



## Why Good Employees Leave

By WENDY SELLERS, The HR Lady®

Why do good employees leave? This is a hot topic in the business world right now and will continue to be so while the economy is doing well and even when the economy is shaky. Why do good employees leave? **Two reasons (1) poor management and (2) because the can.**

They can leave your workplace due to a good strategy that brings them job options elsewhere. So that brings us to choice between having poor or effective management on our teams. I used to refer to everyone as a "leader" not management, but let's be honest, most managers (and even business owners) are not true leaders. Sure, they might have a fancy title and possibly even a decent salary but that does not make them a leader. A leader is someone who others follow willingly – not because they have to in order to get paid, obtain health insurance and/or (in the case of the military) – is simply stay alive. I'll get back to military leaders in a moment.

What is poor management? Poor management is simply the inability to properly manage project or teams of people. Most companies use metrics to measure success (such as sales revenue, KPIs, net profit margin, customer retention/points, sales revenue, overhead costs, etc.). When those metrics are not met, one cause may be poor management. Although it is important to note that if the metric is met, it may be a faulty metric.

A few signs of poor management can be defined by the following higher than normal turnover (voluntary and involuntary), low productivity, increased accidents in the workplace, increased call outs, increased negativity, a toxic work environment and several/lengthy bad conversations.

The root cause of poor management is not easy to define but it usually starts from the top, seeps its way into processes and then becomes the culture of the organization. Here is an example: I had a client the other day ask a management candidate how many years' experience they had as manager. The candidate responded: 8 years. My client was thrilled while I stopped the interview to ask more specific questions such as: What is FMLA; explain the FLSA overtime law to me; Give me an example of a time you had to put an employee on a performance improvement plan and what was the result; Have you handled a harassment incident; How many people have you super-

vised in the past 18 months; What was your turnover rate; etc. The candidate was unable to clearly show that he had true management experience. It turned out that he was managing projects not the people assigned to the projects. The moral of this story is, if he was hired, he would have failed, and it would have been the leader's fault as she was responsible for the hiring.

Now back to working with former military personnel – I come from a family with veterans and active duty military members. Many of my clients have former military personnel and I volunteer with veterans to help them find jobs in the civilian workforce. I can't stress this enough – if you are not naturally in the military your rank and title means nothing – zero, zip, nada. Giving orders to employees might actually get you laughed at! Sure, you can fire a few people who laugh but eventually you will figure out that the good people will leave, and you will be stuck with the poor performers.

Regardless of your background, how to you get good employees to do what you want them to do? *Be real, be open and sincere. You*

*need to engage. And above all, you need to not be a jerk. I know this is tough to hear especially if you are not a "people person" but just keep thinking about productivity, the bottom line and your (team to be rehired) stress level.*

How can you inspire and motivate in your workplace?

1. Bring out the best in others (Do not focus only on their weaknesses)
2. Set the vision (Where are we going together?)
3. Provide accountability and constructive feedback (No excuses; do not delay; Outcome does not work)
4. Provide opportunities for growth utilizing their knowledge, skills and abilities (Actively engaged in your career growth plan means they want to stay)
5. Empower through delegation (You are probably not the smartest in the room, sorry)
6. Protect, not cover up (fairly and consistently, no favoritism)
7. Recognize and reward appropriately (a sincere Thank You is best)
8. Strive to be an authentic leader

Finally, what is an Authentic Leader? Authentic leaders inspire trust in their teams.

People are more willing to be open about problems around an authentic leader, which means that those problems are more likely to get fixed, instead of being ignored. Authentic leaders inspire those they lead because they stay true to their own values; they know who they are, and they don't let anyone keep them from making a decision that they know is right. Finally, authentic leaders have integrity and firm moral codes, and they manage to stay resilient and stable even during the most difficult times.



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Employee Retention Affects Productivity

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Productivity Affects Revenue



**Wendy Sellers,**  
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