



# The Great Resignation... Do You Possess the Managerial Skills to Combat?

By: F. Scott Addis, CPCU, CRA, TRA, ASA

In June 2021, The Predictive Index surveyed 1,906 employees from more than 15 different industries. The goal of the study was to better understand what is contributing to the so-called "Great Resignation" with a focus on the degree to which managers impact employees' decision to stay or leave. The Great Resignation, also known as the Big Quit, is an ongoing economic trend in which employees are voluntarily resigning from their jobs en masse. The term was coined by Anthony Klotz, a psychologist and professor at Texas A&M. In 2021, 47.4 million people voluntarily quit their jobs. Klotz advises that quitting will continue in 2022 but does not expect turnover to spike as high as 2021 because the tighter labor market has pushed companies to offer better benefits and higher salaries.

The pandemic caused workers to rethink their position in life. In a LinkedIn article, "The Great Resignation: Lessons in Truthiness," Klotz explained, "From organizational research, we know that when human beings come into contact with death and illness in their lives, it causes them to step back and ask existential questions like, what gives me purpose and happiness in life, and does that match up with how I'm spending my time right now?"

For employees, the Great Resignation is not just about quitting; it is the opportunity to discover their WHY...their cause and purpose for existence. The Predictive Index People Management Report uncovered that 48% of employees have had thoughts about a career change within the past 12 months.

### **Good vs. Bad Managers**

The Predictive Index drilled down on the impact of a good vs. bad managers on employee retention. The survey uncovered that 63% of those with bad managers are thinking of leaving their company within the next 12 months. For those with good managers, only 27% are considering quitting. Of interest, survey participants were asked to rate their manager from 1 ("terrible manager") to 5 ("world-class manager"). Managers with ratings of 1 or 2 were classified as bad managers, managers with a rating of 3 were considered average, and managers with ratings of 4 or 5 were classified as good managers. It is encouraging to note that 65% of respondents rated their managers either "good" or "world-class," while only 13% considered them "terrible" or "not-so-great."

### **Manager Burnout**

The study also focused on manager burnout – the last act of the stress cycle represented by emotional exhaustion, physical fatigue, and cognitive weariness. Participants were asked whether their managers seemed burned out. 36% of the respondents felt that their manager seemed burned out. Of those who said that their manager is burned out, 58% are considering quitting. It is interesting to note that teams are far more likely to feel burned out when their managers do. Of respondents with burned-out managers, 73% also stated that they were burned out compared to just 22% with managers who were not burned out. Left unaddressed, this burnout won't just impede manager effectiveness -- it'll cause employees to quit. If you are a stoic leader who is attempting to push through burnout, you may inadvertently cause irreparable damage to yourself and your team.

### **Traits of a Bad Manager**

While The Predictive Index 2021 People Management Report aptly highlighted the realities of good vs. bad managers as well as the impact of manager burnout, its 2018 People Management Study asked 5,000 employees to identify the qualities of a bad manager. The following are the top ten traits they identified:

- Poor communicator
- Plays favorites
- Shows little concern for employees' career and personal development
- Badmouths people behind their backs
- Isn't open or interested in feedback
- Wants to prove him or herself right
- Isn't self-aware

- Betrays trust
- Doesn't listen
- Puts his or her needs first

### Manager Effectiveness Survey

Using the research of The Predictive Index, Beyond Insurance has created a Manager Effectiveness Survey that will empower you to better understand your managerial traits in the midst of The Great Resignation. Please respond to the ten statements below.

Score yourself on a scale of 1 (low) and 10 (high)

#### Statement

I care about the well-being of my team.	
I recognize the importance of work/life balance.	
I am a good communicator.	
I am honest, transparent, and authentic.	
I attempt to make work fun and rewarding.	
I empower my team and do not micro-manage.	
I am available and am a good active listener.	
I recognize effort and give credit where it is due.	
I see the development of my team as a key priority.	
I have a positive attitude and use it to drive team morale.	
<b>Total</b>	

Score:

90 and above: Outstanding. You demonstrate outstanding managerial skills!

75 to 89: Capable. You possess positive managerial traits yet have room to grow.

60 to 74: Need Improvement. You will benefit from developing managerial traits.

Below 60: Concerning. Your managerial traits need work.

### 10 Traits of an Effective Manager in the Midst of The Great Resignation

#### Cares About the Wellbeing of the Team.

With all of the turbulence and uncertainties in the world today, your staff needs to see you as kind, helpful, caring, and compassionate. Theodore Roosevelt once said, "Nobody cares how much you know until they know how much you care." This may take the form of handwritten thank you notes or genuinely asking about your employees' hobbies, passions, and families.

### Recognize the Importance of Work/Life Balance.

Persistent stress results in fatigue, illness, forgetfulness, sleep deprivation, aggravation, and irritability. As a manager, it is essential that you make every effort to empower your staff to achieve work/life balance. This includes, but is not limited to, self-awareness, support from colleagues, nutrition and exercise, recovery strategies, rearranging priorities, and time management.

### Good Communicator.

Effective communication improves business performance, builds teamwork, and enhances the customer experience. Your communication skills allow you to set vision and direction, provide updates, talk about issues, solve problems, confirm that employees understand their responsibilities, and provide feedback. A gifted communicator identifies and overcomes barriers to communication and adjusts his or her message to the audience.

### Honesty, Transparency, and Authenticity.

To build trust with your colleagues, you must be honest. The best leaders tell their employees the truth – whether good or bad. Transparency promotes openness between managers and employees. It helps your staff feel valued and encourages creativity. Your staff wants to know that you are genuine and true to your core. Authenticity is the degree to which your actions are congruent with your values. Being honest, transparent, and authentic inspires loyalty and engagement.

### Make Work Fun and Rewarding.

Bringing some amusement into the atmosphere lowers stress, elevates engagement, and drives retention. Happy employees are healthier, more creative, and more productive. A fun working environment improves communication, collaboration, and attracts an audience. Consider giving each team member a nickname, take trivia time-outs, start every meeting with a bit of laughter, recognize pets, host happy hours, celebrate birthdays, and other milestones.

### Empower the Staff and Do Not Micro-Manage.

The manager who constantly peers over the shoulders of his staff sends a message that he or she is not confident that their employees will do a good job. There are significant benefits to an empowered staff who is given the freedom and authority to make decisions. They are liberated and energized to come up with ideas, fix problems, and implement solutions without having to go back to you for permission.

### Active Listening.

Great managers are active listeners. They have mastered the skill of being attentive to the point where they are able to repeat back what they heard. While it does not necessarily mean that you

agree with the employee's position, it demonstrates respect, builds relationships, and garners trust.

#### Recognizing Effort and Giving Credit Where it is Due.

When you find an opportunity to acknowledge and recognize the performance of your staff, you uplift spirits and motivate future performance. Giving credit to others does not cost anything, yet it has a huge return on investment including the ability to retain talent. Leading with gratitude strengthens relationships and enhances culture.

#### Development of Your Team.

Your ability to drive the personal growth of your team is the hallmark of an effective manager. Like a good coach, you send in plays from the sideline yet call timeouts if there is a teachable moment. Timely and consistent feedback is key. Your staff should feel comfortable in approaching you with concerns and questions.

#### Positive Attitude.

The power of a positive attitude in the workplace aligns with employee engagement, team morale, and increased retention. Your attitude has a direct impact on the work performance of your staff as well as your customer experience journey. Your positivity is a calming influence that brings your team closer to you.

The Great Resignation...you now possess the managerial skills to combat!

#### About the Author

Scott Addis, CPCU, CRA, CBWA is the CEO of Beyond Insurance and is recognized as an industry leader having been named a Philadelphia finalist for *Inc. Magazine's* "Entrepreneur of the Year" award as well as one of the "25 Most Innovative Agents in America." Beyond Insurance is a consulting firm that offers leadership training, cultural transformation, and talent and tactical development for enlightened professionals who are looking to take their practice to the next level. Since 2007, the proven and repeatable processes of Beyond Insurance have transformed individuals and organizations as measured by enhanced organic growth, productivity, profitability, and value in the marketplace.