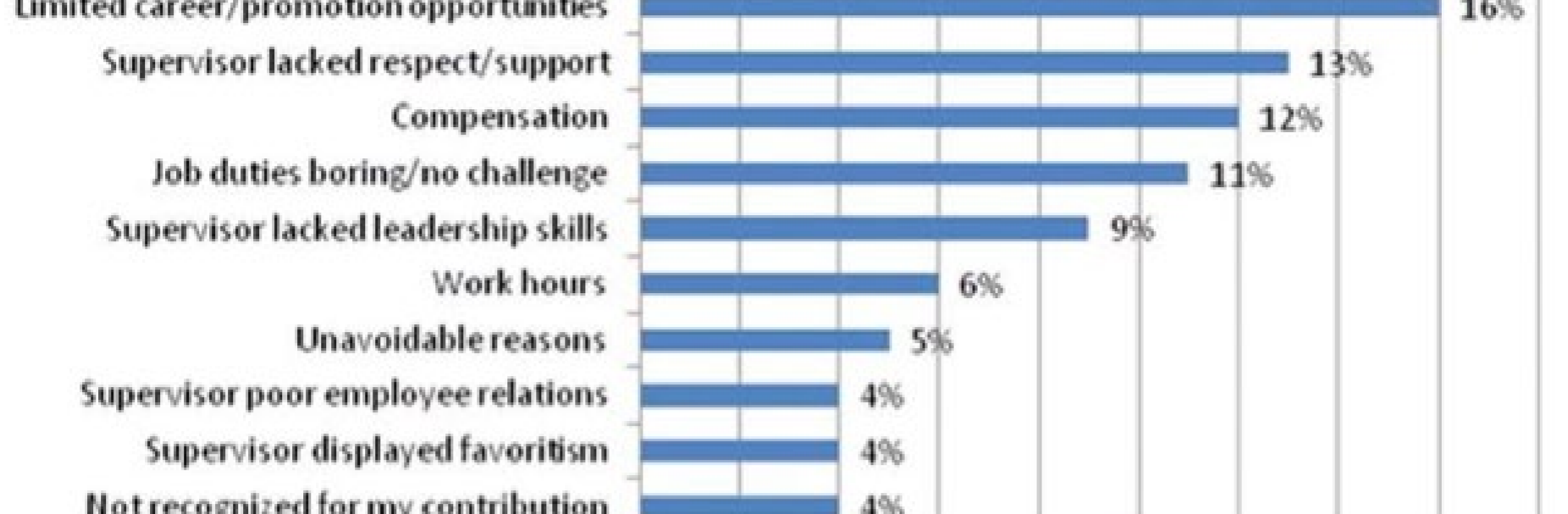




The “ideal” worker is usually defined as perpetually available, meaning someone without many personal responsibilities or interests, rarely gets sick, and prioritises work above all else. The tension between work expectations and personal lives can put the interests of employers and employees at odds. The psychological and physical problems of burned-out employees, which cost billions in healthcare, are just the most obvious impacts. The true cost for businesses can be far greater such as low productivity across organisations, high turnover rates, and the loss of the most capable talents.

When employers were asked why their staff quit, 9 out of 10 said it was about the money. However, it was a completely different story when employees were asked the same question. PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) discovered this when they asked 19,000+ people their reasons for leaving as a part of exit interviews they conducted for clients. Here are the results of the exit interviews:



Based on the above findings, TTM associates outlines the top 7 reasons why employees leave:

1. Unmatched mutual expectations

The more clear and honest employees and employers are about their expectations, the higher the probability there will be a match of expectations. There are numerous ways organisations can increase the probability of hiring people with matching expectations, such as create realistic job descriptions that includes a shortlist of critical competencies, conducting realistic job previews with every candidate, hiring from referrals or a pool of interns and part-time workers. The warning signs of unmet expectations are suppressed anger and withdrawal, poor performance, low participation and absenteeism.

2. Employee-job mismatches due to incomplete talent strategies

Companies with the best-fit selection practices follow a consistent and thorough talent forecasting process before recruiting, which is based on key business objectives that drive talent needs. Employees are not interchangeable parts that should be moved into whichever slot that needs to be filled at a given time. People want to have a job that they are good at and will make them feel that they are contributing to the organisation.

3. Believing that with the right training and coaching people can learn to do any job well

the truth is people are extremely adaptable, but unless they are in roles that match their preferences and motivated abilities they will become disengaged, burn themselves out, and leave. A process for career matching must become a core competency in any organisation. Using the Herrmann Brain Dominance instrument (HBDI)® which is a powerful psychometric assessment that defines and describes the way you think and process information, TTM associates developed a whole new approach to assess individuals. During job interviews, each candidate is assessed on the basis of 4 profiles which you can see here:

- Preference Profile:** What the candidate likes to do.
- Job Profile:** What abilities the candidate has to have to do the job right.
- Competence Profile:** What the candidate can do.
- Organisation Profile:** The fit of the person in comparison to the company's core values.

4. Devalued and unrecognised employees

No incentives or bonuses to unsafe working conditions and low trust environments can all lead to low employee engagement. The below image shows the conclusion of new research by from Bain & Company, conducted in conjunction with the Economist Intelligence Unit on over 300 global business performers. The foundational elements, called 'employee satisfaction', are the necessities such as having a safe work environment and the resources necessary to do the job. Abraham Maslow, one of the founders of humanist psychology who is known for his "hierarchy of needs" theory, said we can't concern ourselves with higher goals until we have the necessities of life, including security. Next comes engagement, employees need to feel like they are a part of an extraordinary team, or that they can learn and grow or make an impact. Finally, at the top—perhaps the equivalent of Maslow's self-actualisation—is the feeling that one can derive meaning and purpose from the company's mission.

The Pyramid of Employee Needs

Category	Item 1	Item 2	Item 3	Item 4
INSPIRED EMPLOYEES...	Get meaning and inspiration from their company's mission	Are inspired by the leaders in their company		
ENGAGED EMPLOYEES...	Are part of an extraordinary team	Have autonomy to do their jobs	Learn and grow every day	Make a difference and have an impact
SATISFIED EMPLOYEES...	Have a safe work environment	Have the tools, training, and resources to do their jobs well	Can get their jobs done efficiently, without excess bureaucracy	Are valued and rewarded fairly

Maslow's pyramid of needs

SOURCE BAIN & COMPANY © HBR.ORG

5. Lack of sufficient coaching and or ineffectual feedback

an efficient coaching process builds strong and durable working relationships, it helps employees answer four basic questions:

1. Where are we going as a company?
2. How are we going to get there?
3. How do you expect me to contribute?
4. How am I doing?

This alignment is a necessary precondition for employee engagement.

6. Blocked growth & career frustration

growth and advancement opportunities must keep a similar pace with employers' career expectations. Hay Group has developed a model for clustering employees according to their level of engagement and enablement to reach employee effectiveness, which if applied correctly, will lead to higher financial success and lower retention rates.

		Employee Engagement	
		Low	High
Employee Enablement	High	Detached	Effective
	Low	Ineffective	Frustrated

The engagement drivers are:
 Clear and promising direction, confidence in leaders, quality and customer focus, respect and recognition, development opportunities, pay and benefits.

Whereas the enablement drivers are:
 - Performance management
 - Authority and empowerment
 - Resources and training, collaboration, work, structure and process.

7. Stress from over-work and poor work-life balance

70% of employees don't think they have a healthy work-life balance, while 40% of workers report that their jobs are extremely stressful, and 61% of workers would give up some pay for more family time. The Warning signs of stressed out employees are:

- Consistently working past office hours and taking work home
- Working through lunch and sickness
- Not taking vacations
- Appearing increasingly cynical, forgetful, or irritable.

At the Boston Consulting Group (BCG), a six-person team started an experiment that triggered a global initiative that spanned more than nine hundred BCG teams in thirty countries across five continents. They confronted their nonstop workweeks and changed the way they worked, becoming more efficient and effective. The experiment resulted in employees being more satisfied with their work-life balance and with work in general by establishing a collective goal, encouraging open dialogue, ensuring leadership support, and spreading change to the rest of the firm, thus the firm was better able to recruit and retain employees.

Final Thoughts

Business leaders know that the key to competitive success is smart management of scarce resources. That is why companies allocate their financial capital so carefully, but the true scarce resources are time, talent, and the passion of the people in an organisation— these resources are too often wasted.

A disengaged workforce is the direct result of detached leadership. Leaders must build an environment of trust and confidence and create opportunities for employees as well as help their employees create their own opportunities. All it takes is collaboration between employer and employee, working together by making small, feasible changes. Organisational solutions that can uncover a company's full productive power will be more effective at surpassing their competitors.

REFERENCES

- The 7 Hidden Reasons Employees Leave book by Leigh Branham(2005)
- Sleeping with Your Smartphone: How to Break the 24/7 Habit and Change the Way You Work
- BOOK by Leslie A. Perlow
- <http://www.bain.com/publications/articles/time-talent-is-good-but-dont-stop.aspx>
- <https://hbr.org/2015/12/engaging-your-employees-is-good-but-dont-stop-there>
- Time, Talent, Energy: Overcome Organizational Drag and Unleash Your Team's Productive Power BOOK by Michael C. Mankins & Eric Garzon
- <http://gender.stanford.edu/news/2012/myth-ideal-worker-new-workforce-outdated-workplace>
- <http://atrium.haygroup.com/ww/our-products/employee-effectiveness-how-it-works.aspx>

Please read more about TTM associates' Inspiring driver program and how it can help organisations to build successful performance measures and demonstrate the inspiring behaviours that are consistent with the organisation's culture. You are also welcome to download our behavioural leadership book