



# The Data Is In!

Multifamily Talent Development Insights and Challenges



Grace Hill conducted a survey to explore the multifamily industry's priorities and concerns related to employee and property performance. This independent study included over 300 respondents across rental housing organizations of all sizes and is intended to provide you with insights and approaches to developing talent.

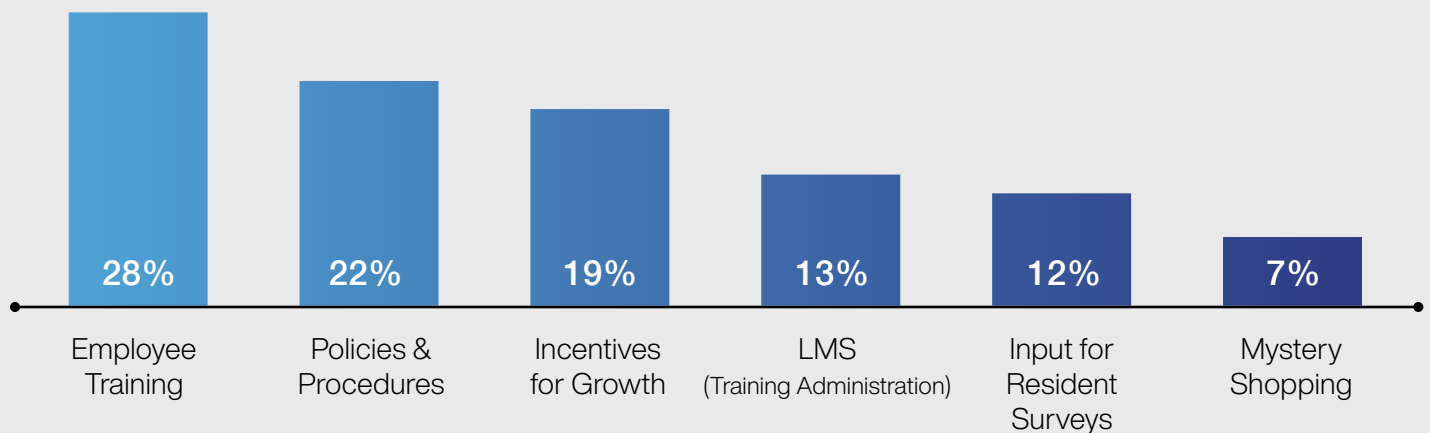
The multifamily industry is competitive, and employee turnover is high, making a successful talent development program even more important for reaching company goals. While organizations often face challenges in developing and implementing successful programs, companies increase their ability to overcome challenges and improve overall performance by using proper insights and a targeted approach. Ultimately, it's about creating a culture of learning that helps employees thrive and organizations excel.

# What Are Your Talent Management Priorities?

Developing a successful talent retention strategy requires a holistic approach that encompasses policies, training, and assessment tools. However, the degree to which organizations prioritize various retention initiatives varies.

Given real-world time and budget limitations, our respondents point to employee training, policies and procedures, and incentives as their top components. The data shows that mystery shopping seems lost in the shuffle — which may make this the missing link to improving overall performance.

## Talent Management Priorities



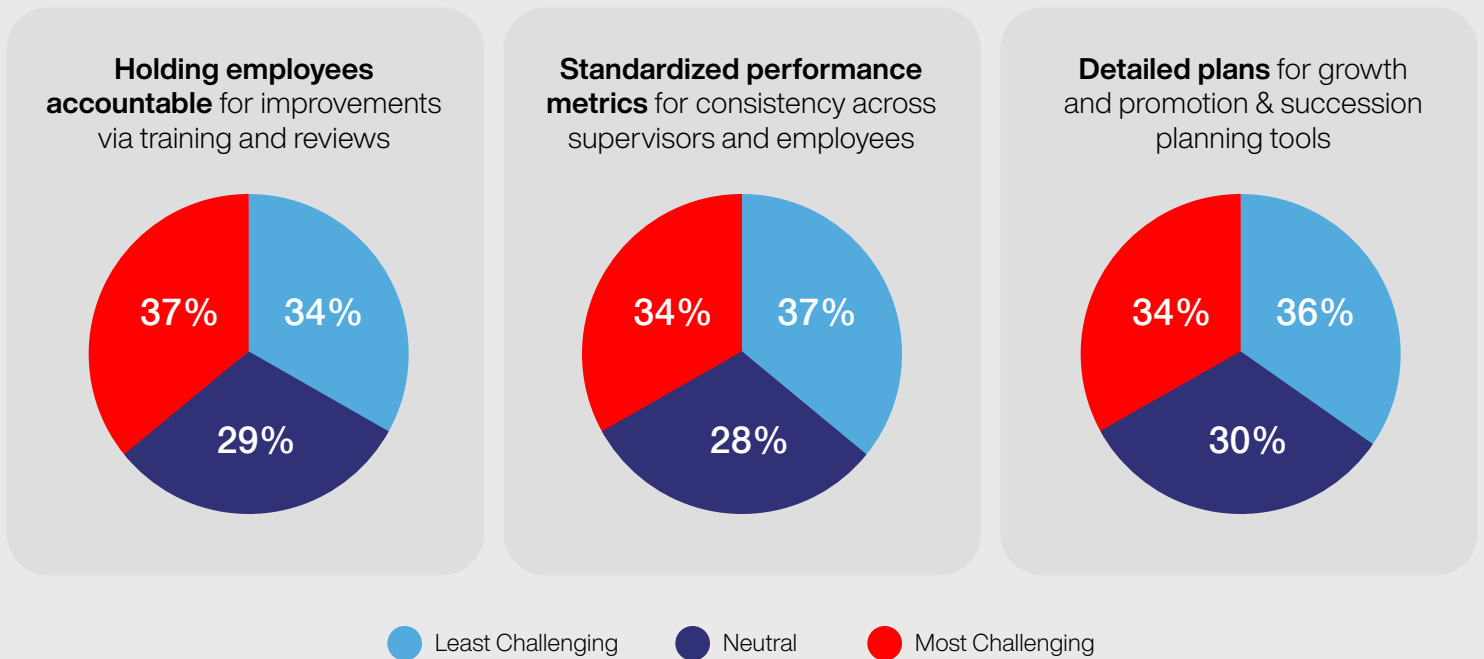
# Understanding Employee Performance Management

Employee performance management (EPM) is an ongoing system for monitoring and guiding employees' performance, professional objectives, and overall contributions to the organization.

Along the spectrum of least to most challenging, three issues emerged as a management concern: ensuring accountability, measuring performance, and planning positive career paths. All three are interrelated and can be viewed as a core set of dependencies within the framework of employee management.

## Challenging Employee Performance Management Issues

Among Total Sample



Done well, EPM is a win-win. Employees want to feel valued and grow professionally, including being empowered to work at their full potential when gaps are identified. However, the company also benefits. Retraining is far more cost-effective than replacement, and loss of talent can disrupt operations for months and lead to morale and reputational issues.

# Retention and Development Strategies

Employee retention is recognized as a long-standing challenge in the multifamily industry. Holding on to your people (and keeping them happy) has never been more crucial to your organization's short-term goals — and long term performance.

The chart below highlights the top four ways respondents are improving turnover rates:

## Opportunities to Improve Turnover Rates

Among Senior Executives  
by Organization Size

- Small
- Medium
- Large

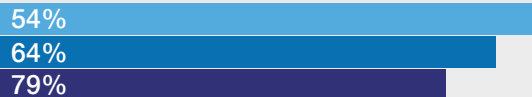
### Professional Development:

training offered to allow employees to build their skill set



### Career Paths:

ongoing training, regular promotions and moves into new/different properties



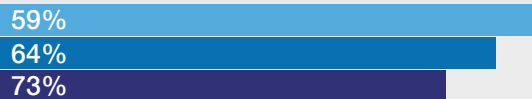
### Employee Recognition:

programs to recognize employees for their contributions



### Onboarding:

good onboarding training experience



# Credentials: A Win for Employee Retention, Development, and Recognition

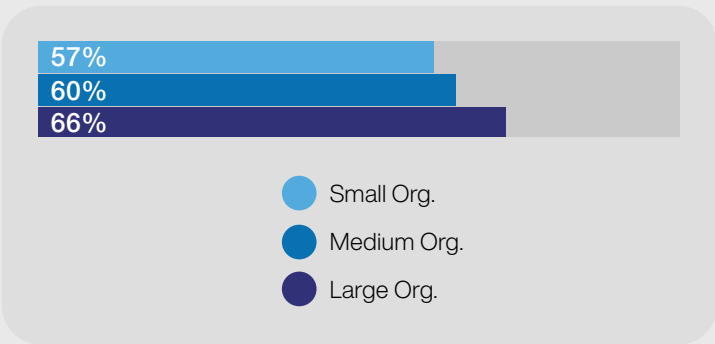
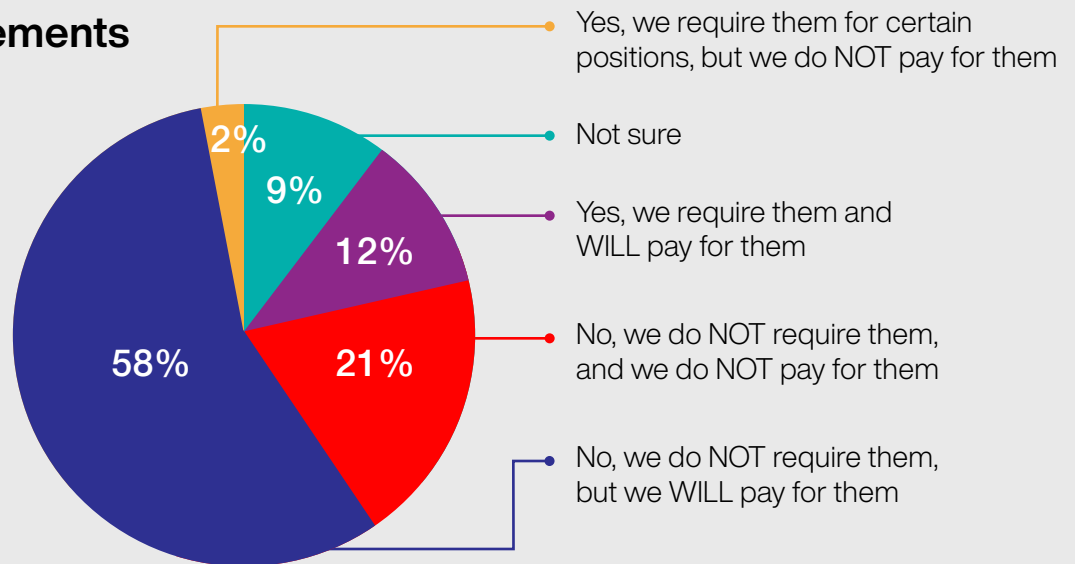
A great way to retain top talent is to help them earn industry credentials by covering the cost. Not only does this enhance employee development, it's also an effective form of employee recognition.

Two little-known facts from our survey support this argument: Nearly 6 in 10 companies don't require credentials, but they will pay for them (especially large organizations). And fewer than a quarter of property managers know their companies will pay for non-required credentials as a benefit.

**Take Note!** This gap points to a neglected opportunity — and potentially an easy retention win for this vital class of employees. So if your organization offers paid credentials, make sure you promote this benefit to your team!

## Credential Requirements and Payments

Among Total Sample



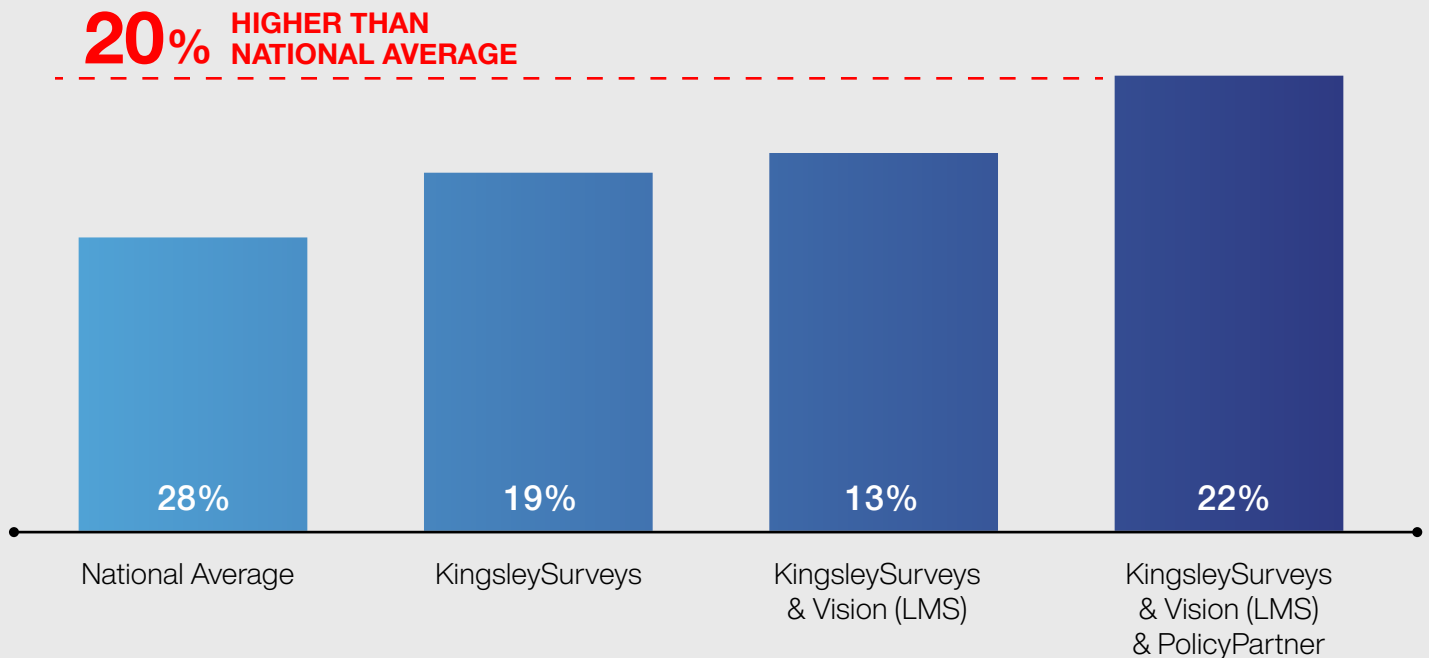
# Training Priorities and Challenges

Employees value learning opportunities, with a clear connection between associate retention and resident renewals.<sup>1</sup> A robust combination of training, policies, and assessments has been shown to significantly boost employee retention.

Implementing clear policies helps employees understand and meet expectations. At the same time, a thorough training program provides your team with the knowledge and skills necessary to perform their jobs effectively. Finally, ongoing assessments provide regular feedback on employee performance and help identify areas for improvement.

These three components — policies, training, and assessments — work in tandem to increase overall performance. In fact, Grace Hill clients who use training, policy, and survey solutions have renewal intentions 20 points above the national average.

## Talent Management Priorities



<sup>1</sup><https://gracehill.com/blog/data-connection-associate-retention-drives-resident-renewals/>

Since **90% of respondents say training improves retention**, what are the roadblocks to executing strong talent development programs?

Nearly **1/3** lack the headcount or budget to reach their training goals

**52%** don't have enough hours in the day to train

### Challenging Policy & Procedure Issues

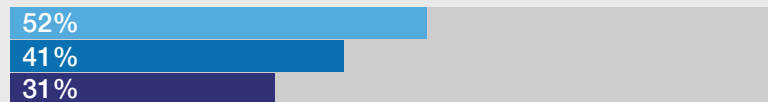
Among Senior Executives by Organization Size

- Small
- Medium
- Large

Current with state and local laws



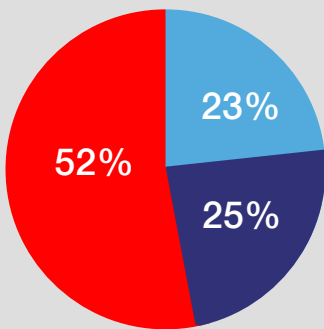
Building training courseware that ties to P&P



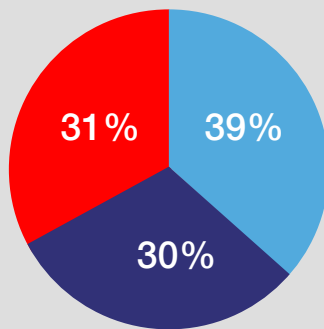
### Challenging Employee Professional Skills Training Issues

Among Total Sample

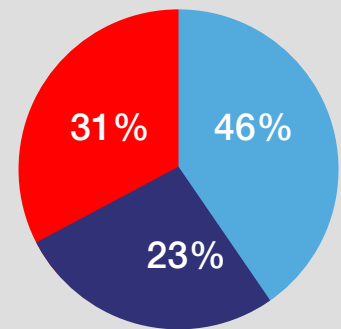
**Not enough hours** in the day



**Training** just a “check-the-box” exercise for legal compliance



**Limited team members** and/or budget to reach goals



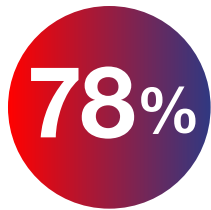
- Least Challenging
- Neutral
- Most Challenging



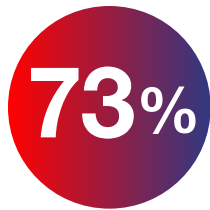
# Top 4 Training Topics

When it comes to training, certain topics are vital to creating a safe and inclusive workplace. Fair Housing ensures equal access to housing; sexual harassment prevention protects against discrimination; and DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) fosters a positive work environment.

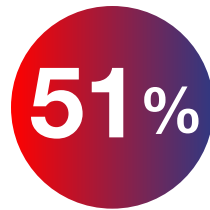
In our survey, the following topics emerged as training priorities.



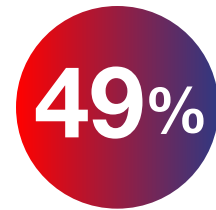
**Federal Fair Housing**



**State Fair Housing**



**Sexual Harassment**



**Diversity**

## Key Differences: Most Important Employee Professional Skills Training Topics

Among Senior Executives by Organization Size

- Small
- Medium
- Large

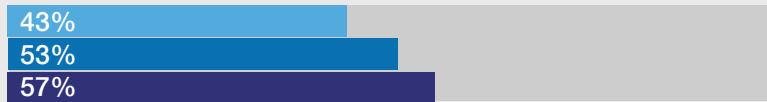
### Fair Housing - State and Local



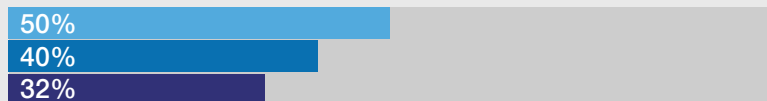
### Sexual Harassment



### Company-Specific Policies & Procedures, including Diversity and Inclusion



### Safety - Related to Property, including Environmental Compliance (OSHA, etc.)



### State and Local Laws (Assistance Animals, Fire Ordinances, etc.)



# Policy Challenges and Priorities

Policies that clearly define company expectations and adhere to industry and legal standards not only improve employee performance and compliance but also help reduce turnover — while strengthening the reputation of your property and brand.

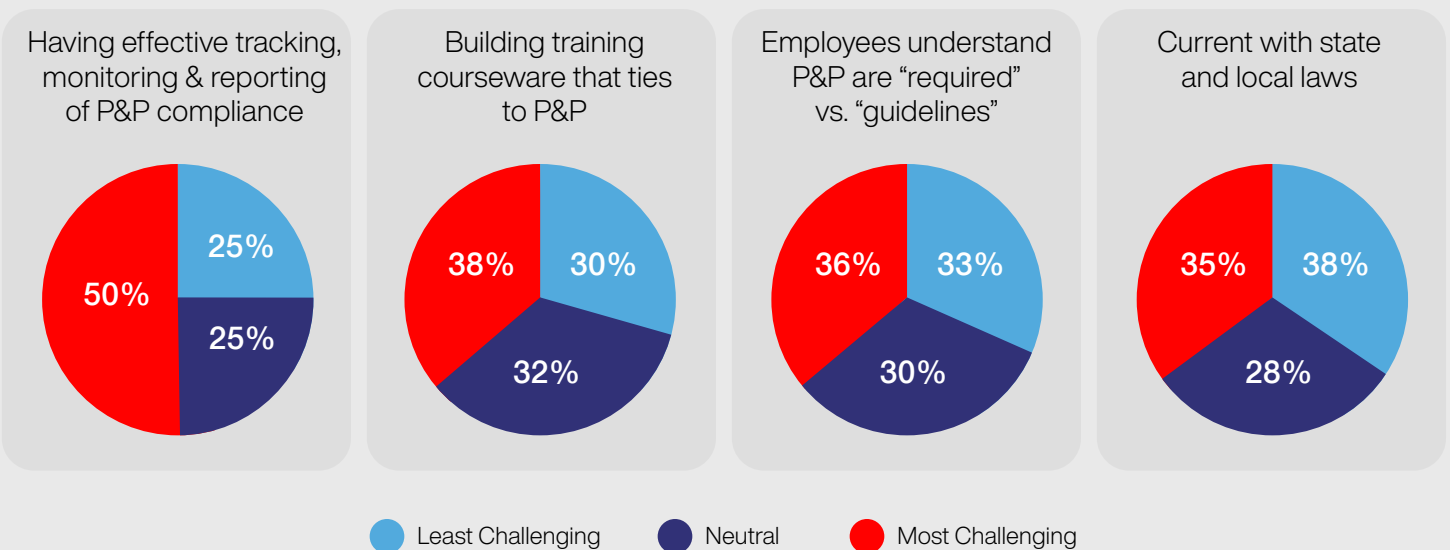
However, ensuring all employees follow policies and procedures is a top challenge for companies.



When it comes to policies and procedures (P&P), multifamily companies of all sizes have much in common. While all companies indicated it was critical to keep policies up-to-date, two-thirds of respondents manage that process internally by creating P&P themselves. Yet, their biggest challenge is ensuring those policies and procedures are followed effectively.

## Challenging Policy & Procedure Issues

Among Total Sample



## Changing Local and State Regulations Is Complicated

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No two rental properties — or their residents — are alike. It's no different for training: Every company must find the solution that fits their business regardless of size or location. That starts with staying current with all relevant state and local laws and cultural norms, as well as the specific needs of your residents.

Nearly half of senior executives at large firms cite staying on top of state and local laws as their biggest challenge — yet they are far less likely than their counterparts to say the same about building courseware that ties to P&P.

Compliance is so much more than checking a box! Comprehensive policy, training, and assessment solutions are key components to ensuring compliance and reducing risk. By focusing on these crucial elements, multifamily managers can not only ensure elevated operational efficiency but also enhance the performance of their employees.



## Is Mystery Shopping the Missing Link?

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Regular assessments help organizations identify areas of improvement and determine strategies to improve. Our study highlights an important point: Assessments could very well be the missing link to enhancing performance across all sectors.

**70%**  
of respondents believe mystery shopping  
impacts employee performance

Although 70% of respondents believe mystery shopping positively impacts employee performance, it ranked LAST among current talent management priorities.

Seven in ten respondents are using mystery shopping — on either a regular or an ad-hoc basis — and an equal share acknowledge that mystery shopping can help improve employee performance. But important distinctions emerge when you dive a little deeper into the data and look at how multifamily companies are using — and finding value in — mystery shopping.



By a 2-to-1 margin, larger organizations regularly use mystery shopping proactively, instead of reactively, on an ad-hoc basis — treating it as a core component of their talent management program rather than a one-off exercise. Doing this gives them a strategic advantage: the ability to measure team performance and connect it to their overall business goals.

## How Companies Are Using Mystery Shopping

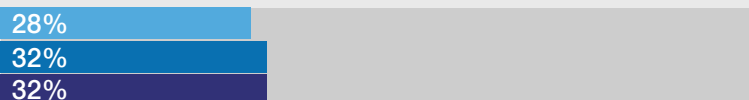
Among Senior Executives  
by Organization Size

- Small
- Medium
- Large

Regularly



On ad-hoc basis



Those strategic benefits need not be confined to larger organizations. Used properly, mystery shopping can positively impact any size company — with a benefit that far exceeds its cost. Yet, when considering an ideal talent management program, respondents surprisingly rank it as the lowest priority component when allocating investments of time and money.

One reason may be logistics. Organizations cite making better use of shop results — both in ease of use and application with other systems — as their number one mystery shopping challenge.

But another may be a matter of mindset — of thinking bigger. Not only can mystery shopping help identify the gaps in (and improve) individual and team performance, but it can also feed valuable data into the company's policy, training, and incentive programs — heightening their effectiveness and that of the overall talent management system.



As multifamily organizations continue to grow and evolve, it's essential for leaders to understand their peers' priorities and challenges to enhance their own practices. By gaining insights into what drives success or causes roadblocks in similar companies, executives can adopt best practices and develop targeted strategies to improve performance.

Collaboration is key to ensuring growth, and Grace Hill is committed to sharing resources and ideas that propel multifamily forward. Each of our industry-leading solutions — PolicyParter, Vision, and KingsleySurveys — can help your company increase compliance and reduce risk. But when combined, they become a powerful program for creating a culture of compliance and building operational excellence.

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Ready to incorporate data-driven insight to develop a successful talent development strategy?

**Talk to the multifamily experts at Grace Hill today!**

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## About the Survey

For 25 years, Grace Hill has provided industry-specific technology solutions that increase resident renewals, reduce operating risk, and improve net operating income (NOI). Over 2,000 businesses trust Grace Hill. We understand the state of the industry and share that insight with our customers. This study was conducted by Goldsmith Strategic Services, on behalf of Grace Hill, to ensure unbiased results. We heard from 302 respondents from a broad cross-section of sizes, roles, and geographies.

### Organization Size

87	107	108
<b>Small</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Large</b>
(1,000 - 3,000 Units)	(3,001 - 10,000 Units)	(>10,000 Units)

### Job Title

70%	15%	15%
<b>Senior Manager to C-Suite</b>	<b>Regional Managers</b>	<b>Property Managers</b>

