

Looking at the 'Great Reshuffling' of the workforce

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"The Great Resignation" is a phrase that has been thrown around frequently in the last year. We have all heard of the trend of workers leaving jobs in record numbers across the country.

But these people are not leaving the labor force altogether. Rather, most of these workers are changing companies or switching industries for better opportunities. Therefore, many experts suggest the term "Great Resignation" should be rephrased as the "Great Reshuffling."

Studies show that the sectors hit the hardest are manufacturing, leisure, hospitality and retail trade. By now, we are familiar with the need of these companies to find and keep workers, and we have become accustomed to seeing "Help Wanted" signs outside our favorite local businesses.

As temperatures rise, now is the time to re-evaluate your employee satisfaction as you gear up for summer, look to recruit new workers, and plan to keep them for the long run.

One business that has it figured out has two locations in downtown Traverse City. Walking through the doors of the Honest Hospitality TC restaurants, Mama Lu's and Flying Noodle, you are bound to see the same smiling staff members year-round.

Managing Partner and CEO of Honest Hospitality TC, Adrienne Brunette, says that staff retention starts with selecting the best candidates right off the bat and instilling its company values from the beginning.

"We run our company with the philosophy of servant leadership and growth mindset," Brunette said. "Meaning when you work with us, we empower you to be involved in the planning of the work that affects you."

On the other hand, workers have come through the pandemic years with more awareness of their needs. With record high demand for labor, they are in the driver's seat, consciously selecting opportunities that align with their goals.

Melissa Anderson started with Honest Hospitality TC as a server and worked her way up to Director of Operations. Anderson remembers the family-based atmosphere and competitive starting wages as major reasons for starting with the company years ago. Since then, she has been driven by the motivated and like-minded team.

"The sky's the limit, and you feel it when you are surrounded by this team," Anderson said. "We level each other up and live with purpose, looking and challenging each other further into the future."

This presents an opportunity for employers to get to know your employee's 'why' and help them explore career goals and development within your company. For instance, TentCraft encourages employees to shadow different departments to learn the business and promote from within. Ask your employees what is important to them so that they can achieve fulfilling opportunities with you.

"In a nutshell, we like to ask them what their goals are, and then, we try and help them achieve those goals, even if that means them leaving the company for something different," Brunette said. "Sometimes that might mean getting a promotion within the company, other times it could be helping them with the tools and resources they need to buy their first home. It looks different for everyone."

In addition to medical insurance and paid time off, many companies are implementing creative benefits such as stipends for cellphone bills and continued education. These forms of nonpayroll compensation can also save your business on employment taxes.

Supporting your employee's family with child care is another significant way to help. Companies like Traverse City Tourism and TentCraft utilize the Tri-Share Pilot Program offered through the state of Michigan to split the cost of child care three ways between the state, the employer, and the employee. Our regional facilitator, Great Start to Quality, provides resources and support to help you implement this program.

Understanding your team's needs and doing what you can to support them builds mutual trust, respect, and loyalty for years to come. As the great re-shuffling of talent continues, evaluate your employee satisfaction, and consider new ways to keep them engaged and dedicated to your mission.

"We feel that we have such an incredible team of people that work with us," Brunette said. "We look forward to growing so that we can support more people that share our passion for hospitality."