



# State of Senior Living Leadership Survey Results - Loyalty

By Michelle Seitzer

Earlier this year, [ServiceTrac](#), a Senior Housing Forum partner specializing in employee, resident, and family member research, teamed up with Senior Housing Forum to do a Gallup Style [State of the Senior Living Leader Survey](#). Data was collected using ServiceTrac's online survey platform. From the survey's 500 respondents, we learned what industry leaders think about job satisfaction, loyalty, and more—and this series of articles is based on the lessons we can learn from the results.

In case you missed it, our first article, [State of Senior Living Leadership Survey Results -- Perception of Pay](#), was about the perception of pay in senior living.

One of the things ServiceTrac wanted to investigate more closely is how committed current leaders are to the senior living industry. Here's what they learned:

## **In It for the Long Haul, Unless...**

More than half of the survey's 500 respondents were senior living executives. When asked, "I plan to work in senior living for the remainder of my career," 91% said they either "agree" or "strongly agree."

In response to the question "What would motivate you to leave the Senior Living Industry?", 42% of respondents selected "I would never leave"—the implication being that nearly 58% of senior living executives could be motivated to leave the industry. The two largest motivators to leave were "better pay and benefits" (22%), and "more interesting work" (29%). We might extrapolate from these results that senior living executives are in it for the long haul, unless... And that question remains to be answered.

## **To Stay or Not to Stay**

So 91% of leaders plan to work in senior living until they retire, and 42% strongly feel they would "never leave" the industry, but what about everyone else in the building? Survey says: only 28% of other staff—facility administrators, department heads, and other workers—would never leave.

It appears that senior living leaders are more content with their roles than their employees. Why the discrepancy? Is it strictly about pay? Or does job satisfaction, morale, or burnout play a role?

Dr. Bret Miller, Director of Research for ServiceTrac, said this: “Recent research postulates that employees in administrative positions tend to have a longer tenured viewpoint with their current role, as opposed to line level staff. In other words, those in administrative roles view their jobs as careers rather than short term or transitional jobs.”

### **Are Leaders Committed Enough?**

Beyond the 42% who infer that nothing could motivate them to leave senior living, the 91% stat—gleaned from the “Do you plan on working in the senior living industry for the remainder of your career?” survey question—is pretty impressive too. Senior living leaders must really like their work, right? Not necessarily, as survey data revealed that nearly half of them could be motivated away by better pay and benefits (22%), or by more interesting work (29%).

This is “good news-bad news” data. Leaders are committed, but many are not quite as committed as we’d like. So what gives? I asked Steve Moran, Senior Housing Forum’s publisher, what he thought this meant. Here’s what he had to say:

“Being a senior living executive is hard work. Because it is a 24/7 business, no leader is ever really off the clock. It also can be one of the most satisfying jobs in the world. These leaders have the ability to impact the lives of seniors and their families and to improve the lives of some of the most compassionate, hard-working team members anywhere.”

“Too often the hard part gets more attention than the good part. This is a huge opportunity. When senior living organizations help leaders see the good they are doing . . . the lives they are changing, I am convinced they will be more committed.”

### **It’s All About the People**

Most people don’t come to senior living—or stay, for that matter—unless they like the work. And a big part of senior living work is the people. The older adults. Their families. The staff who become like family. Locking in these seasoned, satisfied leaders—and giving them opportunities to grow—could stabilize an industry that experiences so much turnover on all levels, and energize it for the next generation of seniors considering residence. Let’s make that revolving door an open door to transforming senior living leadership.

This is the second piece in a series of articles with insights from the State of the Senior Living Leader Survey.



This article has been brought to you by [ServiceTrac](#) in partnership with [Senior Housing Forum](#).

