



Quality Leadership/ Satisfied Employees



If people quit their managers and NOT their jobs, then do people stay at their jobs BECAUSE of their managers?

Just yesterday I met an employee who is a diesel mechanic and said he had been working with the company for two years. He told me that his pay was average and he could probably make more for his expertise elsewhere.

Then he dropped the real reason he was still there. He said his boss and the owners were such nice people to work with. They were also supportive, helpful and a pleasure to work for. He and I both agreed that

we would rather make less income with a good leader than more income with someone who was unfair or dishonest.

“People buy into the leader before they buy into the vision of the leader”—John Maxwell

Another story out of the business world is told from a woman who made a costly mistake to the tune of a million dollars which, if found out, would have resulted in her termination. When she told her boss about it, he took the blame for the mistake because “it happened on his watch” although he was not directly involved with the mistake. She kept her position, he took the blame, and that leader was never forgotten.

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Ten Reasons Staff Stay

When we talk about turnover in the workplace or the retention of employees, here are ten basic and common reasons why people stay:

1. Excellent management
2. Leadership that is transparent, honest and supportive
3. A certain amount of independence from management because they have confidence in the worker's skillset
4. Good feedback from management that is constructive and knowledgeable.
5. An excellent culture from the top down
6. They feel valued by leadership
7. Good compensation and incentives
8. The people they work with
9. They enjoy their clients and customers
10. They feel good about the impact they are having in the organization.

My emphasis of course, in this newsletter, has to do with the value of working for a company under the quality leadership of trusted managers or supervisors. Notice in the above reasons why people stay in an organization that six out of the ten have to do with competent leadership.

In addition, listed below are common traits I have lifted from other writings, the testimony of several staff down through the years, as well as from my own experience.



Five Traits of a Quality Leader

1. **Integrity/Honesty in Communication and Relationships:** Did you know people want to follow a leader they can trust? A good leader is one whose moral fiber is woven by the virtues of integrity and the importance of keeping their word. These types of leaders also own their mistakes and give appropriate credit to staff.
2. **Does what is Right Rather than what is Popular:** As we know, truth takes grit, courage and could be costly as well. Max Lucado put it this way, "A man who leads an orchestra has to turn his back on the crowd."

These leaders don't play favorites or yield to influential manipulators. They can take in different perspectives about a given concern, and listen to the voices and ideas of their team, but eventually they stand alone in the decision that needs to be made for the betterment of the company. Eleanor Roosevelt said it best, "Do what is right in your heart for you are going to be criticized anyway."

I have always been impressed with managers who have their staff's backs when they are being accused or criticized and asked questions later.

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3. Faces Problems Head-On and Strives for Solutions:

Passive leaders who avoid conflict may have a high IQ and be knowledgeable in their trade, but if they can't roll their sleeves up and get into the messy grit of cleaning up chaos or bringing resolutions to in-house misunderstandings, they aren't worth much to the organization.

One of the most frustrating complaints about leadership in the workplace is that they allow problematic behaviors to go unchecked for a long time with no mentoring or correction.

Of course, one would assume that if that is the case regarding leadership, the staff they serve will lose confidence in their leader's competency and at the very least will not sense loyalty or protection from the one who should have their best interest at heart. In the words of one of the ancients "Anyone can hold the helm when the sea is calm"
—Publius Syrus

4. Leads by Example: "A good leader is one who knows the way, shows the way, and goes the way." —John Maxwell

If you want your staff to aspire to be leaders themselves someday, your example is more attractive and convincing than any book they can read, conference they can go to, or degree they can achieve.

The two phrases that come to mind are:

- a) "The key to leadership is not authority, but influence"
- b) You don't need a title to be a leader."

In order to lead well, one must be comfortable in their own skin and realize that leadership can be lonely at the top. On the other hand, those who are insecure and hold the reins tightly at the top seem to cause the most morale damage below.

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Three types of leadership examples:

- ▶ **Micro-managing leaders:** These hoverers are driven by control and a need to know everything. They can struggle with trust and won't allow employees to be independent with projects.
- ▶ **Macro-managing leaders:** These passive-type leaders give projects without any further involvement or advice as to how to see the project through, especially if there is conflict.
- ▶ **Mentor-managing leaders:** Give direction with encouragement and advice if necessary. They won't do the work for you and will appropriately check back to see if the project is finished.

5. **Empathy for Staff:** These leaders have the capacity to get behind the eyes of a staff member who is struggling. They don't offer quick or cheap answers like "deal with it", "it is what it is" or "it's not a big deal." A leader who validates staff and shows empathy responds to a person's dilemma with words like "We value you, so hang in there, I appreciate all you do" or "I'm sorry you have to go through this stressful situation, is there anything we can do to help", etc.

Final Thoughts

Show me a leader with these five traits (although the list could be larger) and I'll show you employees and peers who love their jobs and have no desire to work elsewhere. Qualified leaders produce satisfied staff!



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Bill formed TeamWorks in 2001 to help organizations achieve their goals for establishing high morale and client satisfaction. TeamWorks currently specializes in offering one-on-one surveys and evaluations for management and staff to assess the current culture's needs and recommended trainings going forward.

In addition to conducting a variety of workshops and in-services on workplace issues, Bill mediates conflict among partnerships and staff relationships, speaks at conventions, facilitates management retreats, and offers personal consultation and counseling for staff.

Bill's strengths are in public speaking, mediation, and understanding the complexities of relational dynamics in the workplace. He lives in Medford, Oregon, with his wife Jenny, and enjoys spending time with their five children and five granddaughters.