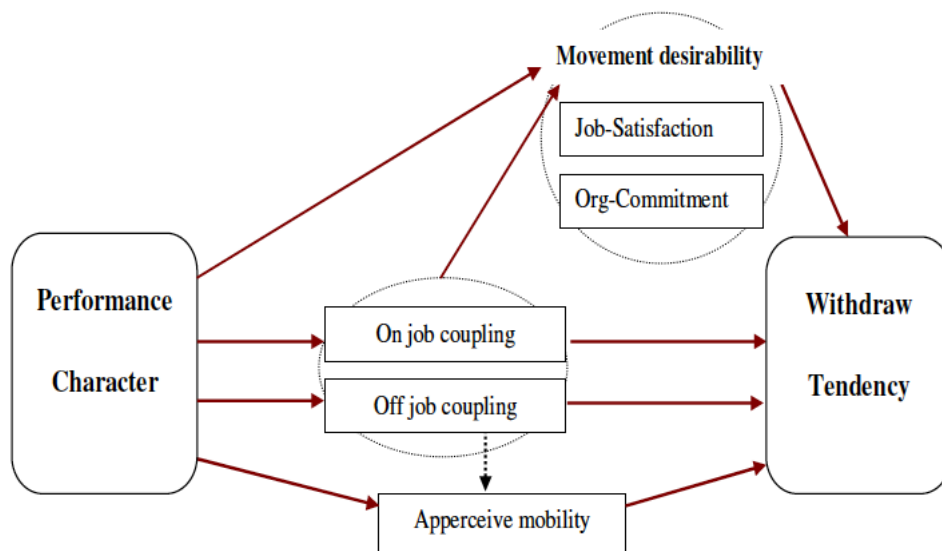


Figure 7 - The Proposed Performance - Withdraw Tendency Model (Zheng, et.al 2010)

More recent models have attempted to address the issue of viewing retention in a one-dimensional vacuum. For example, in their introduction of latent employee turnover Friedmann and Schnorr (2016) propose the following retention model:

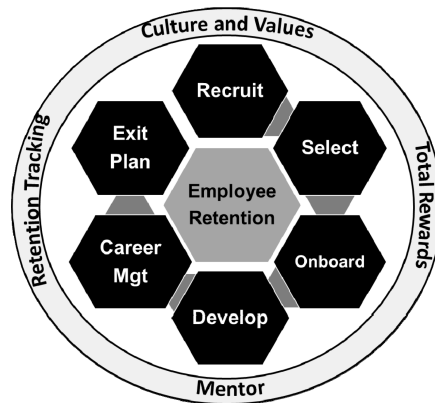


Figure 8 - Employee Retention model. (Friedmann & Schnorr 2016)

This depicts an understanding that there are a number of strategies that will influence retention. However, this is only through an organisational lens rather than consciously considering the employee’s own motivation as a factor. The introduction of an enhanced model attempts to address factors that could impact how the employee will feel/be motivated to stay:

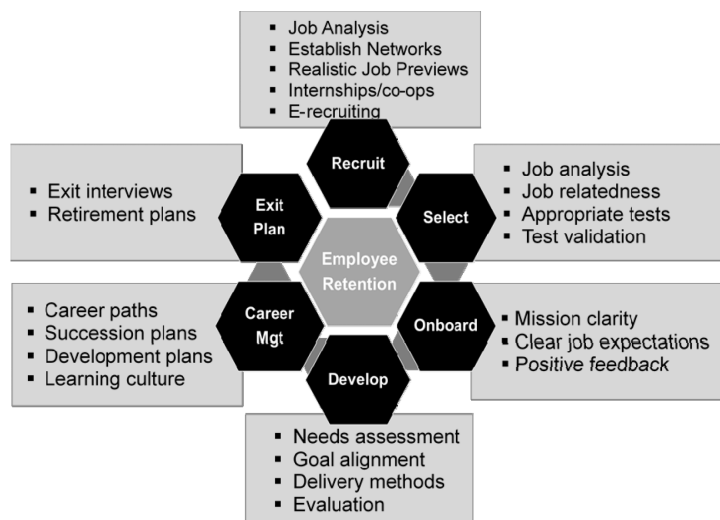


Figure 9 - Effective Human Resource Practices that Promote Employee Retention (Friedmann & Schnorr 2016)

There is challenge to these general approaches born out of an understanding that the behaviours of employees are driven by what happens on each day, i.e. how they feel when they go home (Daniels, 2009) (Silletto, 2018) (Glazer, 2019). These ideas challenge the approaches and solutions BeyondAutism has taken to date:

- Access to Perkbox, an employee benefit scheme that is designed to reward employees for all their hard work and make life a little more affordable. It aims to

ensure 'team happiness' and help employees to feel valued in their company (perkbox, 2021)

- Access to onsite counsellors, available by appointment
- Company pension scheme
- Supportive ill health and absence policies
- Employee engagement events to drive strategy
- 1-to-1 line-management meeting every 4 to 6 weeks
- Annual appraisal, with an opportunity to move up the salary scale by one or two points depending on performance
- Weekly and monthly staff recognition through “Star of the Month” judged against the organisational values, leading to Amazon vouchers for the winners
- Annual staff awards ceremony with significant prizes

All these approaches and strategies provide a degree of delayed gratification, which for some employees could be a motivator. However, the discourse about Millennials and Gen. Z highlights that their expectations are far more instant i.e. access to technology, immediate feedback, the right to be respected (Blain, 2008) (Silletto, 2018) (Sinek, 2017).

Shifting the emphasis from turnover and the reasons that employees might leave, Hausknecht, et.al, (2009) proposed and tested a model of 12 content-related factors thought to be partially responsible for employees’ decisions to stay.

Retention Factor	Definition
Advancement Opportunities	The amount of potential for movement to higher levels within the organisation
Constituent Attachments	The degree of attachment to individuals associated with the organisation, such as supervisors, co-workers or beneficiaries
Extrinsic Rewards	The amount of pay, benefits, or equivalents distributed in return for service
Flexible Work Arrangements	The nature of the work schedule or hours
Investments	Perceptions about the length of service
Job satisfaction	The degree to which individuals like their jobs
Lack of alternatives	Beliefs about the unavailability of jobs outside of the organisation
Location	The proximity of the workplace to one’s home
Nonwork influences	The existence of responsibilities and commitments outside the organisation
Organisational Commitment	The degree to which individuals identify with and are involved in the organisation

Organisational Justice	Perceptions about the fairness of reward allocations, policies, and procedures and interpersonal treatment
Organisation Prestige	The degree to which the organisation is perceived to be reputable and well regarded

Figure 10 - A Content Model of Employee Retention (Hausknecht et.al, 2009)

Their study examined the differences in reasons to stay for both high and low performing employees. In addition, they examined the differences across job levels (i.e. hourly, supervisory, managerial, and salaried/professional positions) in terms of the potential for each group to hold a different type of psychological contract with the organisation.

They concluded that the relative importance of different retention reasons varied across employees' job performance and job level, proposing that targeted, differentiated retention management strategies will influence different employee groups (Hausknecht, et al., 2009)

Developing this notion of differentiated strategies, Zinger (2021) developed a 10-block pyramid approach to engagement that he claims can lead to exceptional organisational results, high employee performance, recognition, meaning, well-being and energy; all of which are identified by others as crucial to retention (Mitchell, et al., 2017) (Qazi, et al., 2015).

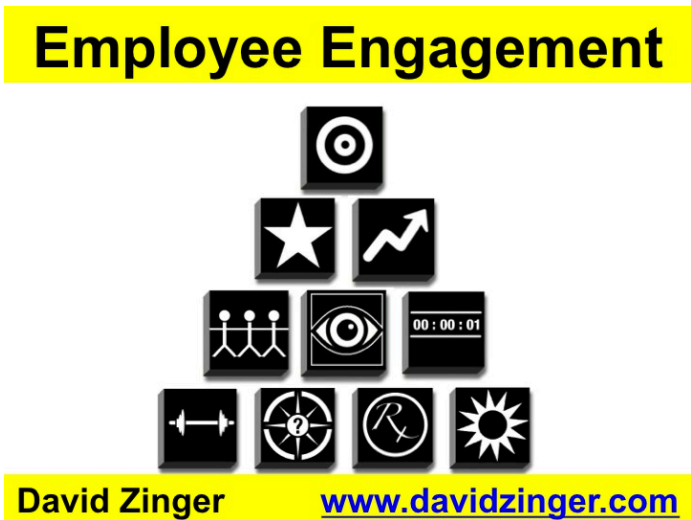





Figure 11 - Employee Engagement Pyramid Approach (Zinger 2012)

The ten elements of the pyramid are labelled as:

	Achieve Results
	Maximise Performance
	Path Progress








	Build Relationships
	Foster Recognition
	Master Moments
	Leverage Strengths
	Make Meaning
	Enhance Well-being
	Enliven Energy

Figure 12 - 10 building blocks for employee engagement (Zinger, 2021)

The pyramid is flexible in its structure allowing the organisation to rearrange the blocks according to focus and values (Zinger, 2012). Once organised into a hierarchy, Zinger (2021) advises that focusing on small groups of three blocks together should enhance action, noting that when working on one aspect, it will impact on the others. For the purposes of improving retention this could be a useful model to consider.

The literature suggests that there isn't a one size fits all approach and that due to the employee being a variable with the added generational dimension, the proposal is that tailored strategies and delivery of them will impact on retention.

2.6 Summary

The review of the literature revealed how the drivers for job satisfaction (pay, opportunities for advancement, recognition, autonomy and meaning), job embeddedness (connection of the employee to the organisation, taking into consideration knowledge, skills, favourable

work environments and connection within the community) and perceptions of human resource practices (participation in decision making, fairness of rewards, and growth opportunities) are all considerations for employee retention, underpinned by the influencing factor of the employee as an individual born into a specific generation. The question “why employees stay” has become as important to improving retention as understanding why they leave compounded by the suggested impact of generational differences (Holtom, et al., 2008) (Anderson, 2020).

Employee retention is a vast and complex organisational issue, especially when considering, that at times, retention can of itself be detrimental to the success and culture of an organisation (Gibbons, et al., 2018). The notion that what drives one employee to leave can of itself be a reason for another employee to stay, points towards the need to have an innate understanding of each employee rather than simply focusing on the advantages for the organisation.

The research objectives will:

1. Evaluate the issues of staff retention
2. Critically evaluate retention within one charity
3. Develop a framework for understanding and improving staff retention in the charity.

With a view to developing a framework for understanding the optimum staff retention cycle at BeyondAutism and a model to achieve it.

Chapter 3 - Research Methodology

3.1 Overview

This research is an evaluation of the staff retention issues faced by a medium-large sized service delivery charity. The three objectives aim to evaluate the issues of staff retention, to evaluate retention within one charity in particular and to lead to the development of a framework for understanding the optimum staff retention cycle in that charity. This chapter will cover the research strategy adopted, the methods of data collection and data analysis, the strengths and limitations of the research, followed by the ethical considerations.

Theories from the literature suggest that there are a range of underpinning drivers that determine why employees stay: (Holtom, et al., 2008) (Zhang, et al., 2019) (Yao, et al., 2004) (Qazi, et al., 2015). In contrast, though not necessarily polar opposite, are the considerations of why people leave: burnout, high job demands with low job resources and lack of job satisfaction (Hastings, 2005) (Bakker, et al., 2014) (Holtom, et al., 2008). The consideration of these factors has led to organisations adopting an array of strategies to improve staff retention – pay scales, flexible working, benefits packages, further training opportunities, access to wellbeing activities like counselling, staff social committees and favourable policies for sickness absence often based on intelligence gathered from exit interviews (Flowers & Hughes, 1973) (Hall, 2019).

The complexity of all these factors alongside the research findings led to the development of a proposed Retention Hierarchy Model (Fig.18) using a case study.

3.2 Research Strategy

This research is an evaluative study exploring the issues of staff retention, using a medium-large sized service delivery charity as the case study in search of a practical solution – to develop a model for understanding and improving staff retention at that charity. The strategy adopted for this research is underpinned by pragmatism, where the “research starts with a problem, and aims to contribute practical solutions that inform further practice” (Saunders et.al., 2019, p.151). Pragmatist assumptions drive many different ways of interpreting the world and can be supported by a mixed-methods strategy giving access to a range of data to inform the research (Saunders, et al., 2019).

A pragmatic, mixed methods approach was adopted where quantitative (e.g. turnover data) and qualitative data (e.g. annual staff survey reports) were analysed for the period September 2016 – August 2020, in a concurrent phase of research (Saunders, et al., 2019).

This approach enabled the collection and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data, covering a specific time period in the history of the charity, 2016 – 2020. Thus, the researcher could consider data over time, conducting a longitudinal study without the need for lengthy passages of time, as the organisational data already existed. This approach also provided a depth and richness to the findings that may not have been possible using a single-phase approach (Saunders, et al., 2019). This also facilitated the triangulation of findings across secondary data sources (collated HR reports, Annual Staff Survey reports and collated exit interview reports) with the primary data collected through a research questionnaire.

As an evaluative study, underpinned by pragmatism with a mixed methods approach, this research is conducted using the case study of a medium-large sized service delivery charity, BeyondAutism. A case study design can be used to answer “how” and “why” questions (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Furthermore, they are used to generate and test theory (Patton & Appelbaum, 2003) enabling the study to evolve and explore a model for understanding the dynamics and challenges of staff retention in a case study organisation. Using a case study, provides a real-life setting, where the ability to understand the context is fundamental (Saunders, et al., 2019).

3.3 Data collection

To evaluate the issues of staff retention, secondary data was collected from the BeyondAutism HR records and collated reports for the period September 2016 to August 2020. The collated reports included exit interviews and annual staff surveys; and were anonymised (Templates in Appendix B and C)

Consideration was given to conducting semi-structured interviews to focus on why employees stay however the researcher’s position within the organisation could have imposed limitations on the responses, for example employees saying what they think you want to hear (Saunders, et al., 2019).

To critically evaluate staff retention at BeyondAutism within the context of the literature and to develop a model, additional primary data was collected through a self-completed questionnaire. Using a self-completed questionnaire, quickly gave access to a large number of people, all asked to respond to the same questions, providing anonymity (Saunders, et al., 2019). Using Google Forms, the questionnaire (Appendix A) was targeted at three groups of staff to evaluate suggestions in the literature that employees leave within the first year if dissatisfied (Holtom, et al., 2008), are more likely to stay if there is a sense of job

embeddedness (Mitchell, et al., 2017) and without the psychological reasoning behind “why stay” external factors might also be a draw (Silletto, 2018). The questionnaire was sent out in November 2020.

A combination of open, closed and category questions were used to provide both qualitative and quantitative responses. The questionnaire was distributed via internal email, with a hyperlink embedded to the Google Form. A response deadline of two weeks was applied to encourage a quick turn-around and to prevent the email slipping down the list of priorities over an extended period of time. A reminder email, including the hyperlink, was sent.

3.3.1 Sample Selection

		No. sent	No. responses	Percentage response rate
Group 1	New starters in September 2020	43	5	11%
Group 2	1 Year service (started in September 2019)	7	2	28%
Group 3	More than 3 years' service	42	28	67%
	Total	92	35	38%

Table 1 - Questionnaire Sample Selection

Group 1 – The BeyondAutism HR reports highlight that approximately 12% of new starters leave within the first 1 – 12 weeks, the responses from this group were sought to evaluate their intentions and why they had stayed so far.

Group 2 – Chosen due to the data relating to length of service for employees at BeyondAutism (Table 2) that fluctuates between staying for just over 1 year to just over 2 years, to evaluate their intentions and why they had stayed so far.

	Length of service	Average length of service
2016-2017	4months – 4 years 6 months	15 months
2017-2018	9 months – 5 years 3 months	26 months
2018-2019	2 months – 4 years	16 months
2019-2020	9 months – 5 years 3 months	26 months

Table 2 - Length of Service at BeyondAutism

Group 3 – Employees with more than 3 years of service are a growing number, though unusual when considering the average length of service making the reasons that they stay an interesting dimension.

3.4 Data analysis

The data collection and analysis specifically address three research objectives:

1. To evaluate the themes and issues of staff retention the primary data was analysed through the pragmatist philosophical lens, allowing the voice of the participants to influence the analysis drawing on quotations from open text questions in the questionnaire and secondary data - exit interview reports and annual staff surveys (Saunders, et al., 2019). This analysis is cognisant of the breadth of experiences and perspectives that each participant will bring, being mindful of factors such as the wider context of the time period and that each individual will be in a frame of mind individual to them at the precise time that they responded, be that in exit interviews, staff surveys or the research questionnaire specific to this study.
2. To evaluate staff retention specifically within one charity quantitative data was considered, drawing on turnover figures from a variety of secondary sources from BeyondAutism within a defined interval (2017 – 2020) to analyse historical trends.
3. When critically evaluating staff retention at BeyondAutism a thematic analysis approach was taken, to enable analysis of key themes and patterns, and to draw and verify conclusions (Saunders, et al., 2019) (Clarke & Braun, 2017). Taking this approach provided a flexibility in exploring different interpretations of why employees stay because it allowed the researcher to legitimately analyse across the data set (Braun & Clarke, 2012). Key phrases (stress, burnout, pay, leadership, benefits, support, job satisfaction, career development and external factors such as moving or family issues) were sought from the historic collated reports and aligned with the BeyondAutism demographic data of the period 2016 – 2020.

3.5 Strengths and limitations

Choosing, BeyondAutism, a case study known to the researcher, provided a distinct advantage to accessing data, to directing questionnaires and to understanding the organisational context. However, the position held by the researcher i.e. CEO, could also have led to bias in the analysis and impeded responses to the questionnaire produced specifically for this study. This was partially addressed by analysing anonymised collated reports written by the HR team for the purpose of organisational learning and development rather than specifically for the purposes of this study and by using an anonymised online tool, Google Forms to survey the current staff group.

It was also acknowledged that a case study of one organisation provided a snap-shot, at a specific time, within one specific set of circumstances. To generalise the findings more broadly across the charity sector a comparison study of more than one organisation would be required.

Using a known organisation also enabled access to data over time, providing a richness and depth to the analysis that might otherwise have been confined to one questionnaire, conducted in response to the research objectives of this study.

When considering the identification of leadership and management as a factor in the literature, a limitation of the data might also have been that the timescale chosen, 2016 – 2020, coincides with the tenure of the researcher as the CEO. Consideration was also given to the potential for bias or impartiality when evaluating and applying perspectives to the study as the researcher was seeking to solve an issue that had financial and reputational consequences for the charity.

Using a questionnaire to collect data was considered to be a strength as employees are familiar with online surveys and how responses are reported and used to drive improvement and change. Employee's prior exposure to surveys also provided an expectation about the language and terminology used (Saunders, et al., 2019).

However, writing a questionnaire can of itself create limitations to the data gathered. For example, the wording of a question will be interpreted by each individual and there is no opportunity to explain or to prompt and explore issues further (Saunders, et al., 2019). This was addressed by focusing on retention and the themes drawn from the literature determining why employees stay.

Whilst, according to Saunders et.al, there is no ideal response rate to a questionnaire, it is worth noting that the 38% response (Table 1) was within the average for email surveys (Lindemann, 2019).

The non-response rate bias of 62% raises the question as to what might have inhibited other potential respondents. The length of the questionnaire was considered at the design stage, as was the complexity of the questions (Saunders, et al., 2019). Choosing a short turn-around time may have been a factor. Also, the largest group of non-respondents were Group 1 (new starters in September 2020), employees who had not been exposed to organisational surveys previously.

3.6 Research ethics

To evaluate the staff retention issues faced by a medium-large sized service delivery charity using one organisation as a case study (single-organisation access), historical collated reports and a questionnaire, internet-mediated and intranet-mediated access was required (Saunders, et al., 2019). Organisational reports were stored on the BeyondAutism server

(intranet-mediated) and the questionnaire was delivered via email, using an online platform, Google Forms (internet-mediated).

To gain access the researcher was contractually bound to request permission from the Board of Trustees to use BeyondAutism data outside of the organisation. All BeyondAutism staff understood, via their contract of employment, that data (both quantitative and qualitative) is collated for the purpose of business improvement and organisational learning. Neither explicit nor implicit in this is the permission to use such data and information for any purpose outside of the organisation. This was mitigated by accessing anonymous, collated, aggregated reports.

Gaining cognitive access to the participants in this study was facilitated by the researcher's position in the organisation, meaning that the employees already knew the researcher. It was important to provide an option throughout for individuals to withdraw or to simply not participate and this was made explicit in all communications. The leverage-saliency could have been bias towards employees feeling obliged to participate and this was addressed with clear communication that participation was not compulsory and assurance of anonymity.

Chapter 4 – Findings and discussion

4.1 Introduction

The aim of the research is to review the staff retention issues within a medium-large sized, service delivery charity. This chapter will present the findings of the primary and secondary data analysis, leading towards the proposed Retention Hierarchy Model (Fig.18) that evolved from the analysis. The objectives of this research are to:

- Evaluate the issues of staff retention
- Critically evaluate retention within one charity - BeyondAutism
- Develop a framework for understanding and improving staff retention in the charity.

To meet these objectives this chapter analyses staff retention at BeyondAutism. It starts by presenting the secondary data to set the context of the charity followed by data that illustrates the reasons why employees leave and why they stay, leading in each instance to a discussion that draws out the key themes. The findings are obtained from secondary data sources at BeyondAutism for the years 2016 to 2020: exit interview correlated reports, annual staff survey results and annual HR reports. The primary data is drawn from a questionnaire sent to 92 employees.

4.2 BeyondAutism secondary data

To critically evaluate the retention issues at BeyondAutism, secondary data will be considered first as an analysis of the turnover figures for the period 2016-2020 provides the context and the prevailing issue. Access to collated exit interview reports and annual staff survey reports, for the period 2016-2020 enables an analysis of the issues through trends.

4.2.1 Turnover data

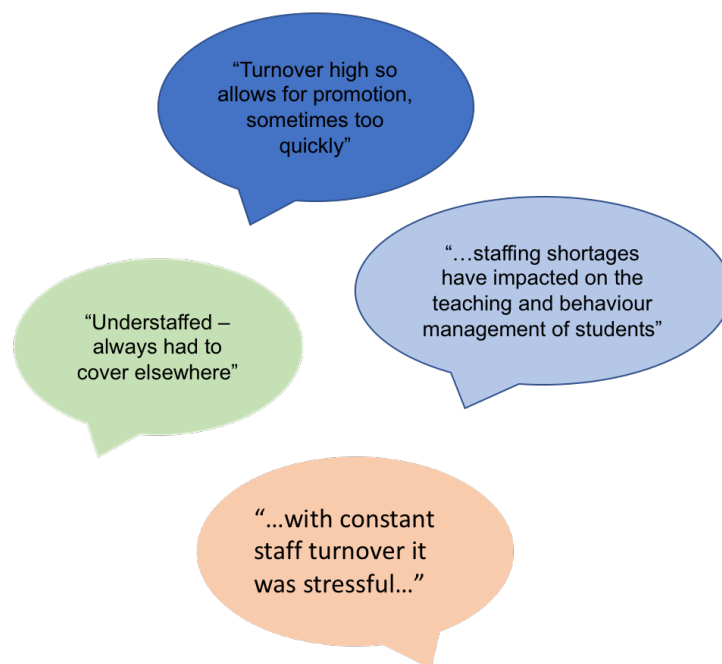
The employee turnover data since 2016 highlights a consistent issue with retention, specifically within the tutor roles.

Year	Total employees	Total leavers	Turnover %	Leavers in tutor role	% of leavers in tutor role
2016-17	120	62	52	48	77
2017-18	137	64	47	49	77
2018-19	153	77	50	72	94
2019-20	200	61	31	48	79

Table 3 - BeyondAutism turnover data

The improvement of overall turnover in 2019-20 can in part be attributed to the increased number of roles available across new services brought on-line during that academic year. New services such as a new Post 19 Hub and the Research & Learning team provided internal movement for employees who may have been looking to leave for career progression. However, tutors, as a percentage of the leavers, remains disproportionately high.

An organisation with 50% turnover is going to experience difficulties with maintaining quality, progress towards objectives, a positive perception of the workplace, organisational memory and expertise (Fox, 2014) (Larkin & Burgess, 2013). At BeyondAutism the effects are further compounded by the turnover of front-line staff, i.e. tutors (Powell & York, 1992) (Stempien & Loeb, 2002). In addition, the notion that high staff turnover can become a self-fulfilling prophecy if considering the importance of employer brand i.e. if the organisation is not known as an *Employer of Choice* due to the reputation promulgated by exiting employees, then recruiting new employees and/or retaining others can become more difficult. (Tanwar & Prasad, 2016) (Kashyap & Verma, 2018). Comments recorded in the BeyondAutism exit interviews (2016-2020) support these underlying theories:



4.2.2 Annual staff survey data

BeyondAutism use an annual staff survey (Appendix B) to temperature check the organisation as a whole. Operating in academic years, the survey is sent out in May each year, during the summer term. For the purposes of this research the data analysis of the surveys focuses on enjoyment at work, staff training and career progression, whether

employees feel valued, paid appropriately and whether behaviour management is well managed. These are key drivers identified for retention, especially within the Millennial group. (Anderson, 2020) (Silletto, 2018) (Twenge & Campbell, 2008) (Hall, 2019) and for employees working with people who can display behaviours that challenge (Hastings, 2005) (Kelly, et al., 2007).

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
No. of employees	117	120	137	153
Response rate (%)	44	88	85	95
Happy working at BeyondAutism	97%	96%	90%	94%
Enough training for the role	80%	70%	71%	66%
Feel valued and recognised	72%	76%	62%	65%
Paid appropriately & fairly for the work	30%	31%	32%	34%
Clear career structure and opportunity	78%	60%	66%	64%
Behaviour is consistently well managed	94%	90%	86%	94%

Table 4 - Percentage of employees that agree or strongly agree

The statistic that stands out is the low percentage of employees that believe they are paid fairly and appropriately – it would be reasonable to assume that this might feature highly as a reason for leaving, alongside career progression and feeling valued. However, even with these low percentage values, employees stated that they are happy working at BeyondAutism. This correlates with the literature available, referring to working in not-for profits, namely that purpose is often the driver rather than pay or other factors. (Blackstone, 2019) (Yao, et al., 2004) (Benz, 2005).

4.3 Why staff leave

The data from the exit interview reports available at BeyondAutism for 2016 – 2020 highlights the trends across the 7 themes drawn from the key literature:

- Stress (Kelly, et al., 2007) (Kickul & Lester, 2001)
- Burnout (Bakker, et al., 2014) (Demerouti, et al., 2001)
- external factors such as moving and family considerations (Qazi, et al., 2015) (Paille, 2013)

- career development (Tschopp, et al., 2014)
- leadership and pay (Holtom, et al., 2008)

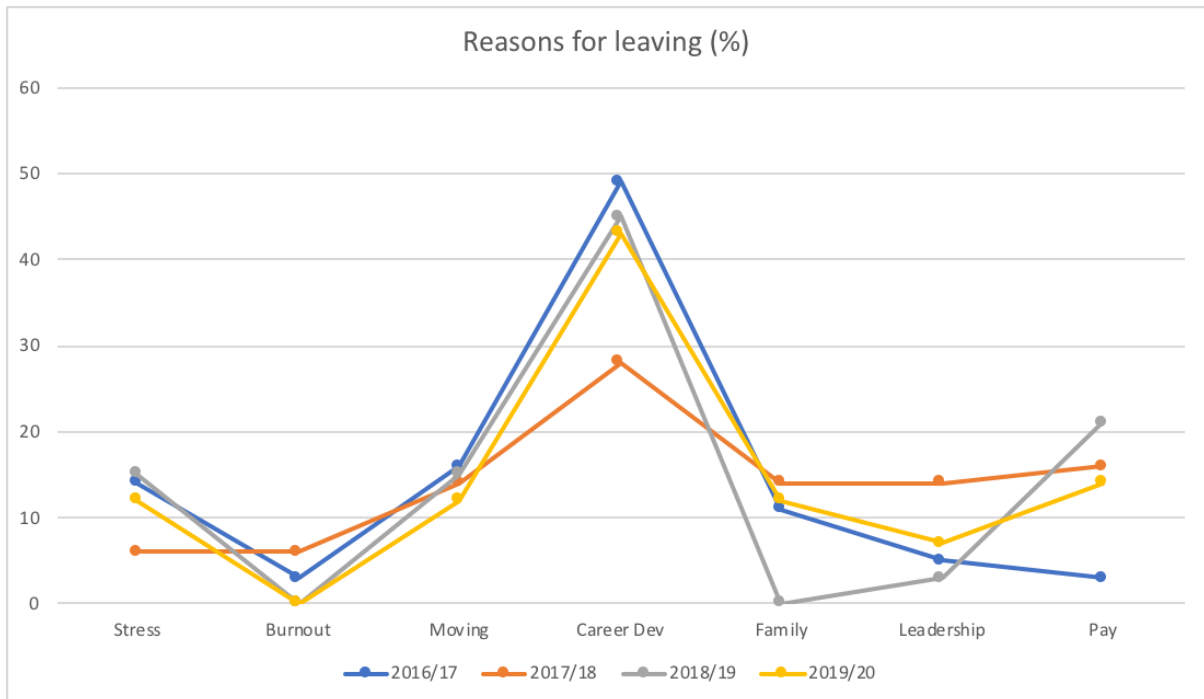


Figure 13 - Reasons for leaving BeyondAutism

Career development is reported as the main reason for leaving BeyondAutism, which supports the Annual Staff Survey data (Table 4) where, on average, only 67% of employees believe there is a clear career structure and opportunities. There could be a correlation between career development being the most cited reason for leaving and the generational demographic. In 2019/20, 64% of all employees were millennials and 22% were Generation Z (Fig.4). These 2 generations rated employee training, inferred here as integral to career development, as an important factor when considering a new job and therefore a driver to leave if not provided, or perceived to be inadequate in their current organisation (Anderson, 2020). The Annual Staff Survey data also highlights that, on average, 29% of employees don't feel they have the training they need. Comments made at exit interviews included:



Comments made throughout the BeyondAutism exit interviews (2016-2020) support the view that if Millennials and Gen Z employees believe that their managers don't understand them or their lifestyles, don't give enough feedback, don't take full advantage of their skills and don't show appreciation of their work it will determine their desire to move-on (Sinek, 2017). Sinek also highlighted that their self-esteem is impacted by the fact that their employers don't shower them with praise and aren't always there to guide them or explain everything as their parents had done (Sinek, 2017).



The specific context of the BeyondAutism working environment, where 85% of roles have direct contact with people with autism on a daily basis (Fig.1) led to the research also considering the effects on staff working within an environment where children and young adults with autism can demonstrate challenging behaviour. The literature indicated that the cyclical effect of behaviours may lead to staff leaving the organisation (Hastings, 2005) (Kelly et.al, 2007). The Annual Staff Survey (Table 4) results show that on average 91% of employees felt that behaviour is consistently well managed. However, the exit interview free text boxes highlight an emerging theme.:

“[staff moral] depends on the amount/severity of challenging behaviour seen on a regular basis”

What have you enjoyed least about your job?
“Dealing with problem behaviour”
“The bad problem behaviour!”
“Risk of being hurt”
“Sometimes it is very hard to manage their behaviour”
“Challenging behaviour/going home with bruises”
“Stress, challenging behaviour”

Table 5 - Quotes from BeyondAutism Exit Interviews (A)

Is the job you do any different to what you expected when you were recruited?
“I did not expect this intensity”
“Didn’t think there was going to be that amount of problem behaviour”
“I was expecting to spend more times teaching children not spending hours dealing with problem behaviour”
“Didn’t expect how physical it can be”
“A lot more challenging behaviour”

Table 6 - Quotes from BeyondAutism Exit Interviews (B)

All these comments were linked to feelings of not being supported and not having enough training.

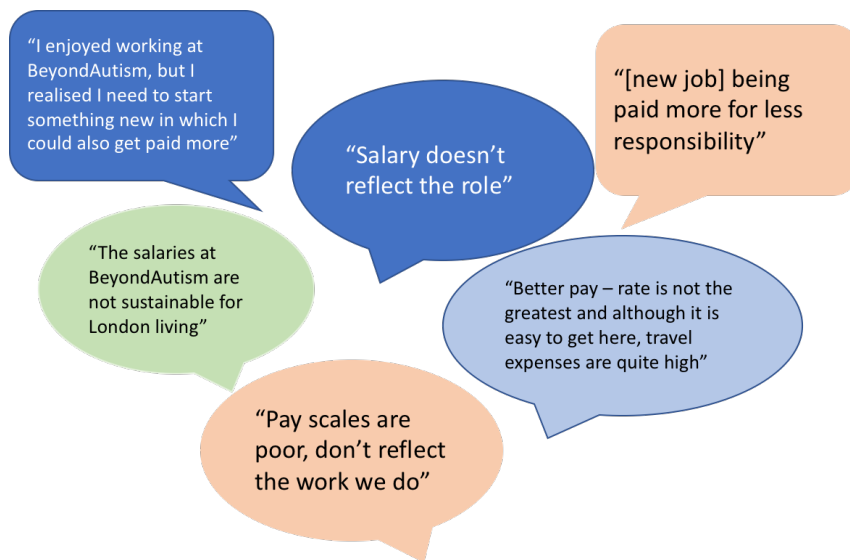
Pay is also a factor raised by employees during exit interviews. When asked “what attracted you to move to your next job?” the percentage of respondents that stated salary was:

2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
18%	25%	26%	10%

Table 7 - Salary as a reason for leaving

Though these figures seem low, triangulation with the Annual Staff Survey data (Table 4) and with the additional comments offered from the exit interviews below, it is a persistent issue and difficult to determine how much of a driver it truly is.

The comments recorded across the years could be correlated to the generational drivers of Millennials as there appears to be an underlying psychological element of feeling undervalued in the role. However, these recorded comments contradict the findings of Benz (2005) who concluded that employees in non-profit organisations tended to be driven by the cause.



The data indicates that, at BeyondAutism, there are key factors driving employees to leave: lack of career development, lack of support and training and not feeling valued.

4.4 Why staff stay

To find out why staff stay, primary data has been drawn from a questionnaire sent to 92 employees, of which there was a 38% response rate, representing the following groups:

		No. sent	No. responses
Group 1	New starters in September 2020	43	5
Group 2	1 Year service (started in September 2019)	7	2
Group 3	More than 3 years' service	42	28
	Total	92	35

Table 8 - Distribution and response rates to research questionnaire

The respondents represent the following roles:

1. What is your role?

35 responses

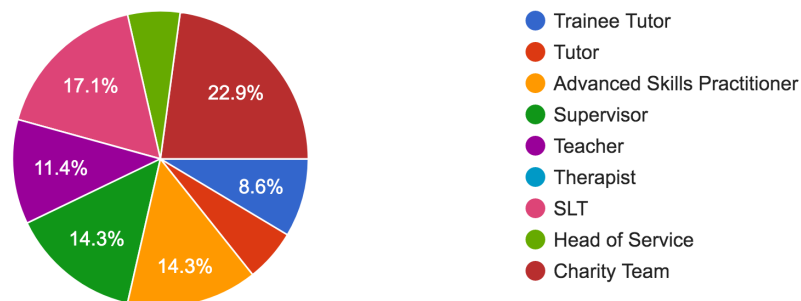


Figure 14 - Research questionnaire, employee roles

The roles that have direct contact with people with autism on a daily basis are Trainee Tutor, Tutor, Advanced Skills Practitioner, Supervisor, Teacher and Therapist, representing 77% of respondents.

The literature states that the reasons employees stay can be linked to job satisfaction (Locke, 1970) (CIPD, 2020) (Holtom, et al., 2008) (Siletto, 2018), job embeddedness (Mitchell, et al., 2017) (Yao, et al., 2004) (Zhang, et al., 2019) and *perceptions of supportive* (POS) human resource practices (participation in decision making, fairness of rewards, and growth opportunities) (Allen, et al., 2003). The research questionnaire (Appendix A) was designed to rate the importance of these factors at BeyondAutism. In addition, the view that external factors can also play a role in whether or not an employee stays: where someone lives, family responsibilities and financial pressures ((Paille, 2013) (Sinek, 2019). Benz (2005) in comparing non-profit employees with for-profit employees, extends this notion highlighting that when considering pay differential and job satisfaction, non-profit employees were generally more satisfied and tended to be driven by what they were doing rather than the monetary reward for doing it (Benz, 2005).

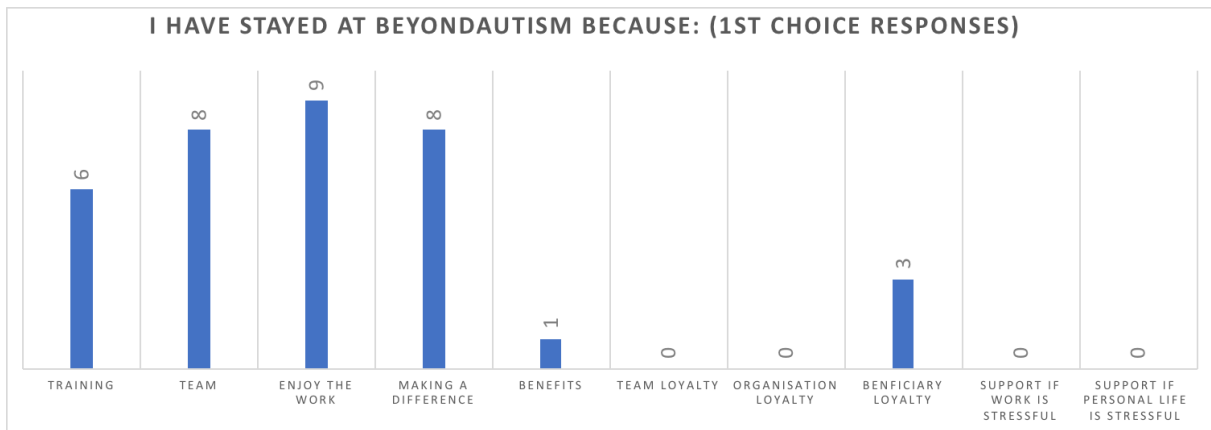


Figure 15 - Reasons for staying at BeyondAutism

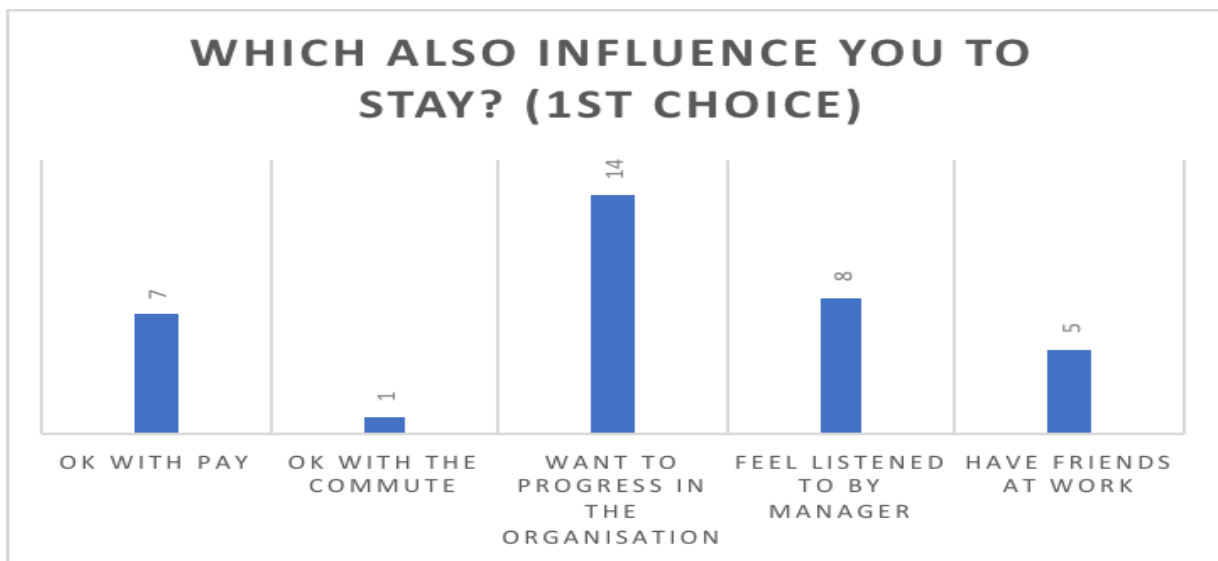


Figure 16 - Additional reasons for staying at BeyondAutism

Employees enjoying their work, feeling like they are making a difference and enjoying working in their team are the responses rated as first choice, closely followed by the training they receive. This corroborates the ideas of job satisfaction and job embeddedness (Holtom, et al., 2008) (Mitchell, et al., 2017).

The key additional factor that influences employees to stay is the desire for career progression within the organisation. Comparing this with the data from the exit interviews, where career progression was the primary reason for leaving, strongly suggests that this is a pivotal factor. One respondent commented ***“My career development and the career path I want to go down means my motivation to stay is high”***.

Drawing on the theory of Glazer (2019) it is interesting to note that 40% of respondents think they’ll stay 1 – 2 years. Of the respondents, 5 are in the Tutor role notable as the largest group within the turnover statistics (Table 3); 3 of which stated that they will only stay for 1 year, 1 stated 2 years and 1 indicated 3-5 years.

In post	Will stay	Why?
2-5 yrs	1 yr	"I am not growing anymore"
1-2 yrs	1 yr	"I take it year by year. I still have options open to me."
0-4 months	1 yr	"I don't think the pay or progression opportunities are sufficient to keep me here"
0-4 months	2 yrs	"Career changes"
0-4 months	3-5 yrs	"I want to learn as much as possible about ABA and help kids and their families"

The comments, alongside the length of time these respondents intend to stay highlight the potential for having conversations with employees from the very start of their tenure. Not only will this knowledge facilitate the recruitment process, it could guide the strategies for retention on an individual basis (Glazer, 2019).

Table 9 - Tutor's intentions to stay

Other comments recorded supporting the length of time employees planned to stay included:

"I enjoy the team work and the opportunities to progress within the organisation"
 "I would love to stay at BeyondAutism to support pupils and the staff. I would like to make sure that staff are confident"
 "It all depends on progression opportunities within or outside of the organisation"
 "Depends on job progression opportunities which arise"

Tschopp, et.al suggest that "employees with an independent career orientation are ready to move on at any time regardless of how good any particular job is" adding credence to adopting Glazer's approach enabling insight to the employer (Tschopp, et.al, 2014, p.155)

The understanding of why employees stay may also be elicited from the drivers behind an intention to leave. Overall positive attitudes towards the job and the organisation (engagement and intention to remain with the organisation) are enhanced by employer fulfilment of the psychological contract among those early in their career with the organisation (Kickul & Lester, 2001) (Sandhya & Sulphay, 2020) (Bal, et al., 2013).

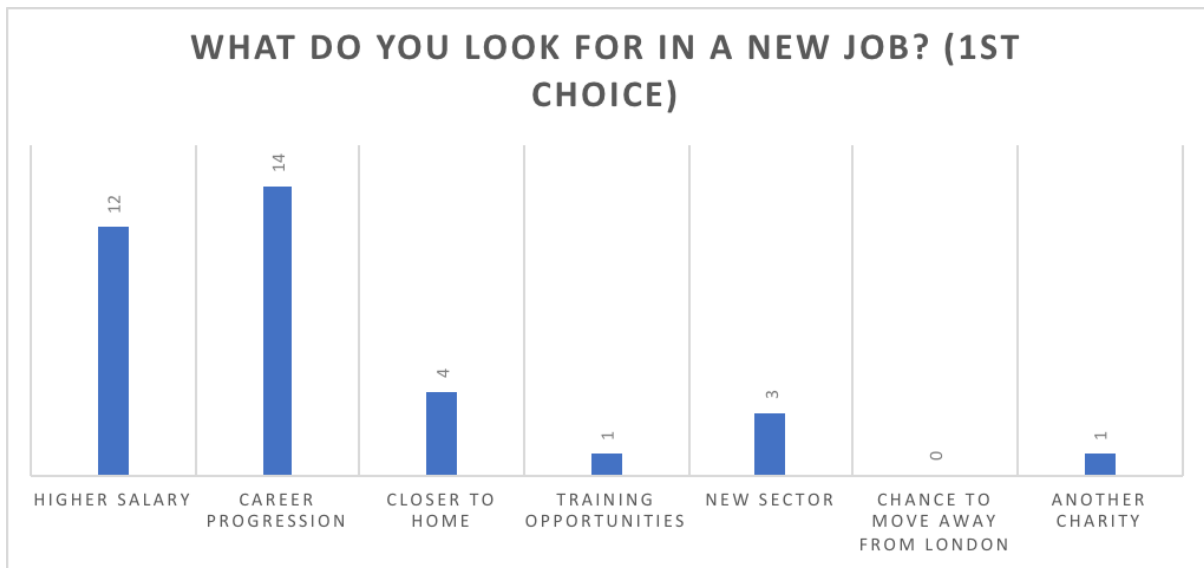


Figure 17 - What do you look for in a new job?

Of the responses, career progression and salary are the highest rated factors – this not only supports the stated understanding of the Millennial generation it is also reinforced by the exit interview data and the feelings in the Annual Staff Survey data (Table 4) that for an average 33% of employees, career structure and opportunity does not exist at BeyondAutism. The data highlights that the key factors underpinning the reasons employees stay at BeyondAutism are enjoying their work, feeling like they are making a difference and enjoying working in their team, alongside the desire for career progression within the organisation.

4.5 Summary

Retention at BeyondAutism is an issue full of complexity and contradictions: employees are happy working at BeyondAutism (Table 4), though are not happy with their pay (Table 4) – this correlates with the notion that when working in a charity financial reward is not the driver (Benz, 2005) (Mirvis & Hackett, 1983). However, the exit interviews and the research questionnaire indicated that pay is a driver to leave (Fig. 16). Stress and burnout cited in exit interviews, linked to exposure to challenging behaviour (Hastings, 2005) (Kelly, et al., 2007) contradicts the Annual Survey results that indicates an average 91% of respondents believe that behaviour is well managed. Career development stands out as the ultimate driver to both stay and to leave.

It is worth noting that the response rate of Tutors to the research questionnaire makes it difficult to generalise their views (Table 8). However, experience and knowledge of the organisation indicates that those in Supervisor roles had themselves been Tutors and therefore the reasons they have stayed can be applied to understanding the drivers of Tutors.

Chapter 5 - Building a Retention Hierarchy Model

To improve retention at BeyondAutism, using the research findings and the learning drawn from the literature review it is possible to develop a model specific to this service delivery charity. The model will build up in tiers:

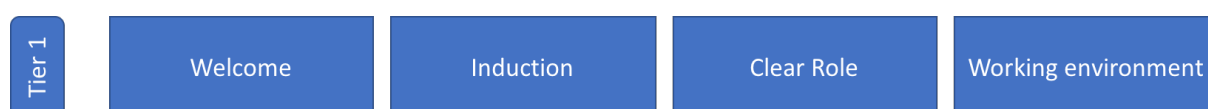
Tier 1 – fundamentals

Tier 2 – individual growth

Tier 3 – organisational elements

Tier 4 – career progression

Tier 1 – Fundamentals



The data from the exit interviews demonstrates how leavers felt about these basic factors:

Yes responses (%)	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Did induction help?	71	23	80	11
Was it a good and positive environment?	60	17	78	13
Did BeyondAutism live up to expectations?	57	72	31	45

Table 10 - Responses in BeyondAutism exit interviews

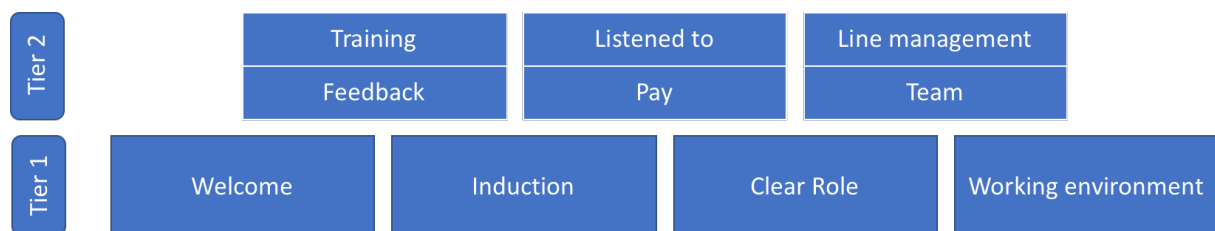
It is worth noting that the low scores in 2017/18 are indicative of a year where turnover was 47% (Table 3). The HR team consisted of 1 person making recruitment slow and relied on the leadership teams in the services to effectively induct new staff. In 2018/19, BeyondAutism lived up to expectations for 31% of respondents. With turnover at 50% (Table 3), experience points towards the services' behaviour data during that year which suggests that staff were dealing with more intense, challenging behaviour. This correlates with the exit interview comments regarding BeyondAutism living up to expectations (Table 6). To understand the low figures in 2019/20 organisational knowledge highlights that the HR team were not operating effectively, the recruitment processes had faltered and 40% of staffing were from agencies.

Comments included:

“Feeling unfairly treated”
“Not 100% sure of role”
“I had no induction because I couldn’t attend”

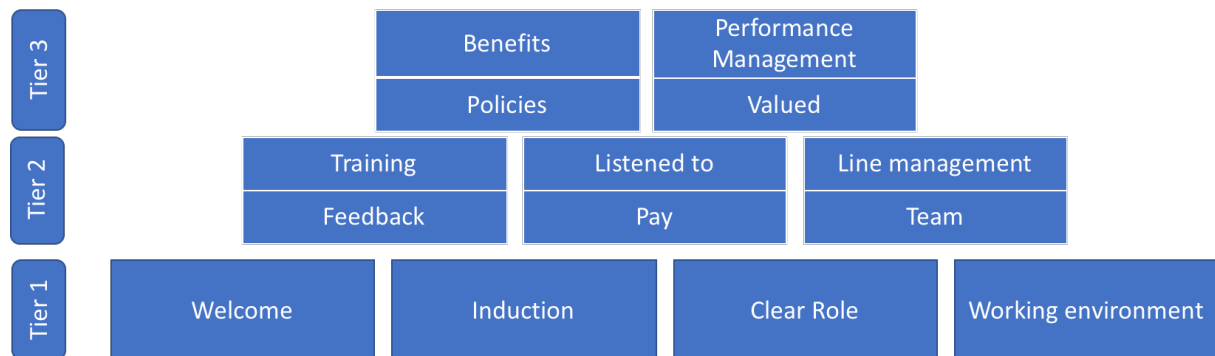
Triangulated with the Annual Staff survey data (Table 4) where over 90% of staff state they are happy working at BeyondAutism, and the free text data from the exit interview reports (Table 6) that highlight staff didn’t feel that the role met expectations underpins the necessity to establish the basics to avoid early turnover (Holtom, et al., 2008). This first tier is also the point at which the foundations are laid for a strong psychological contract and the development of trust (Sinek, 2014) (Bal, et al., 2013) (Kickul & Lester, 2001) (Weinstein, 2013)

Tier 2 – Individual Growth



Building from the fundamental base, feeling listened to by a line manager rated highest in order of influence to stay by 22% of respondents in the research questionnaire (Fig.11). Training, feedback and pay were highlighted in the exit interviews, Annual Staff Survey data and the research questionnaire as key factors that drive both the decisions to leave and the decisions to stay. Training was a key theme underpinning employee’s feelings of safety when working with people who display behaviours that challenge.

Tier 3 – Organisational Elements

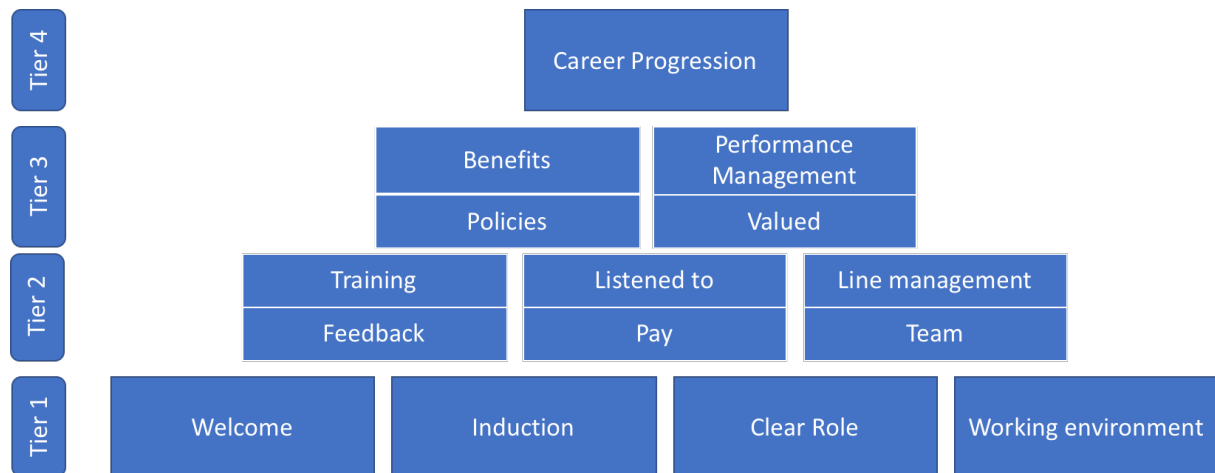


Benefits feature in this tier depicting additionality from the organisation, adding value to an employee’s package. The research questionnaire highlighted that 62% of respondents rated additional benefits as their 9th and 10th choice, suggesting the lack of importance placed on this element of the organisational offer. The Annual Staff Survey data over the years depicts a mixed response to benefits offered:

“I think the benefits and leave entitlement offered is fair considering it is a charity”
 “I do not use many of these except Perkbox, however they are valued”
 “Perkbox is amazing and a benefit I use a lot! As I do our onsite counsellor”

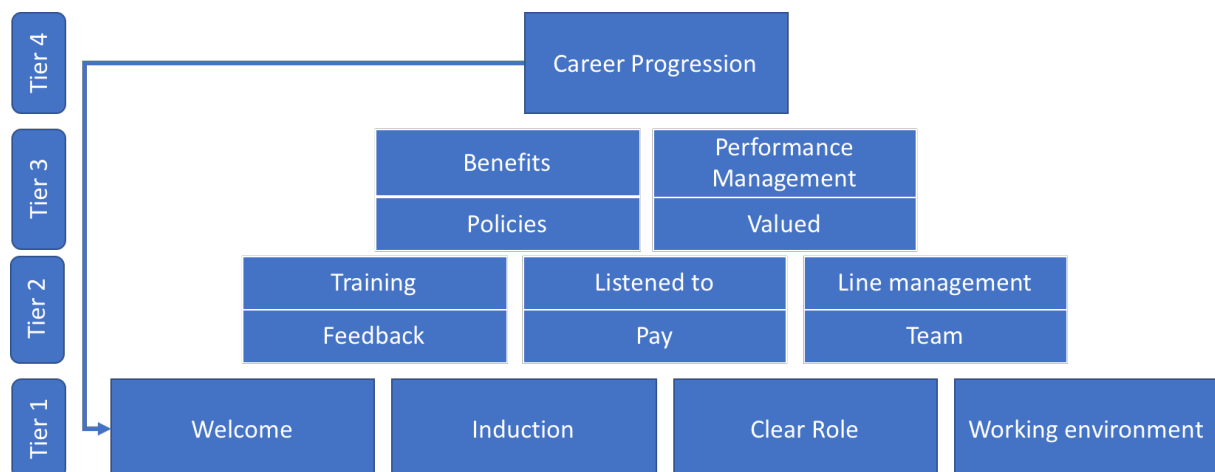
Being recognised and valued have been highlighted throughout the data as key drivers and correlate with the findings from the literature review (Yao, et al., 2004) (Blackstone, 2019) (Kalleberg, 1977). Feeling valued and aligned with the organisation’s policies can further strengthen an employee’s desire to stay (Bal, et al., 2013) (Mitchell, et al., 2017) especially for Millennial and Generation Z (Sinek, 2017) (Twenge & Campbell, 2008). The research data (Table 4) corroborates this though these elements might not be perceived as fundamental to retention per sae.

Tier 4 – Career Progression



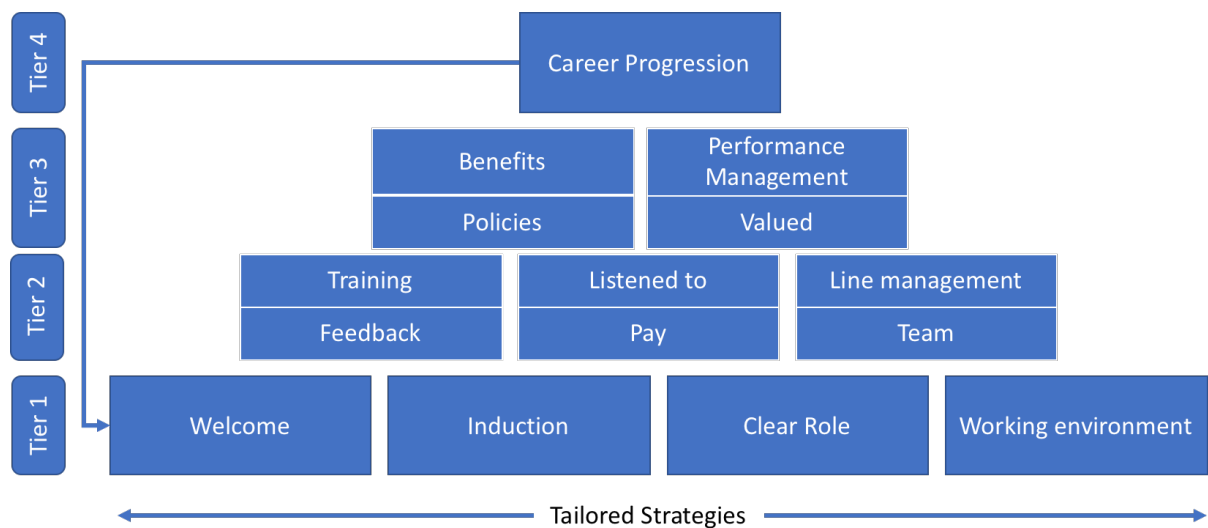
Getting career progression embedded in the organisation is the pinnacle and only achievable by the individual if the other tiers are in place. As highlighted by all the data analysed, this tier can be an exit point for employees either because it doesn't exist within BeyondAutism or because it is being sought elsewhere.

Different to the flexible pyramid model used by Zinger (2012), it is proposed that each role within the organisation should be grounded in Tier 1 (Fundamentals) and layered through the tiers towards the next progression opportunity, creating a retention hierarchy. This is illustrated by an arrow.



To make the pyramid work for each employee, tailored strategies need to be considered (Hausknecht, et al., 2009) - Based on Qazi et.al's (2015) argument that employees are not machines and supporting the notion of job embeddedness i.e. "the forces that keep a person from leaving his or her job", tailored strategies should respond to individuals taking into

account the generational factors emerging as an organisation develops. (Yao, et al., 2004) (Ng, et al., 2010). These strategies could include access to training and management support in response to issues as they arise, being demonstrably valued as part of a team and having an individual, bespoke career pathway mapped from the point of starting in role (Glazer, 2019). Whether or not these are the right strategies to support retention is the subject for further research.



To further develop and understand retention at BeyondAutism the model has been enhanced (Fig.18) to include a consideration towards length of time to achieve each tier (the length of time arrow) taking account of the average length of service (Table 2) and the generational factors underpinning individual decision making (Sinek, 2019) (Silletto, 2018) (Anderson, 2020). In addition, it is important to understand that each tier can of itself be an exit point regardless of the solidity of the previous tiers or because of issues within the elements that form that tier (Holtom, et al., 2008) (Tschopp, et al., 2014). The findings also highlighted that staff are driven by factors external to the charity – for example moving home and family (Fig.8) (Fig.12) supporting the assertions made by (Paille, 2013) and (Qazi, et al., 2015), and therefore should be represented in the Retention Hierarchy Model (Fig.18).

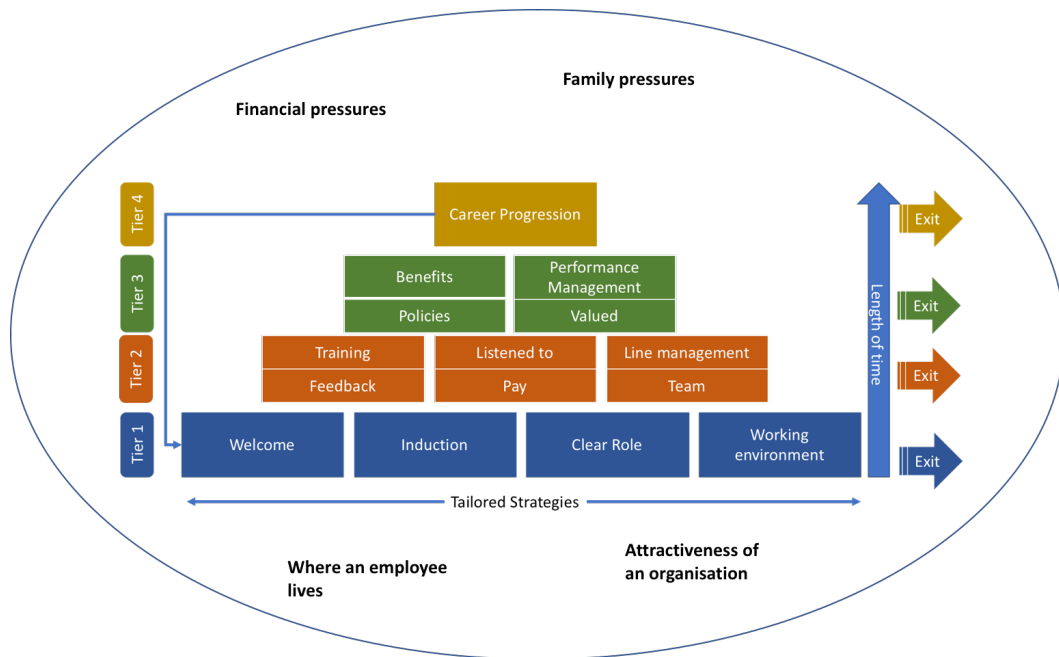


Figure 18 - Retention Hierarchy Model (Author, 2021)

5.1 Summary

Building a model to improve retention at BeyondAutism creates an anchor to test strategies that can be differentiated to impact each individual employee. Each tier will need strategies, processes and approaches that can be applied according to the drivers of the individual whilst also embedding organisational culture, policies and structures that underpin fairness and attractiveness – the psychological contract (CIPD, 2020). Understanding that each tier can also be an exit point could be helpful in a bid to generate a workplace that attracts and retains high performers (Hausknecht, et al., 2009) whilst also benefiting from turnover by bringing new employees and their perspectives into the organisation (Sheedy, 2018).

Chapter 6 – Conclusion

The puzzle was this: that despite a wide number of initiatives and interventions, for example having an attractive employer value proposition through employee benefit schemes, employee support programmes, organisational pension scheme, ill health packages, staff recognition programmes, the service delivery charity, BeyondAutism, had been unable to improve staff retention. This was proving to be problematic financially, to maintain quality and to grow in a sustainable way; therefore, the research examined the literature and research in relation to staff retention, compared this to the differing views of what makes staff want to stay, underpinned by an understanding of the staff retention trends at BeyondAutism to develop a model to understand and improve staff retention. The research objectives were to:

- Evaluate the issues of staff retention
- Critically evaluate retention within one charity - BeyondAutism
- Develop a framework for understanding and improving staff retention in the charity.

The data over time represented in BeyondAutism's internal HR reports 2016 – 2020 (Table 3), highlighted that annual staff turnover had been approximately 47%. This and the data from the BeyondAutism annual staff survey results (2016-2020) and exit interviews (2016-2020), resonates with the widely understood notion that people leave an organisation in one of three categories: "...interpersonal issues... workload problems... or a lack of recognition" and appears to support, in part, the discourse around the Millennial generation (Hall, 2019) (Silletto, 2018) (Twenge & Campbell, 2008).

BeyondAutism operates within a specific field – service provision, including schools, for people with autism and their families and this can add a degree of complexity to the environment in which employees are challenged to stay (Powell & York, 1992). Staff rated challenging behaviour as the most significant source of stress and were often more emotionally exhausted. This concept, when linked to the Bakker et.al (2014) study of burnout and work engagement provided an interesting insight into why a BeyondAutism employee may decide to leave.

There was also the view that new people can bring a fresh perspective, new ideas and expertise to the workplace and that "retaining staff, while maintaining a healthy turnover, is important for efficiency" (Houghton & Bodey, 2019).

To address the research objectives a pragmatic, mixed methods approach was adopted where quantitative (e.g. turnover data) and qualitative data (e.g. annual staff survey reports) were analysed for the period September 2016 – August 2020, in a concurrent phase of research (Saunders, et al., 2019). This approach enabled the researcher to consider data

over time, conducting a longitudinal study without the need for lengthy passages of time, as the organisational data already existed.

To evaluate the issues of staff retention, secondary data was collected from the BeyondAutism HR records and collated reports for the period September 2016 to August 2020. The collated reports included exit interviews and annual staff surveys; and were anonymised. To critically evaluate staff retention at BeyondAutism within the context of the literature additional primary data was collected through a self-completed questionnaire. As an evaluative study, underpinned by pragmatism with a mixed methods approach, this research was conducted using the case study of a medium-large sized service delivery charity, BeyondAutism.

The data indicated that, at BeyondAutism, there are key factors driving employees to leave: lack of career development, lack of support and training and not feeling valued. The data also highlighted that the key factors underpinning the reasons employees stay at BeyondAutism are enjoying their work, feeling like they are making a difference and enjoying working in their team, alongside the desire for career progression within the organisation. Understanding the drivers for both leaving and staying led to the development of the Retention Hierarchy Model (Fig.18).

The proposed Retention Hierarchy Model (Fig. 18) extends the understanding of organisations to illustrate the interdependencies of job embeddedness (connection of the employee to the organisation, taking into consideration knowledge, skills, favourable work environments) (Mitchell, et al., 2017), job satisfaction (Herzberg, 1966) (Vroom, 1964) (Locke, 1970) and brand attractiveness (Ronda, et al., 2018) to understand retention issues in a more complex, medium-large sized service delivery charity in 2020. The literature suggested that there isn't a one size fits all approach - each employee is a variable with their own motivations, perspectives and expectations. This is further compounded by the generational dimension in the workplace (Twenge & Campbell, 2008) (Anderson, 2020). The proposal is that tailored strategies and delivery of them across a complex hierarchical model could have a positive impact on retention. Using the research findings, the model is described in four tiers, all of which can be exit points, which may or may not be a good thing (Holtom, et al., 2008) (Sheedy, 2018).

To further develop and understand retention at BeyondAutism the model was enhanced to include a consideration towards length of time to achieve each tier to take account of the average length of service (Table 2) and the generational factors underpinning individual decision making (Sinek, 2019) (Silletto, 2018) (Anderson, 2020). The findings also highlighted that staff are driven by factors external to the charity – for example moving home and family (Fig.8) (Fig.12) supporting the assertions made by (Paille, 2013) and (Qazi, et al., 2015), and therefore should be represented in the Retention Hierarchy Model (Fig.18).

Retention at BeyondAutism is an issue full of complexity and contradictions: employees are happy working at BeyondAutism (Table 4) and yet turnover is on average 47% (Table 3). It is a non-profit organisation which should incite retention because of its cause rather than due to the financial reward (Benz, 2005); however, employees don't believe the pay is good enough (Table 4) and cite pay as a reason to leave in the exit interviews. Stress and burnout cited in exit interviews, linked to exposure to challenging behaviour (Hastings, 2005) (Kelly, et al., 2007) contradicts the Annual Survey results that indicates an average 91% of respondents believe that behaviour is well managed. The challenge that this complexity poses would seem to support the discourse around the need for differentiated strategies and to consider each employee as an individual (Hausknecht, et al., 2009) (Qazi, et al., 2015). This also resonates with the growing understanding of the impact that multi-generations have in the workplace (Ng, et al., 2010) (Anderson, 2020) (Sinek, 2017).

Therefore, the proposal is that this model is further tested by mapping individual employees across each of the tiers in order to gain a clear and multi-layered organisation-wide picture of retention that makes it sustainable and viable.

This research enabled a deep-dive into the retention issues within one service delivery charity, supported by the access of the researcher, who was the CEO. This provided rich insight and led to the development of a proposed Retention Hierarchy model. However, only studying one organisation is a limiting factor when attempting to understand the potential for application to other charities and service delivery organisations. Therefore, in addition to the next phase of testing at BeyondAutism, the proposed Retention Hierarchy Model would benefit from being applied in other similar organisations to further test its validity and usefulness.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A – Research questionnaire template

13/01/2021

Research questionnaire

Research questionnaire

Before you start the questionnaire, I need to make sure that you know what my research is about, what your involvement will be, and confirm that you agree to take part.

By agreeing to take part in this research you are stating that you understand the following:

- * I am participating in a research study
 - * I have been given an explanation of the research I am about to participate in and I know what is involved in my participation
 - * My participation in this research is voluntary and I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason
 - * My identity cannot be linked to my data and that all information I give remains anonymous
 - * If I have any questions about the research I can contact Tracie at tracielinehan@beyondautism.org.uk
- * Required

1. Do you agree to take part? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
 No

2. 1. What is your role? *

Mark only one oval.

- Trainee Tutor
 Tutor
 Advanced Skills Practitioner
 Supervisor
 Teacher
 Therapist
 SLT
 Head of Service
 Charity Team

3. 2. How long have you worked at BeyondAutism? *

Mark only one oval.

- 0-4 months
- 4-6 months
- 6 months - 1 year
- 1 - 2 years
- 2 - 5 years
- More than 5 years

3. Do you identify with BeyondAutism's:

4. Vision *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

5. Mission *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

6. Values *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

7. Behaviours *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

4. Which of the following statements applies to you? I have stayed at BeyondAutism because: (Rank 1-10, 1 being the highest)

8. *

Mark only one oval per row.

	First choice	Second choice	Third choice	Fourth choice	Fifth choice	Sixth choice	Seventh choice	Eighth choice	Ninth choice
I have received the training to be successful in my role	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I enjoy working in my team	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I enjoy my work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am making a difference	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I like the additional benefits (i.e. Perkbox, counselling, holidays)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have a sense of loyalty to my team	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have a sense of loyalty to our beneficiaries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have a sense of loyalty to the organisation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel supported	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

when work is stressful

I feel supported when my personal life is stressful

◀  ▶

5. Which of these statements also influence your decision to stay? (Rank 1-5, 1 being the highest)

9. *

Mark only one oval per row.

	First choice	Second choice	Third choice	Fourth choice	Fifth choice
I am OK with my pay	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am OK with my commute	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I want to progress in the organisation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel listened to by my manager	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have friends at work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. Any other comments

11. How long do you think you will stay at BeyondAutism? *

Mark only one oval.

- 1 year
- 2 years
- 3 years
- 3-5 years
- More than 5 years

12. Why?

13. Have you considered leaving BeyondAutism? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No

14. How often do you consider leaving? *

Mark only one oval.

- Every day
- Every week
- Every half-term
- When I see others leave
- When I see other jobs advertised
- I have not considered leaving

What would be the most likely reason for leaving BeyondAutism? (Rank 1-7, 1 being the highest)

15. *

Mark only one oval per row.

	First choice	Second choice	Third choice	Fourth choice	Fifth choice	Sixth choice	Seventh choice
Become unhappy in my team	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A poor relationship with my manager	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Not enough training	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Need a higher salary	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
No longer commute	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Not feeling supported in times of stress	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
No/limited career progression	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

When looking for a new job, what do you look for? (Rank 1-7, 1 being the highest)

16. *

Mark only one oval per row.

	First choice	Second choice	Third choice	Fourth choice	Fifth choice	Sixth choice	Seventh choice
Higher salary	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Career progression	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Closer to home	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Training opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
New sector (i.e. not SEN)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Chance to move away from London	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Another charity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Appendix B – Annual Staff Survey Template

Strongly Agree
Agree
Neither Agree nor Disagree
Disagree
Strongly Disagree

Please add any comments or suggestions for improvement that you feel would support your answer to this section

Department **In which area do you work (*must answer to continue*)**

ABA Tutor
ABA Cover Tutor & Lead Tutor
ABA Instructor
ABA Supervisor
Services Leadership Team (Head of Service, Deputy Head, Assistant Head / SENCO, Head of Therapy, ABA Consultant)
School Support Staff (Admin, Site Manager, Teaching Assistant)
Therapist (SaLT, OT)
Charity (Marketing, Fundraising, Finance, HR, Admissions, Post 19 Administrator)

Service **Which Service do you work in? (*must answer to continue*)**

Charity Team
Park House School
Tram House School
Post-19
Early Years & Outreach

Section 1 – Organisation strategy and purpose

- I identify with the objectives and purpose of BeyondAutism
- I feel well informed about what is happening at BeyondAutism
- I know how my role contributes to what BeyondAutism is trying to achieve
- I am inspired by working here
- I feel valued and recognised by the work that I do

Please add any comments or suggestions for improvement that you feel would support your answer (open text box)

Section 2 – Services (BeyondAutism Schools, Post-19, Outreach, Early Years)

- The services consistently achieves what it sets out to accomplish
- Teaching in schools and services is good or better
- Members of staff apply policies consistently
- Learners appear happy and engaged
- Learners are safe
- The needs of the individual learners are always appropriately met
- Behaviour is consistently well-managed by staff
- I know the identities of the school's and service's Designated Safeguarding

Leads

- I am aware of BeyondAutism's Whistleblowing Policy and where I could find a copy

Please add any comments or suggestions for improvement that you feel would support your answer (open text box)

Section 3 – My role

- I enjoy the work I do for BeyondAutism
- I am motivated by my work
- I feel appreciated
- The workload in my job is reasonable
- My work is challenging, stimulating and rewarding
- The results expected of me are realistic
- I rarely work more than my contracted hours in a week

Please add any comments or suggestions for improvement that you feel would support your answer (open text box)

Section 4 – Workplace and Resources

- I have the resources and information I need to do my job well
- BeyondAutism's policies and procedures help me to do my job effectively
- My workplace is well maintained
- I rarely get stressed at work
- I have a good work/life balance

Please add any comments or suggestions for improvement that you feel would support your answer (open text box)

Section 5 – Working relationships

- We have a good working relationship in our team
- Communication between different teams is effective

- I am consulted when new initiatives are under consideration
- I am comfortable sharing my opinions at work
- Everybody is treated fairly across BeyondAutism
- Diversity is valued at BeyondAutism

Please add any comments or suggestions for improvement that you feel would support your answer (open text box)

Section 6 – Services Senior Leadership (Heads of Service, ABA Consultant, Senior Teacher, Senior Therapists & Head of Pastoral), Governors and Advisory Board members)

- Leaders focus on the improvement of teaching and learning
- I feel supported by the Leaders in my service
- The Leadership Team of my service communicates well with staff
- Information and knowledge are shared openly within the service I work
- I have a clear idea of who the Governors and Advisory Board members are and what they do

Please add any comments or suggestions for improvement that you feel would support your answer (open text box)

Section 7 – Senior Management Team (CEO, Heads of School, Financial Controller, HR Manager, Marketing and Communications Manager's, Head of Donor Engagement, Head of Post-19, Head of Outreach) & Trustees

- I feel the organisation as a whole is well led by the SMT
- SMT communicates well with staff
- I have a clear idea of who Trustees are and what they do
- I have had an opportunity to meet some of the Trustees

Please add any comments or suggestions for improvement that you feel would support your answer (open text box)

Section 8 – My Manager

My Line Manager...

- is approachable and supportive when I need to speak to them
- does a good job of sharing information
- asks for my opinion before making decisions that affect my work
- gives useful feedback on how I am performing
- makes it clear what is expected of me in my job
- praises me when I do a good job

- meets me one to one at least every 6 weeks

Please add any comments or suggestions for improvement that you feel would support your answer (open text box)

Section 9 – Learning and Development

- My professional development is well supported at BeyondAutism
- I receive the training I need to do my job well
- 1 to 1 meetings with my manager are helpful
- There is a clear career structure and opportunity for promotion within BeyondAutism

Please add any comments or suggestions for improvement that you feel would support your answer (open text box)

Section 10 – Recognition and Reward

- I am paid appropriately and fairly for the work I do
- My achievements are valued by the staff and leadership team
- I would welcome the opportunity to share my knowledge and experience with other staff at BeyondAutism

Please add any comments or suggestions for improvement that you feel would support your answer (open text box)

Section 11 – Benefits

Please rate the value you place on each of the following benefits

- Exceptional leave (including compassionate, time off for dependents, religious leave)
- Sick pay scheme (5 days after 2 months service, 20 days after 1 years' service)
- Perkbox
- Onsite Staff Counsellor
- Employee Assistance Programme (Employee Support Hub)
- Employer pension contributions (3%, 4%, 5%)
- Childcare vouchers
- Travel season ticket loan
- Cycle to work scheme

Highly valued

Valued

Not particularly valued

Not valued at all

I didn't know we had this benefit

If you would like to add any comments about the benefits listed above, or suggest additional benefits please do so here (open text box)

Section 12 – Other Questions (comment box)

What are BeyondAutism's greatest strengths?

What could BeyondAutism improve? Please make suggestions as constructive as possible.

What could BeyondAutism do to improve staff retention?

How would you rate staff morale?

Very good / Good / Acceptable / Poor / Very Poor

Overall, I am happy working for BeyondAutism

Yes/No

Please list any social activities you would be interested in. These will be passed to the staff committee.

Appendix C – Exit Interview Template

<u>EXIT INTERVIEW</u>						
Name (optional) _____			Date appointed _____			
Location _____			Leaving Date _____			
Job Title _____			Length of Service _____			
<u>MOVING ON</u>						
What is your next career move?						
What attracted you to move to your next job? (please delete as applicable)		Type of Job	Location	Salary	Career Prospects	Development/ Opportunities
Comments / Other						
What are your reasons for leaving?						
When did you first decide you wanted to leave?						
Is there any one change that would have made you stay?						
Would you consider working for BeyondAutism again in the future?						
Further comments						
<u>REASONS FOR JOINING BEYONDAUTISM AND OPINIONS UPON LEAVING</u>						
Why did you originally join BeyondAutism?	Strongly agree	Agree	No preference	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
A good organisation to work for						
Location / ease of access						
Career Progression						
Salary levels						
Benefits						
Staffing policies						
Comments						

Has BeyondAutism lived up to your expectations? What did you expect before you joined? (please delete as applicable)	Yes	In parts	No		
Comments					
<u>YOUR EMPLOYMENT AT BEYONDAUTISM</u>					
When you started, did the induction help and was it accurate?					
Was BeyondAutism a good and positive environment to work in?					
Did you receive enough training to do your job? If not, how could it have been improved?					
Is the job you do any different to what you expected when you were recruited, and if so, how?					
What have you enjoyed most about your job?					
What have you enjoyed least about your job?					
How would you rate staff morale?	Very Good	Good	Acceptable	Poor	Very Poor
Please add any comments on morale					
What is your opinion of the following?	Very Good	Good	Acceptable	Poor	Very Poor
Salary Levels?					
Support from your Line Manager? (Class Leader, Supervisor. Please specify member of staff)					
Support from Senior Leadership Team and HR?					
Holiday entitlement?					
Training and development opportunities?					
Hours of work? (including working time, rest periods)					
Working conditions? (e.g. cleanliness, physical conditions of the workplace)					
Promotion / career prospects?					
Did you receive funded study from BeyondAutism? <i>Remember to return job & watch!</i>	Yes			No	
Comments					