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Employee retention: 5 reasons people quit their jobs



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If you think that employee retention is not a concern because of the current economy, think again. Keeping an eye on employee turnover is important no matter what the economic landscape looks like: Employees who do not <u>feel</u> satisfied, appreciated, and motivated may have a longer <u>job search</u> ahead of them right now, but eventually they will find a new position and quit jobs that are unfulfilling. Although they may cite pay as the reason they resigned during their exit interviews, more often than not, employee dissatisfaction cannot be explained on a pay stub.

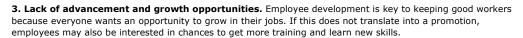
Five important factors that can cause employees to leave their jobs are:

- 1. Bad bosses. In most cases if you want to find out why employees are dissatisfied with their jobs, all you have to do is look at their supervisor. Whether the boss is incompetent, or incredibly difficult, this relationship can often become a catalyst to employee dissatisfaction. And when employees have a strained relationship with their boss, they will begin to take stock of other things about the job that they dislike.
- 2. Lack of employee recognition. The importance of employee morale cannot be overstated and if your company does not have official employee recognition and incentives in place, the little things you do can go a long way. Getting your employees ice cream on a hot day or even saying "thank you" for a job well done will make them feel like they are truly part of a $\underline{\text{team}}$ and that their contributions matter.

"Employees need to feel connected to the business and know that there's value in what they do-they're a cog in the wheel and they should understand how they make the wheel turn and how valuable they are," said Chana Anderson, a member of the special expertise panel of the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM). "We don't always do a great job in explaining that to employees so they get it."



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"Most people want to learn and grow. If they're doing the same thing punching widgets day in and day out, they're going to get tired of it," said Anderson. "If we're making an investment in the professional development of our staff, it keeps them from leaving."

- 4. Work/Life balance issues. In recent years, more and more employees are voicing the need to balance their careers and family responsibilities. Today's employees are no longer willing to sacrifice being actively involved in their children's lives in order to advance their careers. With this in mind, it's important for employers to create solutions that cater to their employees' individual needs—such as flex time programs and allowing workers to telecommute part of the week.
- 5. Eroded trust. According to Liegh Branham, author of The 7 Hidden Reasons Employees Leave: How to Recognize the Subtle Signs and Act Before It's Too Late, many members of today's workforce assume that senior managers are automatically guilty and must be proven innocent. And it's no wonder, thanks to numerous stories in the media—from managerial incompetence to corporate greed—that give us every reason to distrust employers. Most commonly, employees are concerned about whether their leaders know what they're doing

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and are being honest with them. If there is something going on at your company that has decreased employee trust, Branham suggests addressing it directly.

"Trust is the hardest thing to gain and the most important issue in being a great place to work," he said. "When dealing with these issues, the first thing companies need to do is <u>listen</u> to their employees. They'll tell you what's bothering them—but then you have to be prepared to take action. If you're not going to act on what they told you, it will just make your employees much more cynical and you'll make the situation worse."

This article originally appeared on my Workplace Communication Examiner page on September 3, 2009.

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