**Leadership, Here Are 4 Things You’re Doing That Makes Good Employees Leave**

[**Heidi Lynne Kurter**](https://www.forbes.com/sites/heidilynnekurter/)

Senior Contributor

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May 26, 2022,09:45pm EDT

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Businesses around the world are struggling to retain their best employees. The impact of losing one employee can have a devastating effect on team morale, productivity, and performance. Today’s workers are holding companies to high standards and standing firm against outdated leadership practices by forcing accountability and change. Some of these antiquated practices include:

* Ignoring employee feedback and complaints
* Putting the wrong people in leadership and management positions
* Tolerating and justifying toxic behaviors from senior-level employees
* Prioritizing profit, customers and results over morale, and the employee experience

Despite what many employers believe, employees aren’t leaving solely for a bigger salary, they’re leaving due to management and leadership issues. Employees want a leadership team that listens, cares, and takes their feedback seriously. Paul McKinlay, VP of Communications and Remote Working at [Cimpress](https://cimpress.com/" \o "https://cimpress.com/" \t "_blank), stated, “right now there is a huge opportunity for companies to really listen to their team members and build a working structure that people actually want and that works.”

Leaders, here are four ways you’re driving away your best employees.

**Enabling Bad Managers And Tolerating Toxicity**

When leadership turns a blind eye to toxic behaviors, they’re essentially communicating that the company’s values are flexible. Flexible values breed toxicity which not only drives good employees to leave but damages the reputation of the company. Toxic workers who are high ranking or high performing typically get away with disrespectful comments, bullying, placing blame on others, and lack of accountability, to name a few. Philip Pages, founder of [Post Purchase Survey](https://postpurchasesurvey.com/), said, “when leaders fail to take ownership, they lose the respect of great employees.” Scott Hasting, cofounder of [BetWorthy](https://betworthy.com/" \o "https://betworthy.com/" \t "_blank), added, “if something goes wrong, the first thing leaders do is find someone to blame and make sure that everyone knows that they had nothing to do with the mistake.”

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Here are a few examples of toxic behaviors

* Bullying
* Name-calling and offensive jokes or comments
* Blaming others
* Favoritism
* Micromanagement
* Disrespect
* Retaliation
* Discrimination
* Harassment

It’s unfortunately all too common when leadership will take a manager’s word over the employee’s due to their ranking within the organization. This makes targeted employees feel as if they’re disposable and unworthy of fair treatment. To summarize what Brene Brown wrote in her book, [Daring Greatly](https://brenebrown.com/book/daring-greatly/), when the culture of an organization mandates that it’s more important to protect the reputation of those in power than it is to protect the basic human dignity of individuals, it’s obvious that money is driving the culture and accountability is dead. She asserted, “in successful companies, shame and blame don’t work as management styles.”



**Inadvertently Promoting Burnout Culture**

The pandemic put into perspective what’s important for many people. No longer will they accept being overworked and sacrificing their mental health, personal life, and familial obligations for work. Burnout has been a topic for many organizations, yet few have taken the steps to address and prevent it. A few ways companies promote burnout culture are:

* Scheduling back-to-back meetings throughout the week yet requiring major projects to be completed with quick turnarounds
* Scheduling meetings outside of working hours
* Messaging employees at all hours and during the weekend to where they feel like they always have to be “on” and available
* Not training other team members as backups for when an employee is out. This makes the employee feel as if they can’t take their PTO
* Failing to take into account the workload a team member has and continuing to add more to their plate

Companies that put employees first and promote flexibility help to prevent burnout. Since companies have shifted to remote work, burnout has increased dramatically as the line between one’s professional and personal life is blurred. It’s up to leadership to cultivate an environment where employees feel safe opening up, and sharing if they’re feeling overwhelmed with their workload or burnt out. Leaders should practice vulnerability while also encouraging employees to take time off whether it’s for vacation or a mental health day. For this reason, it’s important for leaders to promote self-care practices and work-life balance by modeling it themselves. One way this can be done is by scheduling emails to send on Monday or the next business day rather than over the weekend.

**Ignoring The Disconnect Between You And The Employee**

Employees want to be active participants in achieving organizational goals as well as having their voices heard and feedback is taken into consideration. Robin Young, CEO of [Fitness Savvy](https://fitness-savvy.co.uk/), explained, “employees who feel like they’re constantly ignored will grow angry, frustrated, and resentful. If leadership continues dismissing employee ideas, feedback, and suggestions without good reason, employees will feel like they have no other choice but to leave.”

Connor Brown, founder of [After School Finance,](https://afterschoolfinance.com/) shared, “underestimating an employee's capability is one reason why good employees leave.” Even worse is when a leader purposely holds an employee back for fear that the employee will outshine them. Eventually, that employee will look for other opportunities where they can develop and reach their full potential.

**Valuing Profit And Customers Over Your Employees**

Companies put great emphasis on the customer experience while neglecting the experience of their own people - the people who create the customer experience and loyalty. It speaks volumes when leadership only acknowledges sales quotas and numbers not being met, but fails to recognize the efforts and contributions of its workers.

The leadership team undoubtedly makes or breaks a company’s culture and an employee’s experience. Regardless of how great a manager or one’s team is, leadership sets the tone for the workplace. If leadership is only focused on profit and limits the investment into employees whether that be through benefits, developmental opportunities, or engagement initiatives, it’s felt by all. Employees want to be successful but they also want to feel like a valued member of the organization.

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