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Amy Vetter • Sep. 30, 2021



More than anything, the pandemic brings us face-to-face with our mortality, prompting many pandemic-related epiphanies about life, death, family, and work. It puts into focus how important it is to balance work and life in a post-COVID world.

In July 2021, alone, nearly 4 million employees in the United States [quit their jobs](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/jolts.nr0.htm) (<https://www.bls.gov/news.release/jolts.nr0.htm>). In fact, workers are quitting their

jobs at the highest rates seen since the Bureau of Labor Statistics began collecting

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heard and valued by you and their coworkers. Having a clear and candid conversation is the first step to improving communication and, by extension, employee retention.

Ask your staff how they feel, what they need from you, and anything you can do to improve their experience. Invite them to confide in leadership with any qualms they may have and schedule regular catch-ups and chats with your team to ask how they are doing on a personal level. Your team needs to know that you hear their concerns.

Conducting [stay interviews](https://tinyurl.com/na4n7ee2) (<https://tinyurl.com/na4n7ee2>) is a great way to check in with your staff and signal that they are valuable to you and your firm. Meet with them to discuss their wants, needs, and future plans in-depth. But remember, you need to act on what they bring up. Nothing kills employee loyalty faster than empty words and empty promises.

Lead with empathy

As ideas about workspace evolve, leading your employees with empathy and compassion is more important than ever. Communication is an effective first step to keeping your staff happy, but taking action on what your team says is the key to creating the best work environment for every person at your firm.

Have honest and open communication regarding mental health and work-life balance—recognize when someone feels [burnt out](https://tinyurl.com/jwkn5nmm) (<https://tinyurl.com/jwkn5nmm>), give your staff time off if they need a mental health break or simply time to recharge, and let them know that you are listening.

Being communicative and transparent shows employees that you will take action on their concerns. It can be the difference between keeping your top employees and losing them to frustrations and burnout.

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The easiest and most appealing model is to allow your staff the flexibility to choose. Flexibility in scheduling leads to a happier and more loyal team.

Cultivate work culture and employee engagement

Whether you are back working in the office or still 100% remote, cultivating employee engagement and work culture is vital to employee happiness and retention.

Many managers underestimate the importance of inter-team relationships, and building team camaraderie can be challenging, especially when remote. Fortunately, even virtually, there are many ways to help your staff connect with their coworkers: host fun events and challenges, celebrate birthdays, significant life events, and anniversaries, and encourage those “[water cooler conversations](https://tinyurl.com/ye8yvu27)” (<https://tinyurl.com/ye8yvu27>) (conversations that build rapport but have nothing to do with the work at hand).

Maintaining connections and conversations outside of the scope of assigned work leads to increased morale and a shared sense of accountability. Culture is always a work in progress, but when you're on the right path, it brings your top performers together and becomes a competitive advantage.

Right now, it may feel like keeping employees is tough, but it is possible. By improving communication and flexibility, practicing empathy, and cultivating employee engagement—you will easily be on your way to preventing your own Great Resignation.

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