

Employee Segments That May Be Considered Regrettable Losses

Below are examples of employee segments that may be considered *regrettable losses*—defined as individuals whose departure would negatively impact organizational continuity, performance, or future potential.

Segment	Definition	Why They Fit the Definition of Regrettable Loss
Top Performers	Consistently exceed performance expectations and deliver outsized results.	Their absence can lead to a measurable drop in team output, efficiency, or innovation.
High Potentials (HiPos)	Employees identified as having strong future leadership or growth potential.	Losing them undermines succession plans and future leadership bench strength.
Key Successors	Individuals formally identified in succession plans as “ready now” or “ready soon.”	Their exit can disrupt leadership continuity and force reactive backfilling or external hiring.
Employees with Specialized or Scarce Skills	Possess technical or domain expertise that is rare or hard to replace.	Their departure creates operational risk, capability gaps, or delays in key initiatives.
Cultural Linchpins	Employees who exemplify and reinforce the organization's values and behaviors.	Losing them can erode culture, morale, and informal systems of support and cohesion.
Cross-Functional Bridges	Employees with deep institutional knowledge across departments or functions.	They often reduce friction between silos and facilitate collaboration, making them difficult to replace.
Customer-Facing Anchors	Employees with strong client or partner relationships.	Their loss may weaken customer trust, satisfaction, or revenue continuity.
Mentors and Mobility Enablers	Actively coach, mentor, or support development of others.	Their absence can slow internal mobility, development, and knowledge transfer.
Innovators and Builders	Known for generating new ideas or launching key programs or products.	They are central to strategic growth and innovation pipelines.
Early Exits (<1 year tenure)	Employees who leave shortly after joining.	Indicates potential onboarding, role fit, or culture issues and represents a sunk investment.