

Quiet Quitting- What Business Owners Can Do

9 min read



Since the start of the pandemic, business leaders have experienced unprecedented employee turnover rates with workers quitting their jobs in droves in search of better opportunities elsewhere. The latest trend of The Great Resignation is one in which employees are "quitting" without actually leaving their jobs.

Key Takeaways

- **Signs of Quiet Quitting:** For many organizations, the first indication of quiet quitting is a productivity slump.
- **How Prevalent Is Quiet Quitting?:** 26% of workers report that they do the bare minimum or less at their jobs – effectively making them quiet quitters...
- **Measure Employee Engagement and Your Efforts to Combat Quiet Quitting:** As you implement strategies to reduce turnover and quell quiet quitting, be sure you also have a strategy for...

The practice is called quiet quitting, and it's largely gained popularity through videos distributed on the social media platform, [TikTok](#).

What Is Quiet Quitting?

Quiet Quitting Definition - Quiet quitting can basically be defined as the act of doing the bare minimum at one's job and choosing never to go above and beyond for one's employer or company. Some individuals who have quit quietly do so while looking for other work. Others simply disengage and reduce productivity with the hope they won't be fired.

Trendy terms aside, quiet quitters can be defined in the most basic or traditional sense as highly disengaged employees.

What Happens When an Employee Quits Quietly? 10 Signs of Quiet Quitting

For many organizations, the first indication of quiet quitting is a productivity slump. If your productivity numbers are down, how can you tell whether or not the slowdown is due to quiet quitters working in your [organization](#)? Pay attention to your employees and look for signs of quiet quitting in your company.

Although many workers see quiet quitting as simply setting healthy boundaries at the workplace by doing only the job they are paid to do for the time they are required to do it, quiet quitting is a bit more serious than simply fulfilling one's contractual obligations.

The signs of quiet quitters include:

1. Chronic disengagement
2. Employee stops self-advocating (i.e. discussing development opportunities, pay increases, benefit improvements, or promotions)
3. Slow work pace
4. Disinterested in work
5. Easily distracted
6. Meets only the minimum performance requirements (minimal productivity)
7. Isolates or separates themselves from other team members
8. Withdraws from unnecessary or unrequired tasks, activities, and conversations
9. Attends meetings but does not actively participate
10. Other employees report an increased workload or having to pick up the slack

Given this list of symptoms, the implications of quiet quitting for the health of your business are fairly obvious; when productivity slows, so do profits. So, quiet quitting definitely harms the financial health of your business. It also harms workplace culture and the well-being of both employees who quit quietly and those who remain engaged.

Read More: [Attracting, Recruiting, and Retaining High Performing Workers](#)

How Prevalent Is Quiet Quitting?

According to a 2022 ResumeBuilder.com survey of 1,000 employed Americans, 26% of workers report that they do the bare minimum or less at their jobs – effectively making them quiet quitters. Of these quiet quitters, 21% are doing the bare minimum and 5% are doing less than their jobs require.

Yes, that still leaves 74% of workers who are going above and beyond their minimum job requirements which means a vast majority continues to participate in hustle culture by doing more than they are paid to do [1]. However, the number of quiet quitters is still significant, especially when you consider that 26% of individuals surveyed could translate to 26% of the employees in your company.

Why Are Workers Quietly Quitting?

Quiet quitting happens for a variety of reasons. Primarily, employees do not feel that they are adequately appreciated or compensated for their work. Other times, they don't believe that going above and beyond will result in any real opportunities for career advancement, so they simply don't see any point in doing more than what they are paid to do.

Read More: [How to Hire People Who Won't Quit](#)

According to the above-cited 2022 survey from ResumeBuilder.com, the reasons employees do not want to go above and beyond at work include:

- 46.1% do not want to work additional hours without compensation.
- 45.6% say it would compromise their mental health.
- 40.8% say it would compromise their work-life balance.
- 35.4% do not believe it would benefit their career.

In addition, the study showed that workers are also quietly quitting as a result of burnout. Overall, 75% of workers are burned out. However, quiet quitters report higher rates of burnout with 83% of employees who do the bare minimum and 88% of workers who are doing less than the minimum saying they are [burned out](#). Only 71% (less than average) of workers who go above and beyond report burnout. Although both groups report roughly equal stress levels, those who are quietly quitting report feeling less happy.

The roots of quiet quitting can be located in the same workplace failings that result in high turnover rates, such as having a poor workplace culture which can be riddled with communication problems, feeling of psychological unsafety, dissatisfaction with compensation, lack of recognition, and a **generally toxic employee atmosphere**.

Additionally, workers quit quietly because their employers fail to meet their full range of needs, according to [Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs](#). This includes helping employees meet their most basic needs by providing them with adequate pay and job security, in addition to helping them meet higher-level needs by fostering a sense of belonging in the workplace and providing them with learning and career development opportunities to help them achieve personal fulfillment.

What to Do About Quiet Quitting: 6 Ways to Keep Your Employees From Quitting Quietly

The good news is that the ResumeBuilder.com survey also found that 91% of quiet quitters said that their employers could motivate them to work harder.

Additionally, consider the following tips to transform your workplace into the kind of place that not only churns out high productivity but also happy, satisfied, and engaged workers.

1. Focus on Improving Workplace Culture

Toxic workplace culture is one of the worst things for your business overall. It leads to disengaged employees, hinders productivity, and results in high employee turnover rates. Taking steps to improve your workplace culture will help prevent your employees from quitting quietly (and quitting altogether).

Signs of a positive workplace culture include:

- Clear values and future vision
- Strong employee retention and engagement
- Clear and open communication
- Routine employee recognition

- Professional development opportunities
- Career advancement opportunities
- Good employee benefits
- An atmosphere of psychological safety
- Promotes employee wellbeing
- Strong working relationships
- A growth mindset open to feedback and innovation
- Accessible leadership
- A positive approach to failures
- Empowered employees
- Accountable leadership
- Mutual trust

2. Improve Your Leadership Skills

The individuals at the top of your company are largely responsible for creating a positive workplace culture. They're also responsible for setting the tone in the company, and this can have a great impact on employee engagement, satisfaction, and happiness. Take the time to focus on developing not just your industry-specific skills but also your skills as a business leader.

3. Free Up Lines of Communication

One hallmark of quiet quitting is the "quiet" part. Employees who quit quietly do not verbally communicate their dissatisfaction, their needs, or how employers could better meet those needs to help them feel engaged and motivated.

To prevent quiet quitting, the lines of communication between employees and management should always be open, free, and safe. Employees should feel safe to communicate honestly and business leaders should take steps to ensure that employees feel heard and that their concerns are adequately addressed.

To combat quiet quitting that has already taken place in your workplace, business leaders need to notice when employees are disengaged and take the initiative to reach out and start conversations with these employees. Be sure to frame these conversations so that it's clear they're coming from a place of concern and not a place of discipline because reprimanding an already disengaged employee is only going to result in them becoming defensive and give them another reason to disengage.

So, instead of opening the conversation with observations of how their productivity is lagging, say that you've noticed they do not seem as happy with or interested in their work as they have been in the past. Then ask if something is wrong, talk with them to find out what you can do to help, and work together toward a solution.

4. Find Out What Your Employees Want

The quiet quitters surveyed by ResumeBuilder.com said the following incentives (listed from the greatest to least percentage of respondents) could motivate them to go above and beyond for their companies:

- More pay
- More paid time off
- Better healthcare
- Promotion
- More recognition
- Better title

To help combat quiet quitting in your business, focus on providing the items on this list. Additionally, provide your own employees the opportunity to tell you what most motivates them. Distribute your own in-house survey to help you improve your benefits and tailor them to meet the specific wants and needs of the people who currently work for you.

5. Improve Benefits, Recognition, and Development Opportunities

Once you understand what's most important to your employees, what they value, and what motivates them, start making real changes in your business to provide your employees with these things in order to get them to re-engage. You can offer them to everyone or hand out improved benefits, pay, promotions, or additional career development opportunities as rewards for exceptional performance.

6. Become a More Flexible Workplace

After many workers grew accustomed to working from home during the pandemic, employees' expectations for their workplace models have shifted. We now know it's possible to have remote workplaces, and many employees want to continue having the option to work from home – despite the fact that many have also experienced zoom burnout and difficulties with separating the workplace from home as a result of working remotely.

Every business is different. It might not make sense for your office to continue working 100% remotely. It might be a major money-saver to completely eliminate your central office. If you're like many businesses, you might find that transition to a [hybrid office model](#) (with some remote work time and some in-office work time) suits you and your employees best.

Whatever camp you find your business in, it's important to offer your employees increased flexibility in their work schedules and workplaces. In other words, provide your employees as much autonomy as you can (without compromising flexibility or overspending) to designate their own work hours and ability to work remotely.

Measure Employee Engagement and Your Efforts to Combat Quiet Quitting

Just as high turnover rates are costly for businesses, disengaged employees are also expensive. They not only hinder productivity, but they can also dampen the overall morale in your workplace. As you implement strategies to reduce turnover and quell quiet quitting, be sure you also have a strategy for measuring your success in place. Keep a close eye on the metrics included in your people and productivity scorecards ([here's a guide on how to get started!](#)) such as labor ROI, employee retention rates, and profit and loss by individual employees.

Tracking these metrics can help you better assess the efficacy of different employee engagement strategies so that you can continuously improve your workplace to prevent burnout and discourage quiet quitting while boosting employee engagement, satisfaction, happiness, and productivity.

[1] <https://www.resumebuilder.com/1-in-4-of-workers-quiet-quitting-saying-no-to-hustle-culture/>