

# 16 proactive ways to retain your workforce during ‘The Great Resignation’

## Your business isn’t wholly powerless to stop the impact of “The Big Quit.”

“The Great Resignation,” also known as “The Big Quit,” is making headlines as millions of Americans quit their current jobs to find “something better.” While it’s true that workers are rethinking their priorities and desires in the workplace, it doesn’t necessarily mean your company is doomed to lose its top talent: There’s still hope for leaders who value their employees and are willing to do what it takes to retain their workforce.

If you want to keep your team intact through this period of mass workforce turnover, it’s important to be proactive and take steps toward employee retention. Below, 16 members of [Fast Company Executive Board](#) each share one thing a business owner can do to make staying on the most attractive option for their workers.

### 1. LEAD WITH KINDNESS.

High-performing companies lead with kindness, curiosity, and empathy to understand what’s important to their teams. They seek out talent and proactively ensure high performers are recognized, rewarded, promoted, and compensated fairly (well above and beyond their industry’s standard). They provide flexible and/or remote work, encourage self-care, support personal projects that contribute to team learning, and more. – [Val Vacante](#), [LiveArea](#)

### 2. STRIVE FOR BALANCE.

The word on the street is “balance.” I recommend asking employees and those you are interviewing—whether through a short survey or talking with them—about what benefits they would find most impactful. You won’t be able to please everyone, but you might be surprised by the answers people share. In a recent conversation I had, a new mom shared she was looking for flexible hours and career growth. You won’t know unless you ask. – [Jennifer MacIver Edwards](#), [Insightin | Health](#)

### 3. DEFINE THE GOOD THE COMPANY DOES.

Our millennial and Gen-Z workforce is driven by social impact and mission. What “social good” is your organization doing for your community and beyond? If an organization can define that, communicate it, and live it, that will resonate. If your organization does not have that kind of mission, ask for help in crafting one. – [Jill Murray](#), [Lackawanna College](#)

### 4. LISTEN TO FIND OUT YOUR EMPLOYEES’ NEEDS.

Right now, people are reevaluating their needs holistically. As an employer, it’s time to listen to what those needs are. Do people want more flexibility, more purpose, or more stability? The first step is to

dive deep, ask questions, and take notes. The second is critical: Follow up with action steps. Show you're a collaborator who's willing to co-create an ideal work environment that meets your team's needs. – [Greta McAnany](#), [Blue Fever](#)

## **5. SHIFT YOUR CULTURE STRATEGY TO REMAIN COMPETITIVE.**

Remember, your employees started for a reason, and keeping that culture alive may include shifting and re-strategizing to become more flexible—for example, by allowing remote work from any destination or more flexible hours. Look at the core of why most of your team was attracted in the first place, and find a way to shift and strategize to be competitive with that same culture now. – [Karolina Hobson](#), [Radd Interactive](#)

## **6. SHOW YOUR TEAM HOW MUCH YOU VALUE THEM.**

Treat your employees like gold, because they are. Without your team, you're nothing. Your team is your business—quite literally. After scaling and growing, your team and employees create the actual business, and if you empower your team by compensating them well and creating a great culture and an equal, level atmosphere, you'll ride out any storms such as “The Great Resignation.” – [Benjamin Nader](#), [6 Figure Recruiter](#)

## **7. OFFER AN ASPIRATIONAL VISION.**

Give your people something to believe in. Everyone's gone through so much change and disruption that people don't know who to trust and what to believe. You need to provide a positive, aspirational vision for the future. Offer them clarity, confidence, and conviction, and show them how your organization is a platform for unlocking their dreams, goals, and motivations. – [Michael Margolis](#), [Storied](#)

## **8. ALIGN REWARDS WITH ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS.**

Align your rewards and recognition strategy to your employee value proposition and your organizational goals. If your actions as an organization don't match your statements—for example, if you espouse that you provide work-life fit but then don't allow flexible or remote work—then your competitors will successfully poach your star performers. – [Krishna Kutty](#), [Kuroshio Consulting Inc.](#)

## **9. ALLOW ROLES TO EVOLVE.**

The largest driving force mobilizing this workforce is the search for self-actualization and engagement. Human beings develop over time and will not appreciate being boxed in without an opportunity for growth. My most loyal team members are those whose roles have evolved with them over time. Finding those latent talents and allowing them to be expressed is a surefire way to increase engagement. – [Reuben Yonatan](#), [GetVoIP](#)

## **10. NORMALIZE CUSTOMIZATION.**

We need our lives to be whole, and that requires mass customization—not special treatment—to be the norm. The bottom line of why we each stay or go is different. If I know you trust me to perform well

and I can trust that I'll be measured for my output rather than a false construct about when or where I work, I'll be grateful for an opportunity to work hard and build a life that enables me to be whole. – [Tevis Trower, Balance Integration Corporation](#)

## **11. MAINTAIN A FOCUS ON YOUR CUSTOMERS.**

Drive higher customer satisfaction. Employees usually come to a company because they are excited about its mission and the benefits clients gain from the relationship. To stay engaged, employees need to know the company is not deviating from its customer orientation. During times of change or when the clarity of that mission is muddled, workers get nervous and question the company's direction. – [Kermit Randa](#)

## **12. SEARCH FOR THE ROOT CAUSE OF DEPARTURES.**

Leaders must understand why people are leaving. Many times it is about money, and many leaders fail to recognize this. However, sometimes people are just not happy. Leaders need to understand why people want to leave and address that issue. If it is because of money, then deal with that. If it is because of personal values, deal with that. The real challenge leaders face is learning what is important to their employees. – [Lonnie Buchanan, Veracity Solutions](#)

## **13. LEAN INTO FLEXIBILITY.**

Flexibility is the new employment currency. Ask questions and listen to each employee's individual needs. You can't take a one-size-fits-all approach to align jobs and personal expectations. We can't policy ourselves into an effective hybrid work environment. It takes trained managers working with each employee to craft win-win employment solutions to engage and retain employees. – [Steve Dion, Dion Leadership](#)

## **14. ENSURE YOUR TEAM FEELS HEARD.**

[Research](#) shows that the tidal wave of attrition businesses are facing is the result of disengaged employees. Increased compensation and other perks may help someone think twice about leaving, but if they're disengaged, it will only be a temporary solution. For long-term success, start by building the foundation of engagement by ensuring your employees feel heard and understood. – [Joyce Kim, Genesys](#)

## **15. ASK THEM WHAT, SPECIFICALLY, MATTERS TO THEM.**

Create employee benefits based on what is important to them. Would they like gym benefits, or perhaps healthy lunches? Conducting internal surveys is one way to discover that information. Also, make sure your employees feel recognized and appreciated. If they believe their work is valued, they are less likely to quit their job. – [Kelley Higney, Bug Bite Thing](#)

## **16. TREAT YOUR TEAM AS YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE TREATED.**

As business owners, we do not have control over our team members, but we do have control over the work culture that we establish in our company. Our core values as business owners speak to how we

treat our team members—for me, that means I treat them the way I would want to be treated. I like to describe it as a triangle in which we want all three sides (the business owner, the company, and work) to be in sync. – [Lane Kawaoka, SimplePassiveCashflow.com](#)