

Practicing **R**ecognition **O**pportunity **B**elonging **S**ecurity
“The 7 Hidden Reasons Employees Leave”
by Leigh Branham
Book Notes

Why They Leave

When one or more of four fundamental human needs are not being met:

- R** **The need to feel a sense of worth.** Employees feel confident that if they work hard, do their best, demonstrate commitment and make meaningful contributions, they will be **recognized and rewarded** accordingly.
- O** **The need to have hope.** Employees believe they will be able to grow, develop their skills and have the **opportunity** for advancement or career progress
- B** **The need for trust.** Expecting the company and manager to deliver on promises, to be honest and open in all communication with employees, to invest in employees, to **treat employees fairly**, and to compensate employees in a fair and timely manner.
- S** **The need to feel competent.** Employees expect they will be **matched to a job** that aligns with their talents and their desire for challenge.

Hidden Reasons and Practical Actions

1. *The job or workplace was not as expected*
 - a. **The psychological contract**—what individual and organization **expect** to get from each other.
 - b. **Matching mutual expectations**—conduct realistic job previews with every job candidate; hire from a pool of temp-to-hire, adjunct staff, interns, and part-time workers; hire from current employee referrals.
 - c. **Create realistic job descriptions**—create a realistic job description with a short list of critical competencies; allow team members to interview candidates.
 - d. **Hire from within**—hire from your pool of current employees; create a way for candidates to “sample” on-the-job experience; survey or interview new hires to find out how to minimize new hire surprises in the future.
2. *The mismatch between job and person*
 - a. **Best-fit selection practices**—make a strong commitment to the continuous upgrading of talent; following a consistent and thorough talent forecasting and success-factor analysis process; cast a wide recruiting net to expand the universe of best-fit candidates; follow a purposeful and rigorous interview process; track measures of hiring success.
 - b. **Job task assignment**—conduct “entrance interviews” with all new hires; work to enrich the jobs of all employees; delegate tasks to challenge employees and enrich jobs.
3. *Too little coaching and feedback.*
 - a. **Employees want to have the answers to four questions:**
 - i. Where are we going as a company?
 - ii. How are we going to get there?
 - iii. How do you expect me to contribute?
 - iv. How am I doing?

- b. **How to coach and give feedback**—provide intensive coaching and feedback to new hires; create a culture of continuous feedback and coaching; train managers in performance coaching...
 - i. Get the employee’s agreement a problem exists
 - ii. Mutually discuss alternative solutions
 - iii. Mutually agree on action to be taken to solve the problem
 - iv. Follow up to measure results
 - v. Reinforce any achievement when it occurs

Make the performance management practice less controlling and more of a partnership; terminate non-performers when best efforts to coach or reassign don’t pay off; hold managers accountable for coaching and giving feedback.

4. Too few growth and advancement opportunities

- a. **How to grow employees**—provide self-assessment tools and career self-management training for all employees; offer career coaching tools and training for all managers; provide readily accessible information on career paths and competency requirements; create alternatives to traditional career ladders; keep employees informed about the company’s strategy, direction and talent need forecasts; build and maintain a fair and efficient internal job-posting process.
- b. **Hire from within whenever possible**—show a clear preference for hiring from within; eliminate HR policies and management practices that block internal movement; create a strong mentoring culture; keep the career development and performance appraisal processes separate.
- c. **Review all talent effectively**—build an effective talent review and succession management process; maintain a strong commitment to employee training.

5. Feeling devalued and unrecognized

- a. **Reluctant management**—don’t know how to recognize employees; fail to pay enough attention to performance of the employees; don’t know the difference between average and superior performance; fear they will forget some when recognizing others.
- b. **Pay practices for engagement and retention**—offer competitive base pay linked to value creation; reward results with variable pay aligned with business goals; reward employees at a high enough level to motivate higher performance.
- c. **Use cash rewards for immediate recognition**—use cash payouts for on-the-spot recognition (1-2 percent of base pay budget for cash awards); involve employees and encourage two-way communication when designing new pay systems; monitor the pay system to ensure fairness, efficiency, consistency, and accuracy.
- d. **Remember to say thanks**—create a culture of informal recognition founded on sincere appreciation; make new hires feel welcome and important; ask for employee input, then listen and respond; keep employees in the loop.
- e. **Tools are investments**—give employees the right tools and resources; keep the physical environment fit to work in.

6. Stress from overwork and work-life balance

- a. **When you force workers into choosing** between having a life and a career, your organization has a toxic culture. Empower employees, don’t control them.
- b. **Engagement practices to avoid life-career imbalance**—initiate a culture of “giving before getting”; tailor the “culture of giving” to the needs of key talent; build a culture that values spontaneous acts of caring; build social connectedness and harmony among employees; encourage fun in the workplace.

7. Loss of trust and confidence in senior leaders

- a. **Practices that inspire trust and confidence**—inspire confidence in a clear vision, a workable plan and the competence to achieve it; back up words with actions; pace your trust and confidence in your work force.