

HOT SHEET

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HR Trends:

- According to a Gallup poll, the Labor Union approval rating is at 71% - this is the highest rating since 1965.
- A Chipotle restaurant in Lansing, Michigan has joined the ranks with Starbucks (and others) where unionizing efforts are taking place.
- Wage increases at small businesses continue to grow at over 5% according to payroll data companies. And, according to WorldatWork salary budget survey, overall wage increase budgets for 2023 continue to be at a 20-year high of over 4.1% - though they are still not keeping pace with inflation.
- The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) is proposing a new rule that would increase the liability for both employers of a shared employee when either of the employers engage in unfair labor practices.
- When an employee is on a medical leave protected by state or federal regulations, medical information must be held in the strictest confidence by the employer—even with the manager. The manager can often only be told dates and restrictions.
- Increasing the minimum salary for exempt employees is again being discussed.



Full-Circle HR

Considering Quiet Quitting

Quiet quitting is a new term, with a twist, for an old 'problem'—Employees who have become disillusioned with or unmotivated in their jobs for some reason and are just putting in the minimum time and effort required. A survey by ResumeBuilder.com suggests this is true for 21%* of employees, others suggest it is as high as 50%.** The twist is that many employees today are saying it is a way to achieve work/life balance—that mythical beast we have been talking about for decades (or at least as long as I have been in the HR field—which is, by the way, decades). Others suggest that it is related to the Great Resignation as employees realize that they want to do something meaningful with their lives

and they are not finding it at work. They also do not see the relative value of burning themselves out being available all hours of the day and all days of the week for emails and phone calls, etc. The payoff for 'above and beyond' has lost its appeal, particularly for younger workers. Still others attribute it to management shortcomings and that managers should be connecting with their employees in meaningful 15-30 minute conversations weekly. One social media response to this phenomenon is that quiet quitters should find their passion instead. While this does make some sense, necessary jobs such as data entry or factory line work may not lend themselves to passion. Yet another response is that quiet quitting

increases the burden on workers who feel that want to or must work hard—often women, immigrants, and people of color. Some employers have addressed this falling productivity with technological tracking of their employees. Monetarily, this is not an inexpensive solution. Morale-wise, it is highly likely to do severe damage and possibly also ignite a battle of wills as employees find ways around these techniques.

A different approach might be to support/coach/train managers and supervisors in using the skill of intentional listening in their meetings with employees. Intentional listening is described as paying attention to the speaker's message

or content, words chosen, non-verbal cues, body language, and emotions. Then the listener reflects back what is heard by asking clarifying questions, acknowledging thoughts or feeling, organizing or summarizing ideas, identifying bigger ideas and rephrasing those ideas. While this can be more challenging with remote workers, it can still be done. Another approach is to foster connection between team members through a monthly or quarterly fun activity that helps them engage and connect with each other. These activities may help them see the humanity of the other and foster caring about how their job performance affects their teammates.

Potential Benefits of Hosting an Employee Retreat

Isolation and disconnection from other staff have been common trademarks of the pandemic. Some employers are choosing to host an employee retreat in an effort to: reconnect employees; reestablish and/or grow their culture; give people a break from their everyday work and home life; bring some common ground to their people; and provide an opportunity for some joy and learning. As one corporate executive said, "Events like these play an enormous role in preventing isolation and further developing the company culture. If we can come out of a retreat making people feel more developed and connected to their colleagues, and remembering that we're all humans,

that alone can be a huge infusion of conscious culture updating."***

Four points of focus for your retreat are: 1. Encourage employees to interact one-on-one and in small groups. Have them buddy up to participate in an activity that is done in small groups. Depending on the format of the retreat they might create a meal together, gather for happy hour, make music or other art, or play a sport. 2. Give parents and caregivers a break. This may be easier said than done, but if logistics allow it, parents and caregivers may be ready for a much needed time away from their responsibilities. They may feel more inclined to take this opportunity if it is work-related. It can offer a time for rejuvenation they

might not otherwise take. Don't put additional burdens on them—Offer all employees an opt out. 3. Help employees learn and grow. Invite employees to offer ideas about company or work related topics that they would like to explore. You might also encourage employees to teach each other about what they do. Brainstorm about processes and procedures that could be improved, expanded, or streamlined and invite input from all areas of the organization. Or take some time to revisit your strategic or operational plans and revise and update them. Also remember that not everyone learns the same way. Be sure to include all of the senses in the learning activ-

I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples.—Mother Teresa

ities—visual, oral, hands-on and humor—possibly even music and visual art. 4. Bring greater direction and meaning to the organization. Don't overschedule the retreat and do not let the work side of the retreat lose sight of the point which is to forge community and connection. Plan how you will bring the spirit of the retreat back to the office with you.

Your group still not ready for in-person? Or is your group geographically separated and cannot come together? Here is a great article on how to host a dynamic virtual retreat <https://www.hoppier.com/blog/virtual-retreat>.



*SHRM, *Quiet Quitting: New Term for an Old Problem in a Changed Workplace*, Bannan, Karen J., September 7, 2022.

**NPR Planet Money, *The Economics of Quiet Quitting*, Ozalsky, Greg & Selyukh, Alina, September 13, 2022

***SHRM, *The Benefits of Hosting an Employee Retreat*, Lobell, Kylie Ora, September 1, 2022.