CASE STUDY

From Revolving Door to Retail Excellence: How Horizon Home Goods Reduced Store Staff Turnover by 67% in 9 Months

Company Profile

Company:	Horizon Home Goods
Industry:	Specialty home furnishings and decor retail
Size:	32 stores across the Western US with 380 employees
Management:	32 store managers and 48 assistant managers
Challenge:	24% annual frontline turnover damaging customer experience and store performance

Transformation Results

Metric	Before	After	Improvement
Staff Turnover	24%	8%	↓ 67%
Customer Satisfaction	3.7/5	4.6/5	↑ 24%
Same-Store Sales	Baseline	+11%	+11%
Annual Savings	—	$1.8M	$1.8M
Platform ROI	—	843%	843%

The Tipping Point

Horizon Home Goods had built a loyal customer base over 18 years by offering curated home furnishings with exceptional in-store design consultation. But by early 2025, that reputation was crumbling under the weight of a staffing crisis.

The company had lost 91 frontline employees in the previous year, a 24% annual turnover rate that was devastating store operations and customer service quality. Experienced design consultants were leaving for competitors. Store associates were burning out from constant understaffing. Stores were operating with skeleton crews during peak shopping hours.

Store managers were drowning in hiring cycles. As soon as they trained someone, another employee would quit. The constant turnover meant customers rarely saw the same face twice. Product knowledge suffered. Design consultations became transactional instead of consultative. Online reviews mentioned inconsistent service and unknowledgeable staff.

> *"We were trapped in a death spiral. Stores were understaffed, so existing employees worked harder, got burned out, and quit. Then we'd hire quickly just to fill shifts, which meant poor cultural fit, which led to more turnover. Our best store managers were considering leaving because they spent more time recruiting than actually managing."*
>
> **— Margaret Chen, VP of Store Operations**

Exit interviews revealed familiar retail patterns: no career advancement opportunities, feeling undervalued, inconsistent scheduling, lack of product training, and store managers too overwhelmed to provide support. One departing design consultant summed it up: "I came here because I love helping people create beautiful homes. I'm leaving because all I do is ring up purchases and restock shelves."

The company had tried standard retail retention tactics. They had raised starting wages by 18%, enhanced employee discounts, and created monthly recognition programs. Nothing slowed the exodus. Each departure cost approximately $4,200 in recruiting, training, and lost productivity, not counting the impact on customer experience and sales.

The Clover ERA Implementation

In March 2025, Horizon's leadership team made a fundamental shift. Rather than treating symptoms with higher pay, they would address the root cause: store managers had no visibility into their teams' daily experience.

They implemented Clover ERA for all 32 store managers plus 48 assistant managers across their Western US footprint. Each manager oversaw 8-15 employees including design consultants, sales associates, and operations staff.

> *"I'll be honest, my first thought was 'great, another corporate initiative that will take time away from running my store.' But when I saw three of my associates flag Enablement issues on the same morning, I investigated immediately. Turned out our inventory system had been down for two days and nobody told me. They were manually checking stock while customers waited. That's the kind of problem I could fix in five minutes if I knew about it."*
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> **— David Sullivan, Store Manager - Portland**

The 30-second daily reflections fit naturally into retail workflows. Team members completed them at the start of their shift, during breaks, or on their phones after clocking out. The

questions focused on the CLOVER framework: Communication, Learning, Opportunities, Vulnerability, Enablement, and Reflection.
The manager dashboards provided real-time visibility that transformed how stores operated. When five employees across different shifts flagged Communication issues in one week, their manager discovered that a major merchandising reset had been announced via email, which part-time staff never saw. She held a pre-shift huddle to brief everyone, and Communication scores recovered immediately.

Nine Months of Transformation: The Results

By December 2025, Horizon Home Goods had transformed from a staffing crisis to a destination employer:

Retention and Recruitment:

- Staff turnover dropped from 24% to 8% annually
- Only 30 voluntary departures in the second half of 2025 (compared to 53 in the first half)
- Zero store manager turnover after implementation
- Average employee tenure increased from 1.8 years to projected 3.2 years
- Time-to-fill open positions decreased from 42 days to 18 days

Employee Engagement:

- Daily reflection participation averaged 86% across all stores
- Employee Net Promoter Score increased from -12 to +42
- Communication scores improved 58% in the first 120 days
- Product knowledge training completion increased 71%
- Career path clarity ratings rose from 2.8/10 to 7.4/10

Customer Experience and Sales:

- Customer satisfaction scores increased from 3.7/5 to 4.6/5
- Same-store sales growth of 11% year-over-year
- Average transaction value increased 14%
- Design consultation bookings increased 32%
- Online review ratings improved from 3.8 to 4.5 stars

Financial Impact:

- Estimated annual savings of $1.8M in turnover and training costs
- ROI of 843% (platform cost vs. direct savings)
- Platform investment: $282,600 annually ($295/month × 80 managers)
- Additional revenue from sales improvement: $3.4M

What Changed: Store Manager Perspectives

The transformation came from giving store managers the ability to identify and address problems before they became resignations.

> *"Before Clover ERA, I managed by gut feeling and hoped I'd catch problems during one-on-ones. Now I have actual data about my team every single day. When I see Learning scores dropping for my design consultants, I know they feel disconnected from product training. I can arrange vendor sessions or create peer learning opportunities immediately."*
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> **— Jessica Ramirez, Store Manager - San Diego**

Ramirez shares a specific intervention that prevented a valuable employee departure. Her dashboard showed her top-performing design consultant had declining Opportunity scores for three consecutive weeks. Rather than wait for the quarterly review, she met with him that afternoon.
The consultant, a four-year veteran, felt stuck in his current role with no clear path to advancement. He'd applied for assistant manager positions at other retailers. Ramirez immediately created a senior design consultant role with team lead responsibilities and increased compensation. She also put him on the leadership development track. Three months later, he was promoted to assistant manager and is training to run his own store.

> *"The daily reflections take 20 seconds while I'm grabbing coffee before my shift. But the insights our manager gets are incredible. She addressed our scheduling conflicts within 48 hours of seeing them in the data. That kind of responsiveness makes you want to stay."*
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> **— Maria Gonzalez, Design Consultant - Seattle**

Store managers credit the neuroscience education with transforming their leadership approach. Understanding that lack of recognition suppresses oxytocin and damages team cohesion helped them restructure their feedback processes. Instead of only recognizing top sales performers, they now celebrate product expertise, customer service excellence, and peer mentorship in daily huddles.

The System That Worked in Retail

What made the difference at Horizon wasn't abandoning performance metrics or reducing customer service standards. It was creating a system where problems surfaced immediately and store managers had the authority to respond.

> *"Annual engagement surveys told us morale was low across stores, but by then we'd already lost experienced people. Daily insights let us address issues in real-time at the store level. When Communication scores dropped chain-wide after we changed our return policy, we held regional manager calls within 24 hours to clarify and adjust our approach."*
>
> **— Margaret Chen, VP of Store Operations**

The Vulnerability component proved especially valuable in retail's often harsh environment. One high-potential associate had been hiding severe anxiety about customer confrontations despite strong sales numbers.
Her Vulnerability scores flagged the issue before it affected her performance. Her store manager connected her with the employee assistance program and arranged for her to shadow their most skilled conflict resolution expert. Two months later, she successfully de-escalated a difficult customer situation and received multiple compliments. She's now training other associates on customer interaction techniques.

Lessons for Other Retail Organizations

Horizon Home Goods' transformation offers critical insights for retail chains facing similar staffing challenges:

Empower store managers beyond sales metrics. The platform succeeded because it gave store managers their own team health data, not just sales dashboards and labor cost reports. Each manager could see their specific team's issues and address them independently.

Daily insights prevent the retail turnover spiral. In retail, waiting for quarterly surveys means discovering problems after employees have already found other jobs. Real-time visibility lets managers intervene when staff are frustrated, not after they've given notice.

Address the neuroscience of retail burnout. Horizon stopped treating symptoms with wage increases and started addressing root causes: feeling invisible (no oxytocin from recognition), dead-end jobs (no dopamine from career progress), no control over schedules (suppressed serotonin), and constant customer pressure (cortisol overload).

Make reflection fit retail workflows. The 30-second commitment worked because employees could complete it during natural breaks in their shift or on their phones after work. Longer surveys had always failed because retail workers are constantly on the floor.

Give managers authority to act on insights. Store managers could adjust schedules, create development opportunities, and address team concerns within days. When staff flagged inadequate product training, managers could arrange vendor sessions or create peer learning opportunities immediately.

Connect employee engagement to customer experience. When leadership could see the direct correlation between employee wellbeing and customer satisfaction scores, it justified prioritizing retention alongside traditional retail metrics.

Where They Are Now

Eleven months after implementation, Horizon Home Goods has become a destination employer in specialty retail. The culture shift is visible in everything from store energy to customer reviews.
"Employees talk about their reflections during pre-shift huddles now," observes Sullivan. "Someone will say 'I reflected this morning about how we handled that difficult return yesterday' and it starts a productive conversation about improving processes. It's become part of how we learn and grow as a team."
The company is attracting experienced retail talent again. Candidates specifically ask about career development paths and work-life balance during interviews. Several former employees have returned, citing the transformed store culture.

> *"We spent years trying to fix turnover with wages and benefits. What actually worked was giving our store managers daily visibility into their teams and trusting them to respond. The platform didn't solve our staffing crisis. It showed store managers exactly where the problems were every day, which gave them the chance to fix issues before losing more people."*
>
> **— Margaret Chen, VP of Store Operations**

Final Impact Summary

Investment	Results	ROI
$282,600/year	**$1.8M saved**	**843%**
80 store leaders	**24% → 8% turnover**	**67% reduction**
30 seconds/day	**86% participation**	**Sustained**

About Clover ERA

Clover ERA empowers store managers and retail leaders with daily team insights based on the neuroscience-backed CLOVER framework (Communication, Learning, Opportunities, Vulnerability, Enablement, Reflection). The platform replaces annual engagement surveys with 30-second daily reflections designed for fast-paced retail environments, providing store managers with real-time data to prevent turnover, improve customer experience, and drive same-store sales growth.

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