



A Jones/NCTI® White Paper

***Keys to Frontline Retention:
The High Cost of Low Investment***

Survey Reveals Gaps in Technician Career Progression and Compensation, Putting MSO Frontline Retention at Risk



Research reveals three keys to improve broadband frontline retention

From constantly changing technology to the pressure of meeting daily productivity metrics, frontline employees face constant challenges that impact their proficiency and productivity on the job. When employees lack confidence on the job, they may consider leaving.

The cost of replacing even one employee is substantial – ranging from one and a half to two times that staffer's salary to recruit, hire and train a replacement. Additionally, losses in productivity and sales increase the cost of employee turnover.

THREE KEYS TO FRONTLINE RETENTION

New research by Jones/NCTI provides insight to support MSO retention. The insight, gained directly from technicians via an online survey and roundtable research of training leaders, provides new information for broadband companies to lower turnover and boost employee satisfaction.



A CLEARLY DEFINED CAREER PATH

Eight out of **ten**

frontline employees say a clearly defined career path supports their desire to stay with their current company and creates a sense of loyalty to their MSO employer.



LEARNING TO SUPPORT FEELING PROFICIENT AND PRODUCTIVE ON THE JOB

Almost **90%** of technicians say feeling proficient and productive on the job builds loyalty to their company, yet **almost half** say they are not getting enough training.



COMPENSATION TIED TO PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATIONS

Seven out of **ten** technicians report that bonuses and pay increases tied to **achievement of professional certifications** is an important consideration to stay with their current employer; however, **fewer than half** receive increases tied to certifications.



A CLEARLY DEFINED CAREER PATH

The growing competition across all industries for educated workers with technical knowledge and strong communications skills creates a unique challenge for learning and development leaders in the broadband industry.

There are few major industries that send their frontline employees into customers' homes every day. As in-home representatives of their company, frontline employees serve as de-facto brand ambassadors. They wear many hats, serving as educators, problem solvers, content experts, technical gurus, listeners and advisors. They embody corporate brands and establish the foundation for a relationship that companies want to nurture and grow for years to come.

Frontline employees indicate there is a simple way to improve retention efforts. Eighty three percent of those surveyed by Jones/NCTI indicate a clearly defined career path is the primary factor that makes them want to stay with their company.

Other factors that contribute to a frontline employee's longevity include:

- » Needed knowledge to help satisfy customers
- » The ability to earn industry certifications
- » The opportunity to earn college credit by taking job-related courses

LEARNING TO SUPPORT FEELING PROFICIENT AND PRODUCTIVE ON THE JOB

Currently, technicians and customer service representatives comprise an estimated 35% of the U.S. broadband industry workforce, with frontline technical supervisors comprising 3%.¹ Even with an estimated 40 hours a year of training for customer service representatives and 30 to 35² for technicians, employees want more. Consider how the industry continues to evolve – from cable provider to broadband powerhouse with advanced networks to support the connected home and Internet of Things (IoT). Technicians indicate more training helps them face continuous change and meet high expectations.

Almost **nine in 10** (86%) of frontline employees say feeling proficient and productive in their jobs makes them want to stay with their current company.



It's more than just performing job functions on a daily basis; **seventy eight percent** of workers say showing progress on company assessments makes them feel more proficient and productive.

¹ Bureau of Labor Statistics.

² Jones/NCTI Research.

Training timeframes matter, too. While many companies focus on the first three months, frontline workers indicate the first year is critical to feeling proficient and productive on the job. Sixty seven percent indicated it took them six months or more to feel proficient and productive in their current job.

According to the research, almost half of technicians say they are not getting the kind of training they need. **Nearly half** say the training their company offers is not enough, and respondents indicate that training to advance senior-level employees into supervisory or leadership positions is the **least effective** of their company's training programs.

Most importantly, one size does not fit all when it comes to learning and development. Employees feel more proficient and productive on the job when companies offer three specific types of training, and they want their company to increase these offerings:

- » Ongoing job training, such as safety or technology-specific courses
- » Foundational job training to introduce and refine core skills
- » Access to relevant information while on the job

COMPENSATION TIED TO PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATIONS

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The emphasis on learning and development to grow employees' technical skills is a national trend. To compete with a universal demand for workers with technical savvy, forward-thinking companies are starting to make big investments now in specialization programs, technical training, apprenticeships and partnerships with universities to bridge the capabilities gap.

More than half of the frontline employees surveyed by Jones/NCTI hold at least one professional certification. Workers say bonuses and pay increases tied to professional certifications compel them to stay with their employer.

Seventy one percent say bonuses and pay increases for professional certifications made them more likely to stay with their current company.



However, only **43%** say that they received either bonuses or pay increases for achieving professional certifications.

Additionally, **79%** of those surveyed say company reimbursement for the cost of professional certifications contributes to their loyalty. The good news is that most MSOs provide this kind of support, with **83%** of respondents indicating their companies reimburse them for their investment in certifications.

The findings come from a comprehensive research effort by Jones/NCTI to better address the evolving learning and development needs of broadband industry clients. The company surveyed a base of almost 19,000 frontline technicians during the month of October 2014. The research was informed by a Jones/NCTI industry roundtable during SCTE Cable-Tec Expo, an extensive listening tour and executive interviews conducted during the Spring of 2014.

How Jones/NCTI Enables MSO Frontline Retention

We develop people and advance careers. It's our passion. We design integrated learning tools to support lifelong professional development and career growth.

CUSTOM CAREER PATHS

We work side-by-side with MSOs to develop custom career paths that support frontline teams. From senior leaders who started their careers as installers to new technicians planning their climb up the career ladder, close to 500,000 industry professionals credit Jones/NCTI with long-term career growth and development.

MSO clients turn to us to support custom career path solutions that include:

- » Integrated career paths
- » Job-specific training and tools
- » Industry-recognized certifications
- » Academic support and college credits

PROGRAMS TO SUPPORT PROFICIENCY AND PRODUCTIVITY

Our self-directed, self-paced content works with the way your field technicians and customer service teams learn today. We work with partners to ensure learning success. With tracking and assessment tools, we can provide targeted learning opportunities to fill knowledge gaps.

We are about the “how” *and* the “why” of broadband learning. Our performance solutions build skills and provide foundational knowledge for technicians and customer service representatives. Additionally, our mobile learning tool, Amp by Jones/NCTI, provides access to ongoing, foundational and relevant learning – the three types of training employees value most.

PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATIONS

Leading broadband providers turn to Jones/NCTI for our deep curriculum of course-based learning and our industry-recognized and respected certifications. We offer more than 100 courses tied to certifications that are regarded as industry standards, with a special focus on:

- » Senior Master Technician
- » Master Technician
- » Installer
- » Operations Center Technician
- » Customer Service Representatives
- » Supervisors

Contact us to learn more about Jones/NCTI and our solutions to support your retention goals:



ABOUT JONES/NCTI

Jones/NCTI powers frontline teams and drives performance. The company equips the field for success with results-driven learning content and tools. Designed for the way people learn today, Jones/NCTI's quality content and flexible technology solutions are created for use in the classroom and on the job. A passion for people development drives Jones/NCTI. Hundreds of thousands of technicians, customer service representatives and broadband industry executives credit Jones/NCTI for the knowledge and skills needed to build rewarding careers and contribute to their companies' growth. Clients achieve measureable gains with their business and customers through actionable, timely and relevant learning. Find out how Jones/NCTI helps partners deliver a superior customer experience at www.jonesncti.com.