

January 12, 2026

Animal Health and Nutrition Sales Industry Insights

An Executive Brief for Sales Leadership

A note from Dan Simmons, CPC

For more than 25 years, Continental Search has recruited sales and technical professionals in the animal sciences—primarily for feed additive suppliers, feed manufacturers, and animal health companies.

In late 2025, we polled over 150 sales leaders and professionals to capture real-world insights on compensation structure, industry trends, and the outlook for the next several years. This executive summary highlights the most relevant takeaways from that survey.

HOW TO READ IT:

Page Two presents the overall survey results. The following pages break out results by sector: Animal Health, Feed Additives, and Feed Manufacturing/Consulting.

Some of the takeaways I found:

- Retention risk is real—even before you talk comp. Only 59.36% expect to still be with their employer in 12 months; 40.64% answered Maybe or No. That's a big "flight-risk middle."
- #1 reason salespeople leave: management/culture (not money). "Management/company culture" was selected by 82.89%—higher than compensation (58.29%). If you want to keep your team, leadership consistency is the retention lever.
- If you cap incentives, expect more attrition pressure—uncapped is the prevailing expectation.
- Work/life balance is second only to health insurance as the most important benefit.

If you have questions—or want to pressure-test what the results mean for your specific business—I can dig deeper into the data and pull more targeted cuts.

For the purposes of this summary, a "leader" is someone with direct reports. We grouped Director/VP sales executives without direct reports as "solo contributors" (despite their importance to the organization) simply to keep the comparisons clean and easy to interpret. If you'd like, I can break those roles back out—or isolate any other subset—and walk through the implications with you.

I hope this information helps you recruit more competitively and retain your top performers. And when recruiting needs arise, I hope you'll keep Continental Search in mind.

Dan Simmons, CPC

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EXECUTIVE BRIEFING | TOTAL SURVEY RESULTS (USA)

What the sales talent pool is telling you

Retention risk is real. Only **56%** expect to still be with their employer in 2026; **44%** are maybe/no. Leaders are steadier (**36%** maybe/no) than solo contributors (**46%**).

#1 reason people leave: company culture.

It was selected by **85%** overall (**89%** leaders; **83%** solo).

Career path clarity matters. Lack of career growth was selected by **46%** overall; RIF/re-org by **42%** (higher among solo contributors at **45%**).

Comp, benefits, and vehicles

Most comp plans are variable. Only **19%** report no variable pay; the most common structures are **34%** (<20%) and **33%** (20-40%).

Uncapped incentives are the norm.

Overall: **54%** uncapped vs **32%** capped; **14%** report no incentive pay.

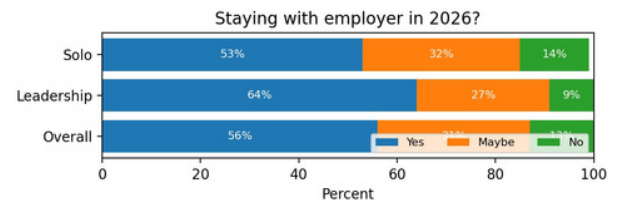
Benefits that matter are practical. Top picks overall: Health insurance (**73%**), Flex/work-life (**65%**), Retirement (**62%**).

Vehicle policy is part of the deal. **40%** have a company-provided vehicle; **26%** have an allowance; **25%** use the IRS mileage rate.

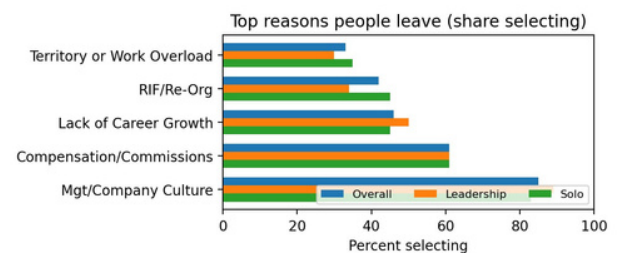
Where the market thinks sales is heading

Consolidation is the overwhelming expectation. **84%** expect fewer/larger suppliers. Technical selling is becoming the price of admission (**66%**).

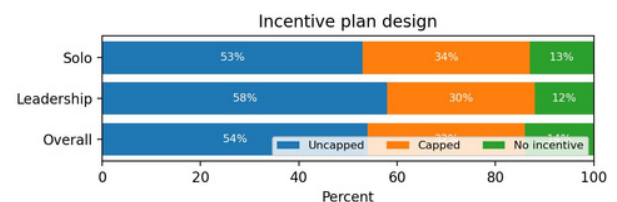
Retention outlook



Exit drivers



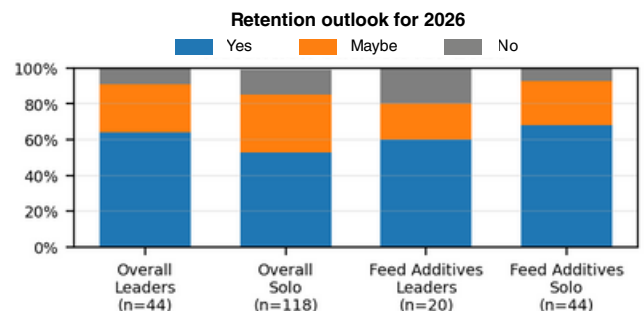
Incentive plan design



EXECUTIVE BRIEFING | Feed Additives

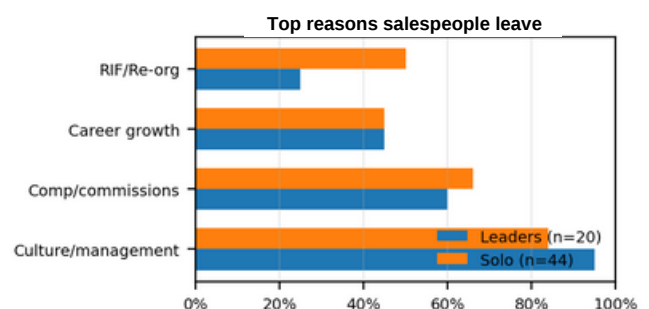
Overall market signals (all sectors)

- Retention is mixed: 56% Yes, 31% Maybe, and 13% No about staying in 2026.
- Leaders are more stable than solo contributors (Yes: 64% vs 53%).
- Top quit driver is management/company culture (overall 85%; leaders 89%).
- 5-year outlook: consolidation expected (84%) and demand for technical selling rising (66%).



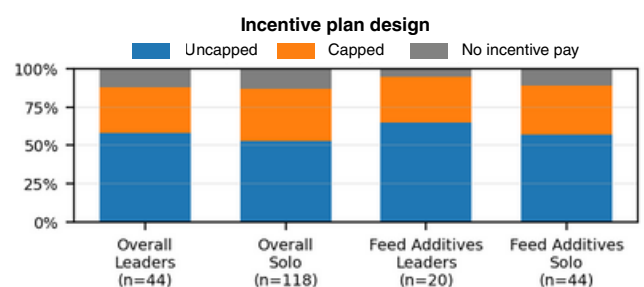
Feed Additives readout

- Retention is stronger overall in this segment: Yes 65.5%, Maybe 23.4%, No 11.1%.
- Culture dominates as a leave reason (Leaders 95%; Solo 84%).
- Solo contributors cite re-org risk more often (RIF/Re-org 50% vs 25% for leaders).
- Incentives are uncapped (Leaders 65%; Solo 57%).



Comp and benefits notes

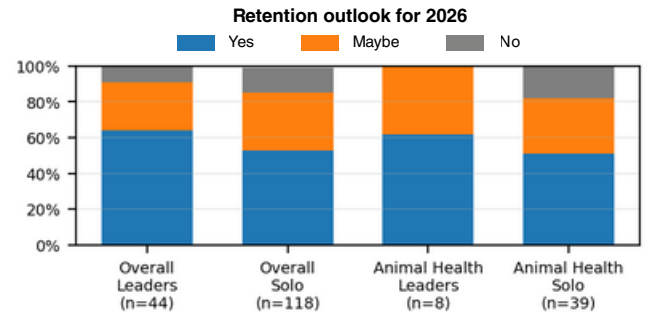
- Top benefits (leaders): Flex schedule/work-life balance 75%, Retirement plan 70%, Health insurance 60%.
- Top benefits (solo): Flex schedule/work-life balance 75%, Health insurance 66%, Retirement plan 55%.
- Vehicle policy (solo): company vehicle 41%, car allowance 27%.



EXECUTIVE BRIEFING | Animal Health

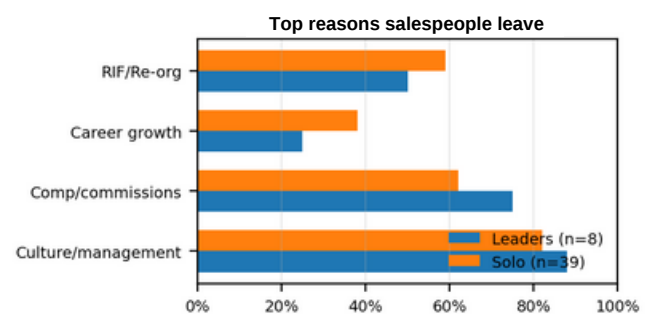
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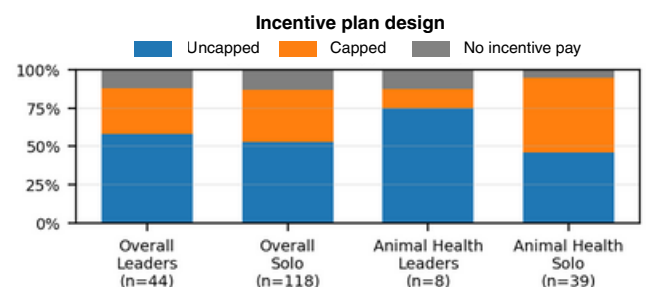
Animal Health readout

- Solo contributors show higher churn risk (No: 18% vs 0% in leaders).
- Change and pay pressure are prominent: leaders cite comp 75% and RIF/Re-org 50%.
- Solo contributors cite RIF/Re-org at 59% alongside culture (82%).
- Comp plan caps are common for solo contributors (Capped 49% vs Uncapped 46%).



Comp and benefits notes

- Top benefits (leaders): Health insurance 88%, Retirement plan 62%, Flex schedule/work-life balance 37%.
- Top benefits (solo): Health insurance 77%, Retirement plan 67%, Flex schedule/work-life balance 51%.
- Vehicle policy (solo): company vehicle 54%, car allowance 26%.



EXECUTIVE BRIEFING | Feed Mfg/Consulting

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- Retention is mixed: 56% Yes, 31% Maybe, and 13% No about staying in 2026.
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Feed Mfg/Consulting readout

- This is the highest flight-risk pocket: solo contributors are 20% No and 43% Maybe (only 37% Yes).
- Career growth is a standout leave driver (Leaders 69%; Solo 51%).
- A material share of solo roles report no incentive pay (32%) and no variable comp (32%).
- Culture leads the list (Leaders 81%; Solo 83%).

Comp and benefits notes

- Top benefits (leaders): Health insurance 75%, Retirement plan 75%, Flex schedule/work-life balance 56%.
- Top benefits (solo): Health insurance 80%, Flex schedule and/or work-life balance 74%, Retirement plan 57%.
- Vehicle policy (solo): company vehicle 31%, IRS mileage rate 29%.

