QuidelOrtho™

Forging a Path to Workplace Wellness:

Insights From the Diagnostic Lab

Forging a Path to Workplace Wellness: Insights From the Diagnostic Lab

Executive summary

For decades, diagnostic laboratories — from the physician's office to the core lab — have faced a critical shortage of skilled workers, increasingly impeding their ability to keep up with growing testing demands. As the average age of the laboratory workforce steadily increases, academic programs are generating less than 42% of the laboratory workforce needed to grow with demands and to fill the volume of open and new roles as forecasted by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.[1]

Compensation, turnover and workplace stress perennially are contributing factors to the shortfall in workers, yet these challenges have only worsened against a backdrop of heightened employment incentives, like increased pay, sign-on bonuses and employer efforts to strike a better work-life balance. So, what's at the core of the laboratory staffing crisis, and how can we address these critical issues? To better understand the concerns presented by some sobering facts, QuidelOrtho conducted a comprehensive industry survey to (1) analyze the workplace dynamics between lab staff and management-level employees, (2) glean insights into the drivers of discontent and attrition among laboratory workers and (3) identify potential solutions and ways to bridge the gaps between the issues and perceptions that drive workplace satisfaction.[2]

QuidelOrtho's 2023 survey underscores the urgent need for a new approach to communication and team management, one that ensures the concerns of lab staff are understood and addressed adequately by laboratory and hospital administration. Survey results revealed a substantial divergence in job satisfaction levels across seniority levels based largely on varying perceptions of laboratory dynamics and outlook.

Top-level findings include[2]:

- While 85% of upper management workers are optimistic about their industry future, only 47% of lab technologists ("techs") share the same sentiment. This discrepancy highlights a concerning trend in the workforce and reflects a divide seen between seniority levels in several important areas.[3]
- A snapshot of significant consequences of these challenges, with only 36% of laboratory employees expressing strong likelihood of remaining in diagnostics. This sentiment varies across levels, with just 12% of techs and 42% of upper management indicating strong commitment to the profession.
- The five most urgent issues identified by respondents: (1) staff burnout, (2) work-life balance, (3) cost pressures, (4) recruiting new staff and (5) workflow efficiency.
- Only slightly more than half of employees surveyed across levels gave favorable ratings of their access to up-to-date diagnostic tests and instruments (with notably lower responses at the tech level) — and lab processes and workflow measures received the lowest ratings among all work environment factors.

This white paper offers insights into the drivers of dissatisfaction, turnover and workplace pressures within the diagnostic laboratory field. It also identifies key issues and provides a framework to address workplace challenges by creating an understanding of the differing views, perceptions and priorities across lab staff and management. Subsequently, the white paper pinpoints areas of workplace alignment and the potential to build on common ground.

Introduction

Due in part to the impact of COVID-19 on public education, awareness of diagnostic laboratories' crucial role has escalated in recent years. The demand for diagnostic laboratory services, from the physician's office to the core lab, has also surged to unprecedented levels, as labs are trusted to collect essential patient data for prevention, diagnosis, treatment and disease management. Healthcare providers rely on diagnostic information to make informed decisions for optimal patient care. All these factors emphasize the significance of the lab's work as well as its people, culture and operations — and are vital for maintaining the lab's technological edge, meeting patient needs and ensuring seamless operations. Yet, as demands expand, diagnostic labs continue to face challenges in team dynamics that have plagued the field since the turn of the century and continue to intensify.

Historically, laboratory workers have embraced a commitment to providing accurate and timely patient care. This commitment has been tested during the last five years as the volume of testing and work for laboratorians has increased substantially. Reports describe that, pre-COVID, 13 billion lab tests were completed in the United States annually. Comparatively, between February 2019 and April 2022, 997 million diagnostic lab tests *just for COVID-19* were processed.[3]

The strain produced by striving to maintain patient care in the face of dramatically increasing testing only exacerbates and highlights the chasm between the personnel who manage the lab and those who perform the day-to-day testing processes. Due to workforce attrition and leaner laboratory staffing, each lab tech must take on more responsibility and quickly learn how to do more with less. This leads to more stress and less flexibility among laboratory staff who remain concerned about their low wages relative to other professional healthcare workers. As a result, a vacuum of staffing shortages is perpetuated as labs struggle to keep experienced workers or hire and train new team members. As frustrated laboratorians leave the profession, the burden on those remaining workers grows heavier.

With so much on the line in the laboratory space, QuidelOrtho designed its survey to understand what lab professionals think about their role, their professional environment and their careers. The objectives of the survey were to:

1. Capture the most influential dynamics in the diagnostic laboratory team to understand employees' greatest needs, challenges and obstacles
2. Understand the differences in worker perspectives along seniority levels, and examine the impact on the overall health of the lab working environment
3. Provide a foundation of actionable ideas to improve staff morale, retention and productivity within the diagnostic lab

Who were the survey respondents?

Of the 200 laboratory workers surveyed[2] (see figure 1):

- Just over 80% were hospital based
- Lab settings represented include blood banks, core labs, molecular labs, microbiology labs and physician office labs
- All seniority levels were included, from lab staff to upper management
- All respondents had influence in evaluation and purchasing for their lab and were classified into four levels: (1) tech, (2) supervisor/manager, (3) director/senior director and (4) medical director/vice president (VP)

All seniority levels were included, from lab staff to upper management.

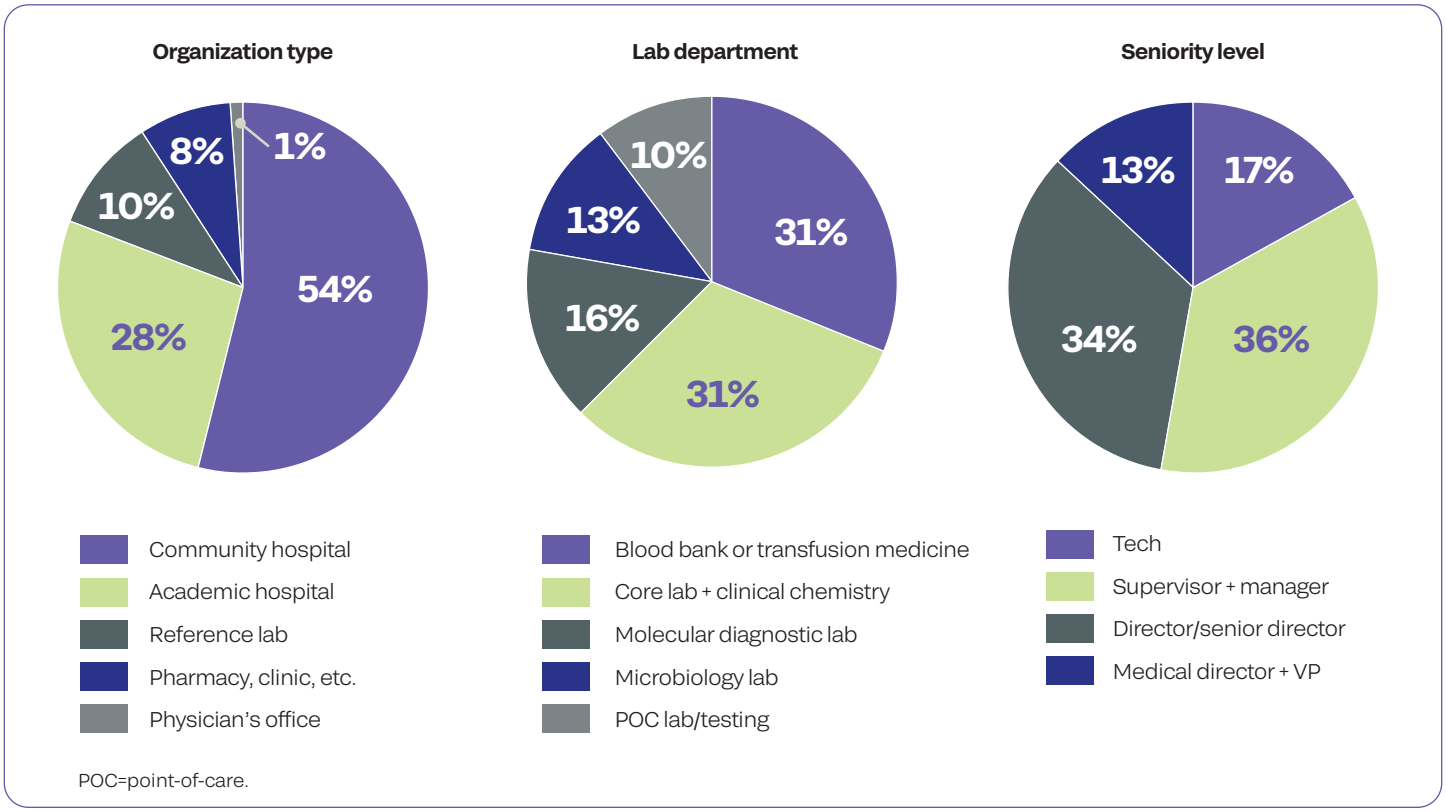
The #1 motivator in the diagnostic lab: patient care

Results from the survey affirmed that helping patients and having an impact on society elicit a strong sense of pride in the job and are far and away the most important reasons why people stay in the profession despite the pressures and challenges.[2] Discovering this critical common ground across all roles and employment levels of the lab gives important clues about how patient care can be prioritized to unite laboratory teams.

Across all job levels responding (see figure 2), by far the highest level of agreement was to the statement *The good we do for patients is the best part of the job*, revealing[2]:

- 97% agreement at tech and supervisor/ manager levels
- 100% agreement at director and VP levels

Figure 1. Participants by organization, department and seniority level[2]



POC=point-of-care.

Figure 2. Agreements with statements about diagnostic profession[2]

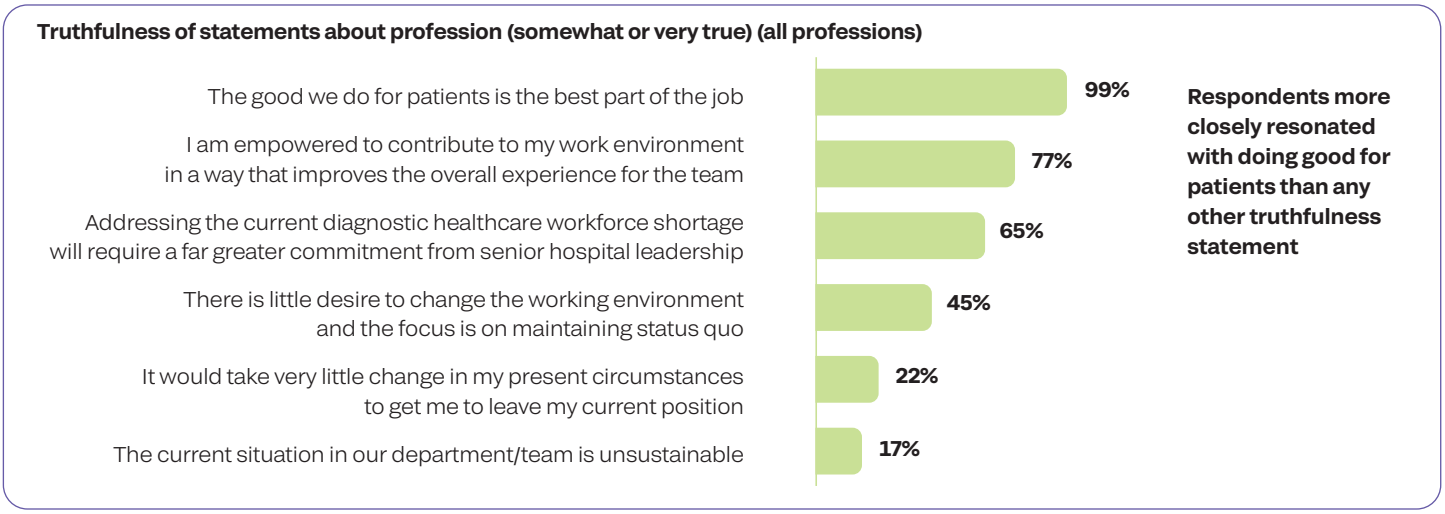


Table 1. Satisfaction rating[2]

Satisfaction rating (somewhat and very)	Total	Tech	Supv./Mgr.	Dir./Sr. Dir.	Med. Dir./VP
Workplace environment	61%	44%	68%	60%	65%
The people I work with	65%	53%	65%	63%	85%
My compensation*	47%	21%	39%	60%	69%
The mission/values of the organization*	82%	65%	78%	90%	96%
The impact of the work I do*	93%	75%	94%	99%	92%
The respect the organization has for me*	75%	35%	75%	90%	88%
Opportunities to advance/take on new responsibilities	58%	35%	49%	69%	85%
The respect and recognition I get from colleagues in my field*	74%	44%	72%	84%	92%
Extremely likely to stay in diagnostics	36%	12%	29%	51%	42%

*Identified as important drivers of retention.

Further analysis of satisfaction with different aspects of the job shows that two patient care-related job measures (*The impact of the work I do* and *The mission/values of the organization*) are also the highest rated for job satisfaction across all staff — with one of only three measures rated above 50% by tech-level staff (see table 1). Beyond these similarities, we begin to see a widening disparity across more functional and experiential job satisfaction measures, including working environment, career opportunities, respect and recognition from colleagues, and (as expected) compensation.[2]

Disparity in job satisfaction drivers beyond patient care

The chasm between the respondents' overwhelmingly top priority of providing good patient care and their markedly lower satisfaction levels with patient care-related job aspects mirrors the divisions within the workforce itself. Excellent patient care requires healthy workplace culture, technologies and workflows. When labs fail in these categories, workers — particularly those at the tech level — may become frustrated because they feel they must work much harder to meet the rising volume of patient testing, at lower compensation than workers with similar experience and training levels in other healthcare fields. A recent study of lab workers pointed to compensation and a disconnect with management as two major factors in their decision to leave their position.[4]

Excellent patient care requires healthy workplace culture, technologies and workflows.

The job satisfaction aspects detailed here reinforce other findings around compensation and report that fewer techs are satisfied with their pay versus the other levels of seniority. Of important note, beyond compensation, these results also show that techs' satisfaction with the recognition they receive from colleagues is lower than in the other groups, as are perceptions of career advancement and opportunity. So, while compensation has proven to be a persistent and difficult challenge to overcome, the findings here suggest lab managers and executive teams can explore other ways to address workplace satisfaction that can also impact morale, turnover and employee well-being.[2] When sign-on bonuses and salary increases aren't in the budget, teams can take steps to improve retention and performance (without breaking the bank) through formal programs encouraging workplace collaboration and recognition.

Morale in the lab: disparity and deficiency

The survey demonstrates that many factors contribute to ongoing staffing issues and burnout in the diagnostic laboratory — lab managers and executives teams need to look at the challenges systemically to reverse the current negative trends. In some cases, labs as workplaces are approaching crisis-level employee morale and retention issues. Data from the survey reveal the divide in morale and the priority or importance of critical issues between different levels of seniority that drives discord and, ultimately, dissatisfaction and worker attrition.[2]

Additional survey responses provide important details about workplace culture and environmental factors that play a role in today's shrinking diagnostic laboratory workforce. Table 1 highlights the disparity between levels related to various factors in optimism and job satisfaction. Table 2 shows the resulting overall positive or negative outlook on job satisfaction by seniority levels[2]:

- Only 50% of techs who responded were *somewhat/very satisfied* compared with 91% and 88% at the two most senior staffing levels
- Only 1% of respondents at the highest levels of management indicated they were *somewhat/very dissatisfied* compared with 10% of the tech-level respondents
- Neutral responses are not shown

Table 2. Job satisfaction by seniority[2]

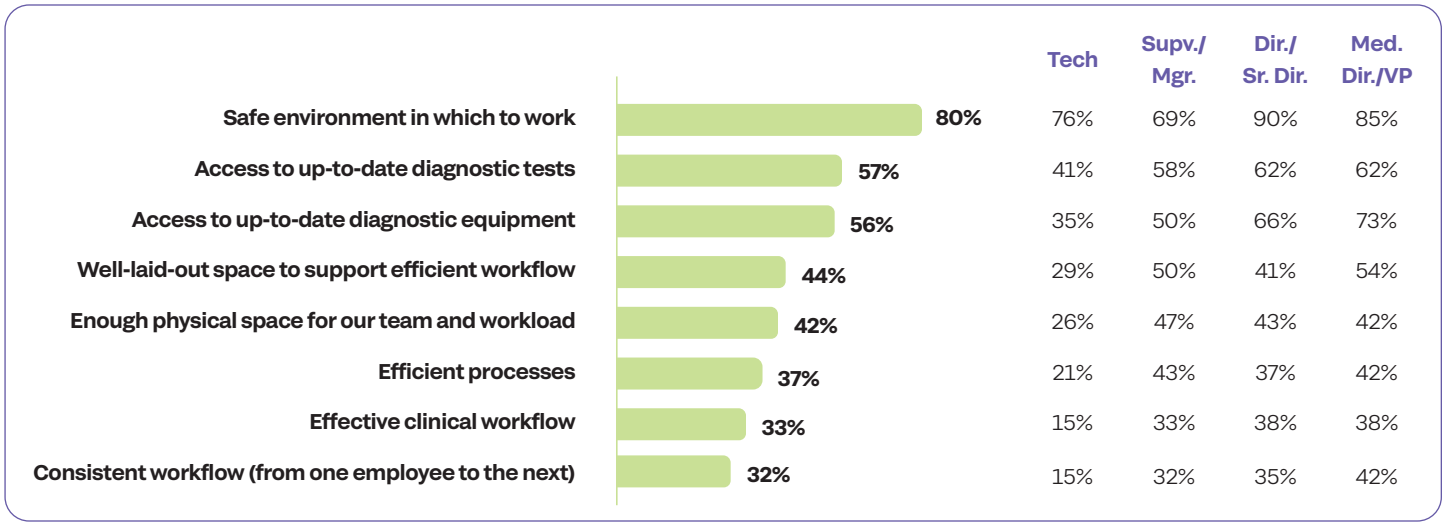
Seniority	Total	Tech	Supv./ Mgr.	Dir./ Sr. Dir.	Med. Dir./VP
Somewhat/ very satisfied	75%	50%	69%	91%	88%
Somewhat/ very dissatisfied	19%	29%	10%	1%	4%

The survey also asked respondents to rate their organization using various workplace environment criteria. Figure 3 shows the ratings of these criteria by seniority level with, again, significant gaps in notable areas, including[2]:

- *Access to up-to-date diagnostic equipment* (38-percentage-point disparity): The responses for this criterion illustrate the difference in perceptions between the people who make the final technology purchasing decisions and those who use the technology on a daily basis
- *Consistent workflow* (27-percentage-point disparity)
- *Effective clinical workflow* (23-percentage-point disparity)

These ratings highlight the disconnect between the decision-makers and the lab techs who are in the direct line of consequences for workflow lapses and deficiencies. Unsurprisingly, factors such as workflow and equipment are rated lower by the lab staff who use them every day — and, pragmatically, these findings illuminate the opportunity that exists for managers to

Figure 3. Ratings of lab/organization work environment[2]



understand more about what impacts their teams the most, day to day, and how these factors contribute to overall job outlook and satisfaction.

Similarly, another section of the survey focused specifically on the physical environment of the lab. The most noteworthy response in this portion was to the aspect *Our space shows leadership is committed to providing the resources we need*. Not only was this criterion rated low by techs, but it also garnered a 44-percentage-point difference between uppermost management (88% alignment) and lab techs (44% alignment).[2] This result further underscores the divergence of perceptions between the leadership making resource allocation decisions and those functionally utilizing the resources on a day-to-day schedule.

How does lab staff view colleagues' morale and productivity?

Shifting from the work environment to issues around teamwork, survey results indicate that, although lab staff can be reassured their employees will prioritize patient safety regardless of other factors, unsustainable workload levels and stress are also problems they identify in their colleagues. In fact, only 9% expressed optimism about their colleagues' workplace stress levels, and just 38% had a positive outlook about their colleagues' ability to keep up with workload (see table 3).[2]

Table 3. Assessment of colleagues

Industry colleagues (good and very good) (by feeling about the future)	Total
Workplace stress	9%
Workplace communication	58%
Ability to keep up with the workload	38%
Keeping a positive outlook	64%
Maintaining patient safety despite challenges faced	92%

The widespread pessimism about the morale of colleagues should raise red flags regarding not only employee retention but also the ability of lab teams to successfully perform their roles. On a related note, the survey found that only 36% of all employees are extremely likely to stay in diagnostics.[2] Taken with other survey findings, this result underscores not just the difference in how employees of varying seniorities view their challenges but also how lab staff view workplace stress and workload as a systemic, organizational issue (versus one they face individually). This multifaceted problem can't simply be solved with higher salaries. Labs face a critical urgency to prioritize employee morale for the sake of staff members' well-being as well as their ability to fulfill the mission. A concerted effort to capture and understand the drivers of workplace stress at all levels is paramount to implementing measures to alleviate workload and stress.

How can labs use these data to their advantage?

Disparity in the way workplace dynamics are viewed between staff and management is not the exclusive domain of the diagnostic laboratory. While many industries struggle with these issues, diagnostic laboratories that embrace optimal patient care as a shared mission to unify staff must also acknowledge and understand the divides among their staff levels — what is causing critical morale lapses and downturns on productivity, burnout and turnover — and determine how these issues can be addressed in the workplace.

Targeting teamwork, celebrating success and tapping into technology

Research into the drivers of improved employee morale reveals three workplace actions that are shown to improve retention, relations and even organizational profit: (1) Recognition and reward, (2) employee empowerment and (3) building relationships between workplace leaders and other employees.[5] Similarly, the results of the QuidelOrtho survey found that recognition for their contributions and career growth is a powerful motivator in the laboratory workplace.

However, addressing a workplace that is aging out is a different challenge. Diagnostic laboratories must address how they can attract employees who have years of work ahead of them in addition to planning and implementing retention strategies. One key to reaching such workers is technology. Not only does lab

automation appeal to a generation of workers who grew up during the Information Age, but research also shows that automation boosts staff performance. A 2021 study of diagnostic lab performance found a direct correlation between the implementation of lab automation technology and staff productivity and efficiency.[6] Additionally, results of this study found that lab techs widely see a deficiency in their access to the latest technology.[2] So, by upgrading or investing in technology to change this perception among current staff, lab managers and executives will also build in safeguards to attract and retain talent for years to come.

Teamwork

Divides need bridges. In the case of the divides between seniority levels among laboratory staff, laying the foundation for these bridges comes from listening to what workers need. And, unlike pay raises or new equipment, these bridges can be built with very little cost to the organization. The QuidelOrtho survey results show areas where it is possible to strengthen teamwork and camaraderie by closing organizational divides and morale gaps.

Incentive and structure

Most employees view compensation and advancement as reflections of the respect their organization has for them. Through this perspective, we can see the correlation between these factors and how employee satisfaction with them differs according to seniority. A comparison between tech-level and medical director/VP level responses illustrates the divide (see table 1)[2]:

- *The respect the organization has for me* — 35% satisfaction among techs, 88% satisfaction among medical directors/VPs
- *Opportunities to advance/take on new responsibilities* — 35% satisfaction among techs, 85% satisfaction among medical directors/VPs
- *My compensation* — 21% satisfaction among techs, 69% satisfaction among medical directors/VPs

What these divides reveal is (1) efforts to recognize and reward employees, particularly at the tech and supervisor levels, must be accelerated and (2) all workers, regardless of level, must feel like they are part of a team where individual feedback is welcomed, solicited, acknowledged and valued.

A better understanding of how the factors in table 1 are interrelated can help develop stronger employee retention programs. Internal initiatives that encourage employees at all levels to hear and consider others' perspectives are important. For example:

- Establishing ground-up, formal programs — like small-group "lunch and learns" — bring employees at all levels together to openly discuss workplace issues and opportunities, giving tech-level staff a voice and improving relationships throughout the organization
- Creating task forces of staff at all levels to respond to identified issues provides the opportunity for employees to shine, earn the respect of their colleagues and expose strengths that open doors to advancement

These data should impel each organization to probe how it can identify and address these and other individual issues. Potential assessment questions labs should ask about each employee on a regular basis include:

- Is the employee's pay truly fair in the market and equitable internally?
- Based on what we observe, how can we retain this employee?
- What motivates each individual worker, and how can we best provide recognition and reward?
- What training can we provide to strengthen this employee's skill and knowledge set?
- What are the employee's leadership qualities, and how can we leverage these skills while helping them grow in their career?

Technology

As labs turn their focus to understanding the individual workers and their needs, they must address their infrastructure as a major factor driving employee morale. Survey data points shown in figure 3 — particularly with regard to diagnostic equipment, workflow and process — demonstrate the need for better technologies to improve the quality of diagnostics, efficiency and productivity. Furthermore, the survey found that adoption of the latest technologies is something respondents see both as important and more likely to

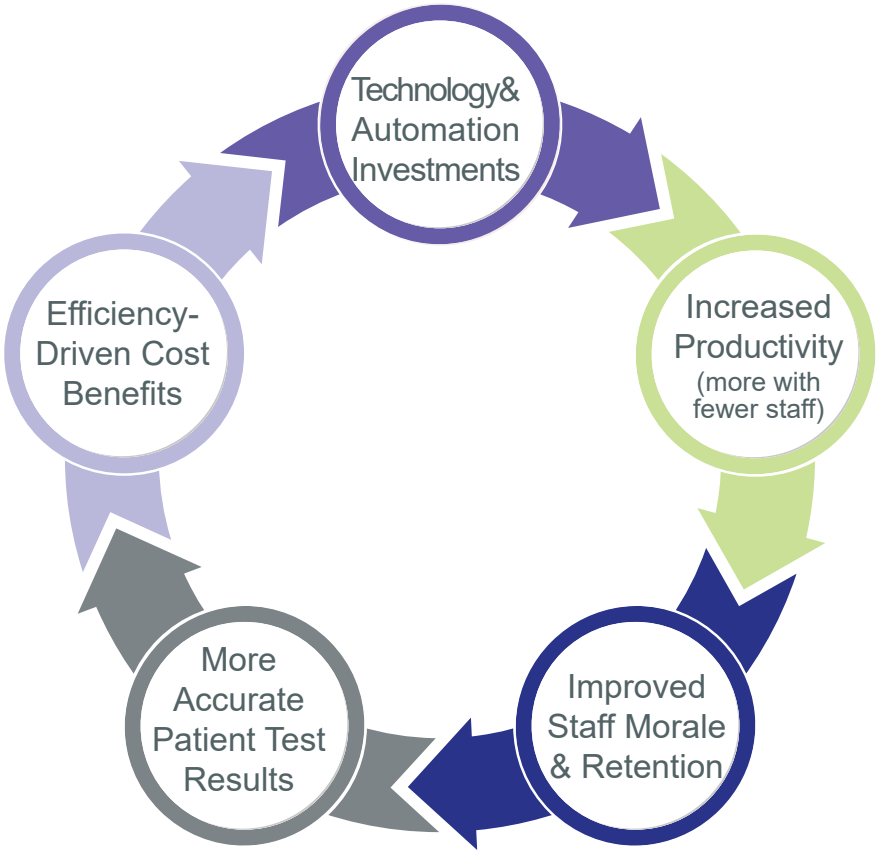
happen versus other potential changes and solutions to workplace demands.[2]

Diagnostic labs that commit to investing in technology and automation should do so with careful consideration of the systems that are best suited for their environment, operational goals and patient needs. Examining and selecting optimal technology can pervasively improve productivity, efficiency and even staff morale.
For example:

- **Laboratory information systems** (LIS) can be customized to manage most laboratory operations, including sample tracking, test results and inventory management. They help streamline workflow and improve data accuracy.
- **Automation** can handle laboratory tasks from sample preparation to labeling — and can aid standardization and consistency while minimizing human error. Automated systems can reduce time spent on routine tasks, allowing staff to focus on more complex responsibilities. Automated quality control and calibration without staff intervention saves time, reduces waste and improves accuracy. Automation can also help fill gaps left by employee attrition.
- **High-capacity analyzers**, when used in a point-of-care setting, can significantly reduce the amount of manual time spent with single-use rapid tests. The burden that respiratory illness season can place on labs presents a great example of why a practice might consider adding or upgrading analyzers to alleviate staff burdens, not just for higher test volumes but also panel testing across the range of respiratory diseases, including flu, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and COVID.

As illustrated in figure 4, investing in technology is known to create a positive continuum that perpetuates continuous improvements in productivity and staff retention rates while reducing costs over time.[2] One recent study found that automation decreased total lab costs by about 12.6%[7]; another found that the average return on laboratory automation investment was 3.5 years.[8]

Figure 4. Lab technology investment continuum



High-capacity analyzers, when used in a point-of-care setting, can significantly reduce the amount of manual time spent with single-use rapid tests. The burden that respiratory illness season can place on labs presents a great example of why a practice might consider adding or upgrading analyzers to alleviate staff burdens, not just for higher test volumes but also panel testing across the range of respiratory diseases, including flu, RSV and COVID.

Managing change: How labs can bridge the gaps at all levels

Addressing the problems identified by staff — at every level — is essential to creating a healthy and productive workplace. The QuidelOrtho survey shows that, in addition to burnout and work-life balance as the top two most urgent issues felt across the board, the most senior respondents identified cost pressures as their most urgent problem in the lab. Survey results show that they also felt the pressures of recruiting new staff, which is unique to manager roles.

Table 4 highlights these key issues with ratings of the importance of each and how various levels of seniority views its priority. Suggested interventions are also included to address the pressures felt by each functional area.[2] Overall, these results are consistent with a larger study (N=4,613) investigating workplace stressors of U.S. laboratory professionals published in 2020, in which 85.3% of respondents reported that they felt burnout with regard to their laboratory work.[4]

Table 4. Current situation of department/organization[2]

	Index	High	Low	Intervention(s)
Staff burnout	193	179 (Tech)	146 (Supv./Mgr.)	· Flexible hours · Wellness programs and coping education · Automation that eliminates maintenance tasks, freeing staff to focus on tactical patient care · Regular assessments of stress, like the Perceived Stress Scale · Application of tools provided by organizations such as the American Institute of Stress · Employee assistance programs
Work-life balance	142	154 (Supv./Mgr.)	113 (Med. Dir./VP)	
Cost pressure	139	193 (Med. Dir./VP)	121 (Dir./Sr. Dir.)	· Technologies and automation that streamline manual and repetitive tasks · Process optimization to streamline operations · Waste reduction · Broader employee involvement in cost-saving programs
Recruiting new staff	110	132 (Med. Dir./VP)	90 (Supv./Mgr.)	· Implementing technology that will benefit staff and produce results that attract recruits · Improving retention and compensation programs to minimize churn
Workflow efficiency	103	107 (Dir./Sr. Dir.)	98 (Supv./Mgr.)	· Regular assessment and investment in technology and automation · Regular technology updates to LIS, QMS and EHR systems · Audits and continuous improvements to lab automation · Routine assessment of SOPs to identify process opportunities · Cross-training for better versatility among staff · Performance-based incentives

EHR=electronic health record; QMS=quality management system; SOP=standard operating procedure.

Which organizational improvements are most important to lab employees?

Respondents were asked to choose the seven most important changes or improvements that would benefit their organization and/or themselves the most (see table 5). As the most important change that would benefit themselves, the top response selected was *Improving the personal recognition for individuals in the diagnostics field* (80%).[2] This response rate was higher than *Improving pay in our profession* at 77% — accounting for a notable 45% discrepancy from the organizational score. Additional noteworthy responses were[2]:

- *Training improvements/innovations that make it faster and easier to train staff on the equipment used in our role* (72%)
- *Aggressively adopting the latest technologies that can help staff get more work done faster* (71%); this was also noted as the most "likely to be accomplished"

Across their organizations, the most important and beneficial change selected by respondents was *Aggressively adopting the latest technologies that can help staff get more work done faster* (69%). This number is in line with the individual response (71%), indicating a moderate to high level of importance. However, in reexamining figure 3, *Access to up-to-date equipment* and *Access to up-to-date tests* were ranked low by techs (35% and 41%, respectively).[2]

Additional noteworthy organizational responses were[2]:

- *Expanding investments in the use of diagnostics automation* (65%)

Table 5. Most important changes or improvements benefiting the individual or organization[2]

Most important changes or improvements (choose seven)	You personally	Organization
Improving the personal recognition for individuals in the diagnostics field	80%	35%
Improving pay in our profession	77%	40%
Training improvements/innovations that make it faster and easier to train staff on the equipment used in our role	72%	60%
Aggressively adopting the latest technologies that can help staff get more work done faster	71%	69%
Broader adoption of a clear career ladder framework to develop and promote staff like us	66%	50%
Improving the visibility and perception of the value of diagnostics as a profession	63%	57%
Expanding investments in the use of diagnostics automation	47%	65%
Improving the dedication senior leadership gives our department or team	44%	35%
Elevating the visibility of the profession so more young professionals enter the field	40%	52%
Expanding staff positions (headcount or FTE) in the department as needed	35%	48%
National listing/forum of open positions for diagnostics professionals	31%	32%
Promoting the healthcare diagnostics profession (at high schools, for example) to increase incoming students	23%	43%
Deeper partnerships with government/non-profit resources to advance industry standards and excellence	20%	42%
Investments at the national level (DOE, for example) in expanding education for diagnostics professionals	17%	34%
Manufacturers providing certificates of training/proficiency for contractors and travel techs	12%	17%
Making effective use of contractors, travel techs, etc., to immediately fill crucial staffing needs	5%	28%

DOE=Department of Education; FTE=full-time equivalent.

- *Training improvements/innovations that make it faster and easier to train staff on the equipment used in our role* (60%)

These results give additional insight into the lab employees' minds. By making organizational changes that positively affect employees personally, labs would see improved morale, lessened stress and increased staff retention.

Further analysis on the most important improvements that would benefit employees personally revealed that certain changes were prioritized differently according to respondent staff level[2]:

- Notably, techs prioritized *Improving the personal recognition for individuals in the diagnostics field* (80%) and *Improving pay in our profession* (77%). Labs that implement these improvements will be making giant steps toward better employee retention and morale.
  - It should also be noted that *Improving pay in our profession* was highly important across all levels, but for lab techs, it was tied as the number-one desired improvement.
- Lab supervisors/managers and directors/ senior directors favored *Improving the personal recognition for individuals in the diagnostics field* (85%, 66%) and *Training improvements/innovations that make it faster and easier to train staff on equipment used in our role* (83%, 69%). Their enthusiasm about recognition and training should be shared with lab techs, emphasizing the advantages of training to make their work more efficient.
- Medical directors and VPs suggested *Aggressively adopting the latest technologies that can help staff get more work done faster* (81%) and marked it as the top change that would benefit their organization — which illustrates they are thinking about the "bigger lab picture." It is worth probing across departments and employees to elicit the "buy-in" that could make this change a reality in the lab.

Conclusion

The work of the diagnostic laboratory is critical to our modern healthcare system and the lives of millions of patients each year. As diagnostic testing expectations and demands continue to increase, labs of every size and shape — from the integrated delivery network core lab to the physician office — can only keep up if they identify the divides and obstacles that hinder patient care and productivity. Although patient care remains a unifying factor among staff at all levels, the sharp divides between seniority levels on attitudes and perceptions about the workplace are influencing a negative outlook on the profession, staff attrition and, ultimately, productivity.

Building a better diagnostic lab requires a concerted and sustained effort to address staff divides and implement lasting measures to unite teams that work together toward shared goals. A united and motivated lab workforce unlocks fresh motivation and productivity levels. Achieving this is a challenge, but one that, if executed properly, will help mitigate many of the other challenges that today's laboratories face.

To keep up with the changing dynamics in patient care and across the healthcare organization, diagnostic laboratories must:

1. **Remediate the divides** that exist in their organizational structures through assessments, interventions, training and programs that will give all workers a voice and ensure that everyone is contributing toward shared goals
2. **Motivate and reward employees** with thoughtful and fair assessment, training, compensation, continuing education and recognition programs
3. **Adopt technologies** that will mitigate the workflow, process and cost stressors that are driving employee dissatisfaction and attrition

As labs look at solutions for creating an inviting and thriving workplace, technology can be a lynchpin between attracting a new generation of workers and empowering the existing workforce to focus on more personally fulfilling and stimulating aspects of patient care. New advancements and innovations are allowing lab workers to collaborate with others to learn and do more, while technology efficiently manages the more repetitive aspects of their work. This critical balance of teamwork and technology will increasingly drive the success of the diagnostic laboratory and serve as a solution to more workplace and employee-related challenges as testing demands only increase over time.

References: 1. *Occupational Outlook Handbook: Clinical Laboratory Technologists and Technicians.* U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Updated September 14, 2023. Accessed March 22, 2024. https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/clinical-laboratory-technologists-and-technicians.htm **2.** Data on file. QuidelOrtho Corporation; 2023. **3.** Stone J. We're facing a critical shortage of medical laboratory professionals. *Forbes.* Published April 2022. Accessed March 22, 2024. https://www.forbes.com/sites/judystone/2022/04/28/were-facing-a-critical-shortage-of-medical-laboratory-professionals/?sh=47cec66f260c **4.** Garcia E, Kundu I, Kelly M, Soles R, Mulder L, Talmon GA. The American Society for Clinical Pathology's job satisfaction, well-being, and burnout survey of laboratory professionals. *Am J Clin Pathol.* 2020;153(4):470-486. **5.** Hammoud MS, Osborne S. Effective employee engagement in the workplace. *Int J App Manag Tech.* 2017;16(1):50-67. **6.** Huf W, Mohns M, Bünning Z, et al. Benchmarking medical laboratory performance: survey validation and results for Europe, Middle East, and Africa. *Clin Chem Lab Med.* 2022; 60(6):830-841. **7.** Archetti C, Montanelli A, Finazzi D, Caimi L, Garrafa E. Clinical laboratory automation: a case study. *J Public Health Res.* 2017;6(1):881. **8.** Mokoginta M, Sjaaf AC. The cost and quality of laboratory automation: a systematic review. Paper presented at: 6th International Conference on Public Health; October 23-24, 2019; Solo, Indonesia. Accessed March 22, 2024. https://doi.org/10.26911/the6thicph-FP.04.24

New QuidelOrtho branding may not be available in all markets, subject to country-specific regulatory approval. Please confirm with your local commercial team.

9975 Summers Ridge Road
San Diego, CA 92121 USA

800-874-1517
quidelortho.com

QuidelOrtho™