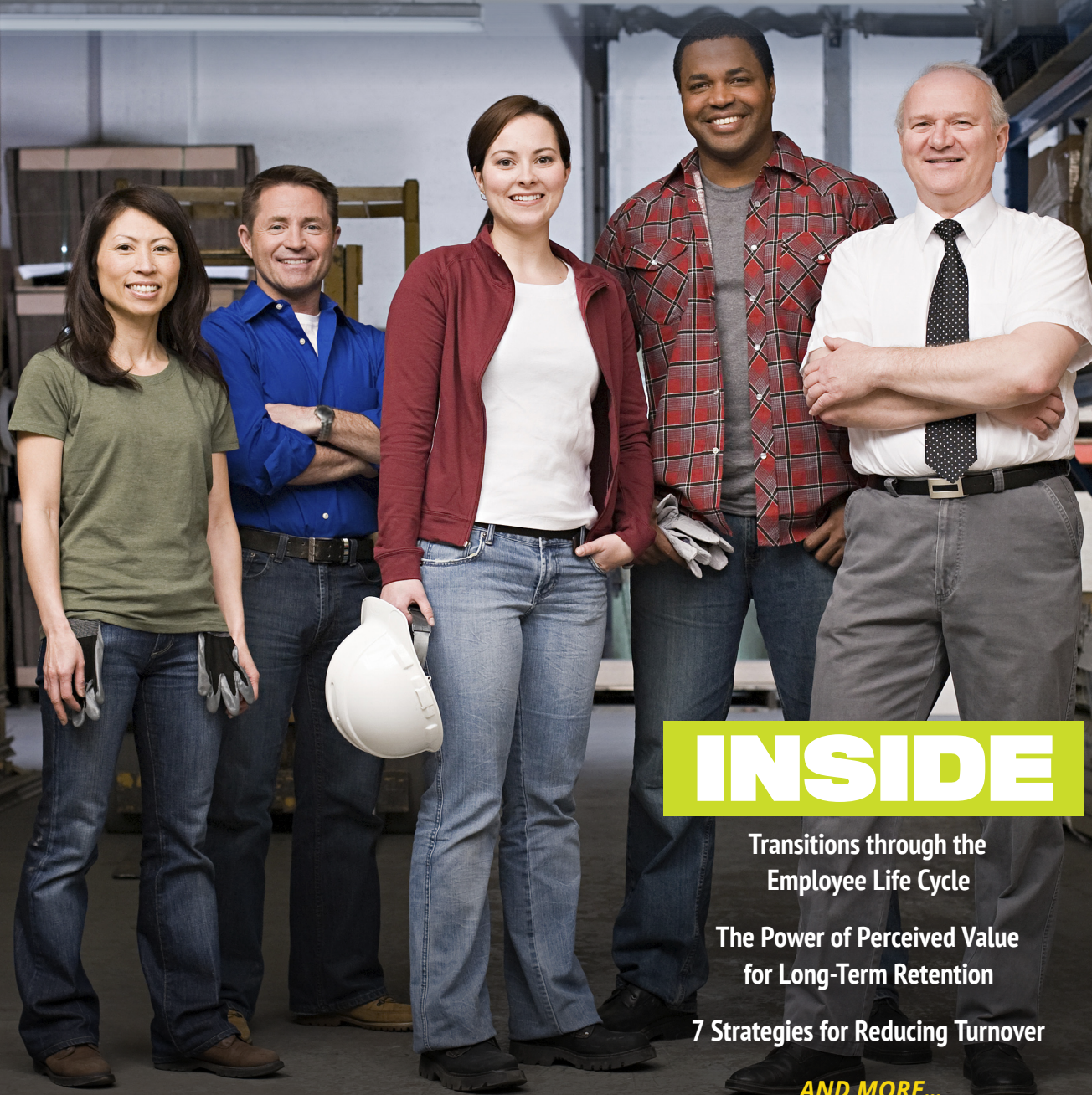


THE RESOURCE

Labor & Industrial **INSIGHTS** magazine

VOL. VII, ISSUE VI



INSIDE

Transitions through the
Employee Life Cycle

The Power of Perceived Value
for Long-Term Retention

7 Strategies for Reducing Turnover

AND MORE...

Aftermath: The Labor Drought

In the last issue we discussed The Labor Crisis, referring to the Government assistance & incentives, COVID challenges, etc. - as **THE PERFECT STORM**. Now we're facing the Aftermath of that perfect storm, and dealing with...The Labor Drought.

The aforementioned "perfect storm" challenges, as well as the abundance of opportunities available for workers has resulted in a limited supply of people who are looking for jobs. We are also in the midst of a "turnover tsunami" as we emerge from the pandemic. 52% of employees say they will be looking for a new job (*Achievers*).

These factors continue to make it very difficult to attract and retain talent! And...these challenges are likely to continue. Another important element of this Labor Drought is the Great Sansdemic. Haven't heard of it? You're not alone. But, it's very real, and will have ongoing impact on the labor market.

The U.S. is suffering from the beginning phases of a Sansdemic (**SANSDEMIC**: *sans* - without, *demic* - people). By 2028, it is predicted that we will have a deficit of 6 million workers. A report by EMSI shares details on the Sandemic and how it will transform the labor market - "*The Demographic Drought*". Contributing factors of the Sansdemic include Baby Boomers Retiring (earlier in many cases), Boomer Wealth accumulated and being passed down, Low Birth Rates, Record Low Labor Force Participation, as well as the impact of Video Games and the Opioid Epidemic on Gen Y & Z (particularly Males).

The Bottom Line: The extremely challenging environment to recruit and retain employees that COVID brought on - is here to stay. COVID may very well have shown a light on (and exacerbated) a problem we were already facing, but were turning a blind eye to - the SANSDEMIC.

So, how are we going to face these ongoing challenges - this Labor Drought - inside our organizations?

Poll your organization on the employment factors below. Are your requirements and expectations realistic? Are they competitive in your industry? What could be re-evaluated?

- *Do you Drug Test?*
- *Have you relaxed your Background Requirements?*
- *Have you raised your pay rates in the last 3 months?*
- *Have you relaxed job experience expectations?*
- *Are you offering remote work or flexible work options?*

Now is an important time to audit your organization and ensure you're: promoting the 'Pillars of a Positive Work Culture', providing competitive compensation, gathering Employee Feedback, considering Leadership Development & Coaching, evaluating your Onboarding & Training Programs, and reviewing your Benefits package. We're happy to help you get started!

THE RESOURCE

"What is one thing you could change or implement that would have an immediate, positive impact on your work culture? If you don't know - ASK!"



Best Regards,

Kathy Hartung, CEO

Labor & Industrial **INSIGHTS**[®] magazine

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BEST PRACTICES FOR HIRING SEASONAL EMPLOYEES IN 2021

BY JAZZHR



With nearly eleven million positions currently open in the U.S. job market, companies are struggling to deal with the significant shortage of labor.¹ People are more discerning about which jobs to pursue, thanks in part to increases in unemployment benefits in response to the pandemic. (For example, one study found that between March 2020 and July 2020 “a 10 percent increase in unemployment benefits caused a 3.6 percent decline in [job] applications, but did not decrease vacancy creation.”²)

As job seekers increasingly seek to work on a seasonal basis, companies must figure out how to get those individuals to work for them. Organizations have to address several significant challenges to hiring:

- Lack of flexibility. If job-level statistics reveal anything, it's that the pandemic changed how most people work. Now more than ever, U.S. workers expect job flexibility, with three-quarters of the respondents to one survey affirming that “it is important to retain flexibility as part of the return to normal.”³
- Lack of empathy in the hiring process. Few employees will want to be part of an institution that doesn't empathize with their needs.
- Alienating language in job descriptions. Qualified candidates often opt not to apply for positions when the postings for them contain “language that is aggressive, gender specific, and discriminatory.”⁴

Companies need to do whatever they can to avoid bad practices during the hiring process. Additionally, they also must ensure that the application process reflects well on them, or else they (and any prospective candidates) will be saddled

with a disappointing active recruitment process—and take a hit to their word-of-mouth hiring, too. Following three key practices can help companies improve their hiring of temporary staff:

Invest In Growth Training

Over 90 percent of respondents to one employee survey said “they would stay at a company longer if it invested in their learning and development.”⁵ Organizations that want to recruit quality temporary talent need to align their workplace cultures with those employees' interests and needs.

This can be especially important when hiring temporary staff. Hiring employees early, well before the seasonal period begins, allows ample time to train recruits and gives companies plenty of opportunities to prove that they're committed to employee growth.

Keeping employees up to date on their regular “how to



do the job” training can boost their performance as well as the company’s profit margin. Investing in meticulous compliance training can also have a significant impact by saving the organization from some hefty fines, lawsuits and worse, and improving employee engagement and retention.

Invest in Diversity Training

Companies that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in their strategies and training are likely to make smarter, more productive hires.⁶ One way they can achieve this is by highlighting inclusivity in their job descriptions and by using blind resume reviews. Additionally, they can keep all employees (especially recruiters and interviewers) informed on DEI issues such as unconscious bias, microaggressions, harmful stereotypes, and discrimination.

For one of the largest target markets for temporary hiring, young adults, diversity can be a deciding factor when they’re weighing whether to join an organization. Implementing diversity initiatives can help companies attract these socially conscious individuals who care about representation—and about being represented—within the workplace.



Implement Incentives

The pandemic not only forced people to confront the mortality of those near and dear to them, but possibly their own. It really made people—whatever age they are and whatever time they have left—think about how they want to spend it.

—Paola Peralta

Many people who have spent a significant amount of time at home over the past year and a half are emerging from the lockdowns wanting to spend their time more meaningfully. After spending a considerable amount of that time counting bathroom tiles and watching Netflix reruns, it’s no surprise that many people feel an impulse to make every moment count. They’re looking for more consideration and mindfulness in their work, in their workspaces, and in their relationships with management.

Companies need to convince people that working for them—no matter how short their stay—can aid their future careers. To attract and retain talented people, organizations need to offer personal incentives that employees increasingly expect:

- Flexible hours
- Stringent cleaning measures to keep employees as COVID-safe as possible
- Wellness programs and policies (such as free mental health apps, books, subscriptions)
- Bonuses and perks (such as gift cards, discounts, lunches)

- Fun experiences in the workplace (such as happy hours, social gatherings, games, lighthearted social media posts)

Get With the Times

In the many months since the pandemic began, many people have found themselves placing a higher priority on life, community, and wellness, both in their personal lives and in their professional lives. Job hunters now have new criteria in mind when looking for work, and businesses must be ready to accommodate (and even embrace) that new mindset. ■

JazzHR (jazzhr.com) is powerful, user-friendly, and affordable software built to help growing companies exceed their recruitment goals. JazzHR’s best-in-class solution replaces manual, time-consuming hiring tasks with intuitive tools and automation, empowering hiring managers to recruit and hire the right talent faster.

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7 Strategies for Reducing Turnover

BY UNEMPLOYMENT TRACKER

Every time a skilled worker leaves a company, it costs the company about 30 percent of that employee's salary to replace them. When a company loses several employees in a short period of time, that figure can add up to a very significant expense. An organization that takes steps to retain its best employees can save a considerable amount of money—and enjoy a much healthier bottom line. The following strategies can be implemented right away, won't cost an arm and a leg, and will almost undoubtedly improve a company's retention rates.

1

Hire the right people in the first place.

In exit interviews, employees often declare that they would have stayed longer if they'd had a better idea about what their role in the company was expected to be. Hiring managers should be sure to accurately describe the requirements for any open position and be clear about what's expected from each individual employee. If they leave out any of the important details about a position just to fill an opening, they may find themselves back at square one very soon. Finding the right fit for a candidate involves being as transparent as possible about what the job entails, as well as what skills are necessary to do the job effectively.

2

Prepare a good onboarding process.

After explaining the role and its responsibilities, managers should also inform their new hires about the company's culture, mission, and vision, and about how the employee will fit into those overall objectives and goals. Expectations about their performance should be clearly stated, along with an accurate picture of what the first few months of their employment will be like. To prevent a new employee from being overwhelmed by the details of an entirely new position, they should have access to appropriate personnel who can address any questions or issues that arise.

3

Offer useful training.

In order to be successful on the job, any employee needs to possess the knowledge and skills required by their position. It may be necessary for the organization to provide a combination of online training, classroom training, and hands-on opportunities in order to convey its policies and procedures clearly. An employee who is well informed about what's expected of them and equipped with the appropriate tools to succeed will have a better chance of making a good contribution to the company; therefore, managers should continue training until a new hire demonstrates mastery of their essential skills. Once that point is reached, employees should have opportunities for professional development so that they can continue to learn and grow.

4

Provide appropriate compensation.

Employees often leave a company because they don't feel they're being compensated fairly or because a competitor is offering a significantly better salary. (Of course, it's not salary alone that keeps an employee in place; health care, insurance, and other elements of the compensation package can be major factors as well.) The compensation a company offers to its employees should at least be in line with what other companies in the same field are providing. If its pay scale is below that of other organizations in the area, a company should either increase its wages or offer other compensation to make up the difference.

"Organizations can significantly increase employee job satisfaction by finding ways to make their team members proud to be part of the workforce."



5

Monitor manager performance.

When disgruntled employees are asked why they left their companies, one common reason they give is an inability to get along with certain managers. A bad manager can be the cause of employee turnover (just as a really good manager can help with retention). Because managers who don't deal well with people can push away great employees, it's vital not to assume that all managers are carrying out their responsibilities in the most effective ways—and to keep an especially close eye on managers whose personalities may seem likely to cause friction.

6

Recognize achievements.

Many people like to be recognized when they achieve something exceptional, and employees are certainly included in this group. In fact, feeling unappreciated (or underappreciated) is one big reason why employees leave organizations. By taking the time to celebrate whenever someone has performed far beyond expectations, companies not only demonstrate their gratitude for superior performance but also show other employees that they, too, can receive public recognition for excellence.

7

Make employees proud of their company.

Organizations can significantly increase employee job satisfaction by finding ways to make their team members proud to be part of the workforce. More than at any time in the past, employees want to know that they're working for a company that is a positive force. For example, because many of today's workers are motivated by a desire to contribute to positive solutions, a company could appeal to employees by becoming a major contributor to charities and other worthy organizations. Establishing a family-oriented workplace, too, could make employees feel very comfortable and satisfied with their employment there.

Staffing remains one of the major areas of concern for companies today. As organizations struggle to keep their positions filled with skilled talent, it's more important than ever for them to focus on retention. By following strategies that increase employee satisfaction and prioritize giving workers the information and skills they need to succeed, companies can improve the chances that their employees will stick around. ■

Unemployment Tracker is a software company dedicated to providing unemployment cost-management software solutions to organizations of all sizes and types. For more information, visit unemploymenttracker.com.

TRANSITIONS THROUGH T

Moving from one stage of the employee life cycle to another can be a stressful experience, and getting those transitions right is crucial for the long-term stability and productivity of any organization. Each of the four main phases of that life cycle has its own unique function and significance. By following certain key strategies, companies can help ensure that the employees move successfully from one stage to the next.

Preboarding

The first major employee transition, preboarding, starts the moment a new recruit accepts an offer of employment and continues until their first day on the clock. Good preboarding is designed to alleviate a new hire's first-day fears, give them the tools to be up and running as quickly as possible, and ultimately drive engagement and retention. (Although preboarding is a part of the larger onboarding process, it warrants its own category because of its unique challenges and opportunities.)

Steps companies can take today to improve preboarding:

- Send a new hire an “ambassador pack” containing their new business cards and other company-branded materials or swag.
- Set up an informal Zoom breakfast or lunch for the new hire and their team.
- Gather all the tedious new-hire paperwork in advance to make for a more enjoyable first day for them.

Onboarding

Taking place between recruitment and employment, onboarding is “the process of helping new hires adjust to social and performance aspects of their new jobs.” Good onboarding is an “umbrella” process. When done right, it incorporates the pre-start period (preboarding); facilitates early employment activities, such as training, icebreakers, and social get-togethers (orientation and induction); and supports new hires until they are fully settled into their roles, whether that takes three weeks, three months, or even a year (integration). It's a comprehensive, two-way process designed to share knowledge, communicate values, build connections, and manage compliance to transform new hires into confident, empowered team members and ambassadors.

Steps companies can take today to improve onboarding:

- Implement a new-hire buddy program and empower buddies to meaningfully support recruits.
- Align activities and training with current projects to ensure that new hires receive the most relevant information.
- Have managers and HR check in with new hires on a regular basis.



THE EMPLOYEE LIFE CYCLE

BY JESSE FINN

Reboarding

Reboarding is the process that takes place when employees who have been absent from an organization for some time (to take parental leave, for example, or because of burnout or other reasons) are transitioning back into it. During the pandemic, it was in widespread use as organizations brought their teams back from furlough or back into the office after working remotely.

Its purpose is to refamiliarize returning staff members with the inner workings of the organization, update them on their projects, welcome them back into the company's social circles, and ultimately get them up and running again quickly. Good reboarding follows the same principles as good onboarding but is often more tailored to cater to the employee's existing organizational knowledge.

Steps companies can take today to improve reboarding:

- To avoid overwhelming a returning employee, drip feed information to them before they go back to the office.
- Check in often with returning employees to ensure that they are settling in all right.
- Make information easy for returning employees to access by centralizing all the resources they need to get up to speed.

Offboarding

The last employee transition, offboarding, takes place right before the formal separation (whether voluntary or nonvoluntary) of an employer and their employee. Also known as exit management, this stage is often overlooked: “only 29 percent of organizations have a formal offboarding process to transition employees out of an organization.”

Good offboarding should provide support for the five key components (the “offboarding ABCs”) of effective exit management: assessment, brand, compliance, dignity, and expertise. When done well, offboarding safeguards business continuity, grows the company's future processes, and ultimately creates loyal brand ambassadors who leave the organization with their heads held high.

Steps companies can take today to improve offboarding:

- Crowdsource the goodbye message to the departing employee by asking their colleagues to fill a card with personal messages so they know how much they will be missed.
- Set a date for a formal handover of responsibilities from the departing employee to their replacement (or other relevant parties).
- Hold a formal exit interview with open-ended questions (consider incentivizing the process to ensure maximum participation).



Navigating the employee life cycle presents challenges for both the employee and their organization. By being attentive to those challenges and proactive in addressing them, companies can help ensure smoother transitions between the phases. ■

Jesse Finn is the senior brand and content manager for Talmundo (www.talmundo.com). He has a background in brand management and content creation and is passionate about ethical business.

Using Technology to Support HR's Changing Strategic Priorities

BY CORNERSTONE EDITORS



In 2020 HR leaders listed their top strategic priorities as (in descending order) employee experience, leadership development, learning transformation, next-generation leaders, and people analytics. Just one year later, however, that list has been radically transformed:

1. Employee Well-Being / Mental Health
2. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
3. Leadership Development
4. Employee Experience
5. Management of Remote Workers¹

This shift is in large part a response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which brought to the fore the need for strong leaders, more equitable representation within the workforce, and the rise of hybrid work. But even with these changes, the emphasis on technology solutions to support HR activities remains low: just 37 percent of the HR leaders surveyed said they would want to improve existing technology if their budgets allowed.

Rather than viewing technology as a "nice to have" option, HR leaders must look to it as a "must-have" tool essential for meeting any strategic goal—even when the organization's priorities change over time. By leveraging technology, HR leaders can create a connected experience, address some of their most urgent priorities, and reach their strategic objectives.

ONLINE LEARNING SUPPORTS EMPLOYEE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

The pandemic took a toll on everyone's mental health. As the world learns to manage the reality—and uncertainty—of COVID-19, employees are starting to prioritize their mental well-being. From employers' perspective, this new focus is a good thing, because improved employee mental health actually leads to increases in productivity.

TECHNOLOGY IS A VALUABLE TOOL TO GIVE EMPLOYEES THE SUPPORT THEY NEED.

For example, employees

achieve better work-life balance by exploring digital learning content on topics such as stress management, mindfulness, and meditation.

TECHNOLOGY DRIVES SUCCESSFUL DEI INITIATIVES

There's no shortage of research to suggest that implementing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives in the workplace can improve performance, increase innovation, and bring other positive benefits. With the right technology tools, companies can drive DEI across entire organizations.

For example, HR professionals can fully intend to interview a pool of candidates with a variety of backgrounds, but that doesn't necessarily mean they will hear from diverse applicants. Artificial intelligence can flag biased language in job descriptions and improve them so they attract a wider pool of candidates. Combined with analytics, AI can also identify whether salary and promotion decisions are equitable within a company. Moreover, learning content can also be a valuable tool for driving DEI initiatives internally by educating employees about—and supporting them in addressing—their unconscious biases and by shining a spotlight on any inherent bias within the organization.

AI AND ANALYTICS BOLSTER SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Leadership development remains near the top of the HR priority list, with overall skill development becoming increasingly necessary for organizations to drive growth and retain employees eager for career opportunities. Technology that leverages employee data strengthens the quality of resources HR teams can offer employees and helps move the needle on strategic goals.

Analytics platforms will be a boon for HR teams seeking to understand and meet organization-wide development needs. Whether applied to leadership training or other skills courses, AI and employee data together can ensure that the most

relevant learning opportunities are delivered at the point of need. Enlisting a technology platform that offers online training is critical to driving leadership and other skill sets, especially when organizations operate remotely.

CONNECTED TECHNOLOGY AS A DRIVER FOR PROGRESS

The real value of technology tools in HR doesn't come only from addressing these individual challenges. Instead, a true technology solution for HR's evolving needs is one that is connected, rather than siloed. Today's HR teams face a saturated market of offerings that solve different needs: one solution for learning, one for recruiting, one for performance, etc. It's no wonder then that the vast majority (82 percent) of talent leaders who are using HR technology "struggle with adoption challenges."²

As HR's strategic priorities change, technology solutions evolve alongside them. In fact, the global HR technology market is expected to grow significantly over the next few years, "from USD 24.04 billion in 2021 to USD 35.68 billion in 2028."³ To see the benefits of these technology tools, HR teams need a connected solution—one that fosters a cohesive experience and allows HR departments to expend time and energy productively, without the need to toggle among platforms for different tasks or choose among solutions that support one goal over another.

In the years to come, how teams connect and perform their jobs will continue to shift, as will HR's strategic priorities. By implementing comprehensive, connected technology tools, a company can prepare itself for the future—and whatever unknowns it brings. ■

Cornerstone OnDemand works with hundreds of the world's largest companies and thousands of smaller ones to help them recruit, train, and manage their staff; engage their workforces; and empower their people to achieve great business results.

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The Power of Perceived Value for Long-Term Retention

BY ROBIN SCHOOLING

Several years ago, I met an early career HR professional who was debating whether to accept a new job offer. In the previous year, she had received a promotion, attained an HR certification, and greatly expanded her professional network. She enjoyed her job, liked her team, had friends at work, and was very satisfied with her pay. She had job autonomy and was able to implement initiatives that were important to her. Both her direct manager and “the powers that be” regularly provided recognition and kudos, and the organization celebrated milestones (such as birthdays, new babies, and business wins). Yet even though she was what many would consider “happy” in her job, she was looking for something more, and therefore began exploring other opportunities.

“Why,” one may wonder, “would a seemingly content and newly promoted employee look for another job?” Simply put, she had decided that the value she could receive from a new job would be higher than the value she was getting from her current job.

People have always resigned from jobs in pursuit of this perceived value. It may lie in higher compensation or in more robust benefit offerings. Or it may be based on culture, such as a desire to join an organization that affords better work-life balance, more closely aligns with one’s personal values, or better caters to an individual’s work style (for example, by offering the ability to work from home).

Someone may explore other opportunities because they anticipate enhanced career development and professional growth. They may want to broaden their knowledge base or work in a different industry. Or they may want to increase their perceived value by adding the name of a sexy-and-shiny company to their resume.

People quit jobs for any number of reasons. The Great Resignation of 2021 is creating a candidate market right now, and the business world is collectively gobsmacked at the increased turnover it’s experiencing. This turnover really shouldn’t come as a surprise, though: people are thinking about “value” in their work lives today just as they always have. And although employers can’t change the facts, they can use this opportunity to review how someone’s perception of value may affect their desire either to start a job search or to entertain a conversation with a recruiter.

UNDERSTANDING PERCEIVED VALUE

Marketing specialists most often discuss the concept of perceived value when they explore whether customers believe that a company’s product or service satisfies their wants and needs. Believe is the critical word here, and marketing professionals rely on this understanding to inform their branding and messaging. This leads to articulating the value proposition for said product or service, extolling its merits, or justifying its price.

HR is quite adept at using these concepts, especially in talent acquisition, where employer branding specialists and companies spend bundles of money to develop employee value propositions (EVP). HR departments align their employment brands with their EVPs, design unique (quirky? value-driven?) messaging, and target and source from critical talent segments in order to make great hires.

But what about existing employees? Are companies continuing to have the “value” conversation with folks who have been on board for six months? Or two years? Or twenty years? Do HR staff and managers know if those employees continue to derive value in their jobs or at the company? Do they even understand what those employees value? If the answers to these questions are “no,” now is the time to make some changes.

HAVING VALUE CONVERSATIONS

Value conversations with existing employees should

be driven by individual managers. Pulse surveys offer a great starting point for managers to gain data-driven insights into the mood of employees across the organization and into the state of their own departments or teams.

But it's also critical that managers never lose sight of the fact that speaking with employees is the best way to really understand their unique needs and wants. In these conversations, managers can ask questions that include:

- “What makes you feel appreciated at work?”
- “How do you know when you’re valued?”
- “How can I best recognize your contributions?”
- “What’s important for you to experience at work?”
- “What factors need to be present in a job for you to be satisfied? Are we meeting those needs?”


And then, after getting answers to those questions, it's important that managers let their employees—those incredibly talented individuals they want on their teams—know that they have been truly heard. Managers must take the lead in ensuring that employees feel psychologically safe at work, as

well as in offering recognition and planning team celebrations (including knowing which employees like—or dislike—being in the spotlight of public recognition).

BRINGING IT TOGETHER

As for that maybe-ready-to-make-a-move HR professional, she decided to map out her personal value inventory, including what made her happy in her existing job and what was missing. She listed the things she loved to do and the things she wanted to avoid. She reflected on what she wanted to learn and where she thought additional experience would take her, both within her existing organization and at other companies. She then shared this insight with her manager, which allowed them to jointly devise a personal development plan that went beyond a performance plan that merely captured tasks, goals, and accomplishments. Together they worked to ensure that she would continue to get value out of her current job—as a professional, as a contributing team member, and as a human. ■

Robin Schooling is a managing partner for HR and people strategy with Peridus Group.



"...it's important that managers let their employees— those incredibly talented individuals they want on their teams— know that they they have been truly heard."

Safety Compliance Is Not Safety Commitment

BY KEVIN BURNS

Most companies would prefer that their employees step up and do their best work voluntarily instead of having to be pushed just to do the bare minimum. But when organizations focus solely on achieving compliance (which is not much more than getting people to check boxes), they are missing the bigger picture: commitment. When people commit to something, they do it with more energy and focus—and yes, that includes safety performance.



Clarity first

People rarely commit to anything that isn't clear. When the details are murky, they hesitate. They might comply in the moment, but that is certainly not a commitment. For employees to be willing to commit to the goals of the company, they need clarity—not just about what the goal is but about what's in it for them. That means more than just money, because money does not create commitment but is simply a transaction. People seldom do things solely for money, but they *are* more willing to commit to a cause, a program, or a goal if they can see how it aligns with their own values, goals (whether short term or long term), and ethics.

Short-term compliance versus long-term commitment

In *Front of the House: Restaurant Manners, Misbehaviors, and Secrets*, restaurateur Jeff Benjamin discusses how restaurants often struggle when they focus more on short-term sales (getting customers in the door tonight) rather than on long-term relationships (ensuring that those customers become repeat visitors). Filling a restaurant one time is easy: make a lot of noise, have a celebration, discount the food. But smart restaurateurs want each customer to return to their restaurant again and again (and spread the word about the restaurant to their friends, too), so they ensure that their staff provide all customers with an exceptional restaurant experience—one that will make them want to commit to dining there again.

How a company handles its safety program is not unlike how a restaurant handles customers. It's easy to achieve compliance—the minimum—one time by clamping down on safety procedure, ensuring that safety personnel are in the field watching everyone, or relying on brute force enforcement. But, like the diners who don't return to a restaurant after an underwhelming dining experience, employees don't commit to following safety procedures if they haven't been totally sold on them.

The tactics of the past don't work today

Just because an organization achieves compliance today doesn't mean it has its employees' commitment to safety tomorrow. Safety programs need to become focused on encouraging people to *want* to follow safety procedures and to do so voluntarily because they are committed to the safety program. The more a company chases its people into compliance, the more the company *will have* to chase them into compliance.

Using accident photos and horror stories about workplace injuries to scare and guilt employees might achieve improved safety behavior, but forced and fear-based compliance doesn't last and, in fact, requires using more severe examples each time—just as restaurants without a loyal, expanding clientele have to offer more incentives and bigger discounts to bring in new customers. And after a while, this strategy stops working completely.

There is a better way

Compliance on its own is fleeting and unreliable. When employees are committed to safety, their compliance will follow. Without that commitment, though, employees will look for shortcuts, reasons, and excuses to avoid compliance or—worst of all—another workplace that allows them to feel like they fit.

To get long-term commitment instead of short-term compliance, organizations need to follow a three-step strategy when implementing their safety programs:

1. **Clarify the safety message** to ensure that every employee understands their role, the goals of the safety program, the mindset needed to execute it, and its benefits to the employee.
2. **Build supervisor support** for the program, because when supervisors are not on board with safety, their crews won't be either.
3. **Get employee buy-in** through safety meetings as well as conversations about the employees' perspectives and concerns about the safety program.

Building commitment to a safety program can take months. The work is well worth the effort, though, because companies want (and in fact need) their people to embrace safety voluntarily in order for it to be more than bare-minimum compliance. Once a long-term commitment is present, the workplace becomes a much safer space for everyone. ■

Kevin Burns is the president and CEO of KevBurns Learning, where he works with smart, caring companies to energize safety culture, build teamwork, and get employee buy-in. He is the author of PeopleWork: The Human Touch in Workplace Safety and can be reached at kevin@kevburns.com.

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