HR INSIGHTS

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When Times Are Tough, Invest in Your Team

BY BRIAN FORMATO

Most struggling organizations try to figure out how to turn their fortunes around. They look at various metrics and investigate cutting costs, increasing production, expanding their offerings, and a whole host of other options. Team building, though, rarely tops their lists, with many HR managers thinking of it as an investment to consider only when their organizations' financial results improve.

But what's the thinking behind that position? If a business isn't performing well and goes into cost-cutting mode, then what is it doing to improve performance? Budget cuts and poor performance cause employees to disengage, which usually only worsens the company's predicament. Improving performance is key to improving an organization as a whole—and that starts with motivating employees to work together as an effective team.

A tough business climate is something all companies face at one time or another. An organization's long-term survival depends on its leadership's ability to handle both the good times and the tough times. In all situations, leaders must consider not only the intent of their actions but also their impact. In the case of cost-cutting initiatives, those policies may be implemented with the intention of improving the bottom line, but their impact on a company's culture and morale can be disastrous.

With profits down and a need to please stakeholders and shareholders, what should leadership do to improve performance? Cutting costs, cutting programs, and cutting head count are all defensive tactics that have residual negative impacts on morale and can cause an even more rapid downward spiral. As the old saying goes, "If all you play is defense, the best result you can hope for is a tie at zero." To improve performance, companies need to go on the offense by being proactive—and that means investing in their teams.

In fact, the best time to work on a team is when things are not going well. For example, the sports team practice of calling a timeout in order to figure out how to deal with a challenging situation may offer a good model for companies to follow. Calling a "team timeout" to evaluate the situation and come up with a plan for team building to strengthen the team and its actions is an opportunity for a company to recharge and get back on the winning track. A team timeout is a small investment in terms of time and money that can pay huge dividends when a turnaround is required and can serve as a catalyst for improved performance.

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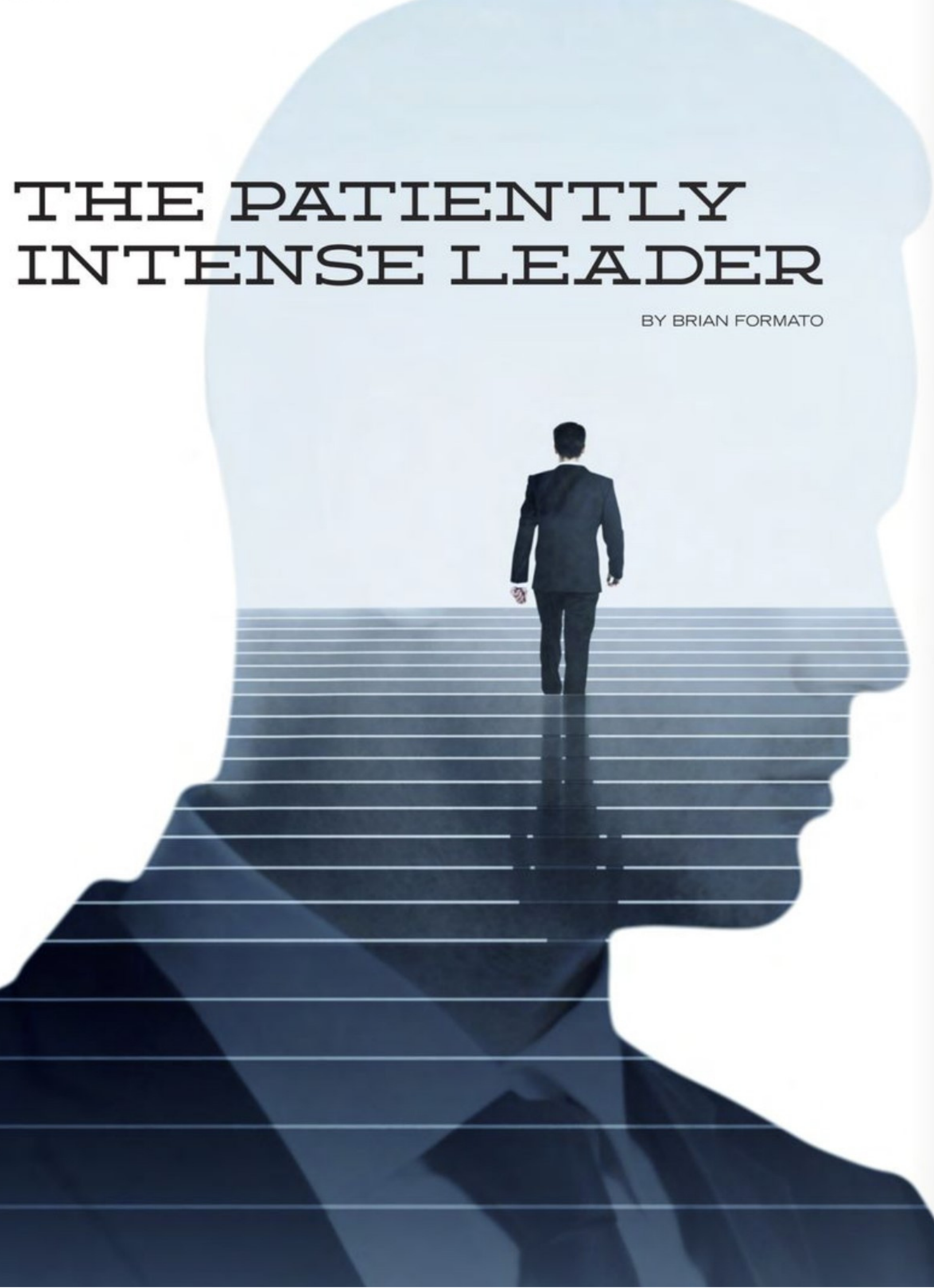
THE PATIENTLY INTENSE LEADER

BY BRIAN FORMATO



Taking a close look at executives across various industries, geographies, and company sizes provides insights into the commonalities and differences in style and approach that work best in different settings. The best leaders know their own strengths—and their own weaknesses. Their self-awareness isn't the only significant determinant of leadership success, though. The ability to be "patiently intense" is another correlative success factor. Patience and intensity might seem like opposites, but the two competencies actually create balance that leads to leadership success.

Merriam-Webster.com offers these definitions:

- ***patiently:*** "in a patient manner : with calmness or without complaint or hurry in spite of delays, difficulties, tedium, etc." [1]
- ***intense:*** "marked by or expressive of great zeal, energy, determination, or concentration" [2]

Both terms focus on staying the course and persevering despite opposition or adversity. They actually do go hand in hand. After all, in order to succeed, a leader must have the grit and determination to fend off naysayers, deal with adversity, and power through obstacles. Intensity in the form of sustained effort is required to launch a company or to scale a new solution.

Being intense is not enough, though. Leaders must be able to sustain that intensity over the long haul and exhibit stamina. Many intense leaders have failed, especially when trying to drive change in larger, more established organizations. This is where patience comes in: effective leaders must leverage patience to calmly and deliberately address opposition and, often, to slow the pace of decision making.

"Being patient doesn't mean going slowly. It means going at the appropriate pace."

When introducing a disruptive solution to the market, the desire to go fast can sometimes derail ambition. Understanding the importance of being deliberate, calculating, and patient is a critical skill. Being patient doesn't mean going slowly. It means going at the appropriate pace and recognizing how to alter that pace as needed to bring the team, investors, customers, and other constituents along.

Leaders set the tone for their organizations. Those who are able to balance patience with intensity will be likely to guide their companies to long-term success. ■

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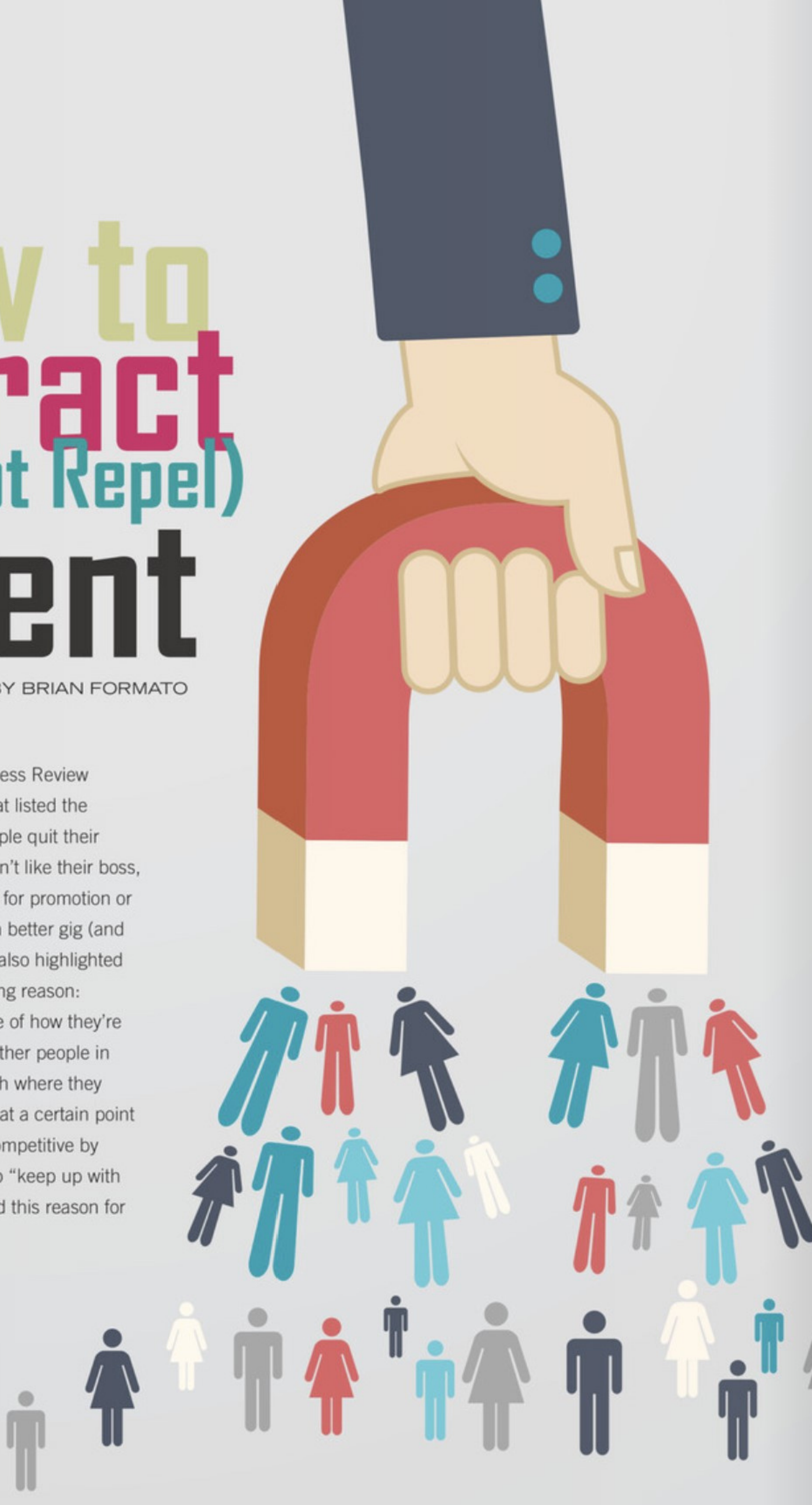
2. "Intense." 2022. Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/intense.

How to Attract (and Not Repel) Talent

BY BRIAN FORMATO



In 2016 Harvard Business Review published an article that listed the usual reasons why people quit their jobs: "because they don't like their boss, don't see opportunities for promotion or growth, or are offered a better gig (and often higher pay)."[1] It also highlighted one somewhat surprising reason: because of "their sense of how they're doing compared with other people in their peer group, or with where they thought they would be at a certain point in life." Humans are competitive by nature, and the drive to "keep up with the Jones's" lies behind this reason for quitting jobs.

> When organization suffers from an increase in turnover, the root cause might lie in how its managers are treating employees.

A more recent article published on the Harvard Business Review website highlighted three things managers can do to help people want to stay in their jobs: "enable them to do work they enjoy, help them play to their strengths, and carve a path for career development that accommodates personal priorities."[2] All of these interests are very closely linked to employee engagement.

When an organization focuses purely on retention, it can achieve that by overpaying and asking very little of its employees. In that situation, though, employees will be compelled to stay for all the wrong reasons. Many large organizations take this approach because they are assessing metrics incorrectly. Some turnover is,in fact, good. The hungriest and best employees do tend to move around and change jobs, both within and between organizations.

That insatiable thirst for growth and new challenges motivates the best employees. To harness that power, organizations must focus not on retention but on engagement, which exists when an employee's thirst for growth is fulfilled. Companies can drive engagement by providing new and interesting work and by challenging employees, teaching them new skills, and supporting them in their quest to grow.

Having the right talent philosophy is key to attracting and engaging the right employees. As organizations work to set their cultures, core values, and talent strategies, it can be useful for them to think of their managers as magnets. Most people think that a magnet attracts other metal objects, but, depending on its polarity, it can also repel metal objects.

Employee engagement starts with the boss. Many organizations have a mix of managers: some attract talent, and others repel talent. Bosses clearly play a key role in shaping an organization's workforce. One size does not fit all, so it is critical that managers actively engage their direct reports individually and hold development dialogues with them.

It is also important for organizations to conduct pulse checks with employees to measure their engagement. This can be done formally via surveys and more informally through manager-led conversations. It is important that the organization is measuring the right things and not make the common mistake of confusing employee satisfaction (what someone gets from their employer: salary, work conditions, benefits, etc.) with employee engagement (what someone is willing to give to their organization). Engagement is the discretionary effort—the willingness to work extra time, to go above and beyond, to help others, and to be an ambassador for the company. Employees who are engaged at work are far less likely to entertain calls from headhunters and recruiters. They are content where they are and seek opportunities to make a difference in their current companies.

When organization suffers from an increase in turnover, the root cause might lie in how its managers are treating employees. By listening more closely to employees' needs and concerns, managers can drive engagement and, in turn, improve retention. ■

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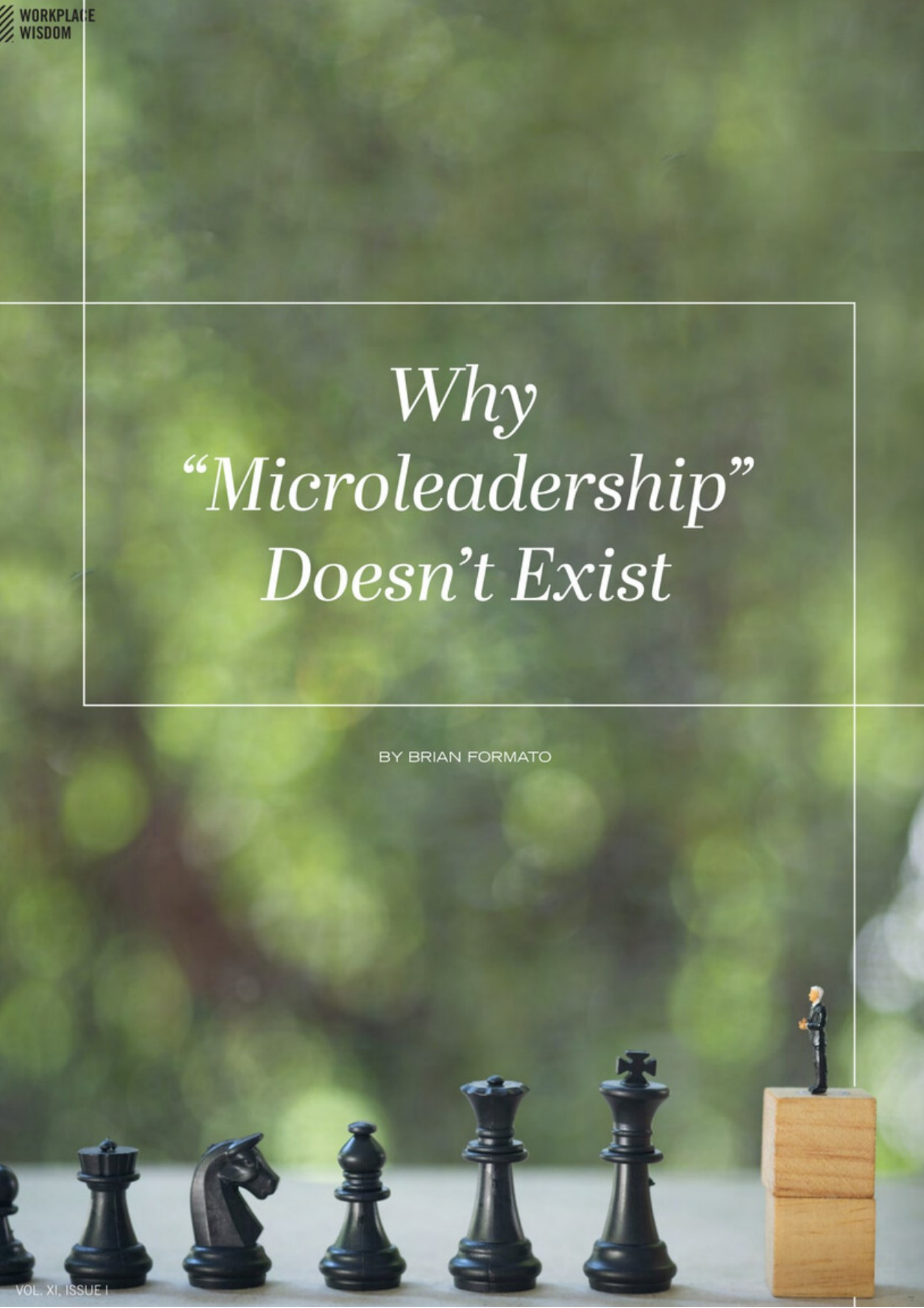

Why “Microleadership” Doesn’t Exist

BY BRIAN FORMATO

The term MICROMANAGE—"to manage especially with excessive control or attention to details"[1]

—often comes up in discussions about how to run organizations and manage employees. No one wants to be seen as a micromanager, but overly controlling management styles are, unfortunately, pretty commonplace. Interestingly, there's no comparable term to describe similarly negative behaviors in leadership practices. Why?

The terms management and leadership are often used synonymously, and organizations frequently describe the same group of people as both a "management team" and a "leadership team." But management and leadership are actually two very different things, with each area relying on its own particular skill set. The two are so different, in fact, that it's rare to find people who excel at both.

The phrase "managers do things right; leaders do the right things" (which has been attributed separately to Peter Drucker and Warren Bennis, who were both significant contributors to management and leadership studies) highlights the different approaches of those two groups. Managers work with and through others to accomplish organizational goals, whereas leaders attempt to influence the behavior of other individuals or groups.

Management and leadership are further differentiated by the fact that management is assigned, whereas leadership is assumed. Management generally relies on permission and authority, which are bestowed through titles and the assignment of duties. However, it is possible

for someone at any level of an organization to become a leader by taking the initiative, going above and beyond the minimum, being a team player, modeling positive behavior, and inspiring others.

Management's focus on command and control enables the existence of micromanagement. But because leadership focuses on influence, vision, and freedom, an extreme version of that approach—"microleadership"—simply can't exist.

When companies do a better job of distinguishing between management and leadership, they can achieve better results in both areas. By identifying—and supporting—the different behaviors and expected outcomes of managers and leaders, organizations can empower each group to be more effective and successful in its own way. ■

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Use Office Space Design to Shape Company Culture

BY BRIAN FORMATO

I recently sat down with renowned office designer Carrie Frye of CFID Studio to talk about how to create great office spaces. The design and implementation of a new office is a powerful opportunity for a company to engage its employees and burnish its brand image. Yet in spite of its benefits, the introduction of a new office is an infrequent occurrence; in fact, most leaders manage an office change only once or twice in their careers.

Between us, Carrie Frye and I have over 50 years of experience helping companies navigate this big investment. Over the course of our conversation, we drew up a list of five recommendations for getting it right.

FOLLOW THE GOLDILOCKS PRINCIPLE: THE AMOUNT OF CEO ENGAGEMENT SHOULD BE "JUST RIGHT"

BF: During my 20-plus years in HR, I've been involved in a number of office relocations and renovations. In every case, the CEO was highly involved. Why does it matter to a Fortune 100 CEO what a division office looks like? The answer is culture. A company's physical space speaks volumes about how the company operates and the importance it places on employees.

CF: As a designer, I *want* to have the CEO involved. The most successful office cultures come from the top. If new hires see the CEO working in the break room, they know it's okay to brainstorm over a game of ping pong at 10 a.m.

BF: Early in my career I worked for Western Publishing in New York. (They were famous for publishing the Little Golden Books—remember their gold binding?) After an investment group purchased the company and continued to expand it through acquisitions, it no longer fit in its Third Avenue offices. So we embarked on a project to move to West 57th Street. The move took more than a year to complete and consumed most of my working hours (as well as many of the CEO's hours!). We debated everything from carpet color to office size, and I was amazed by how much time the CEO and senior leaders spent on the project at the expense of revenue-generating activities.

CF: It's important for the CEO to set the strategic direction for a new office, but there's such a thing as too much CEO involvement. Here's my advice to CEOs: *create a team you trust, then let it execute your vision.* Empower that team to do the research, guide the project, and make granular decisions on things such as carpet colors and finishes. That way, you can focus on running the business.

INVOLVE EMPLOYEES, FROM START TO FINISH

CF: The best designs begin with team members and the brand. But too often, design decisions are based on the personal preferences of senior leaders. Team members need to give input throughout the process, via surveys and other methods. As a starting point, designers need to understand how people work and how various groups work differently.

BF: I once worked with a large company to consolidate its back-office functions in a new building in Charlotte. After collaborating with senior leaders to select a property, we began space planning. The next months were consumed with determining who would sit where—who would get offices, who would get windows, and who would get conference tables. Everything was determined by level, regardless of people's specific needs. I still recall the IT staff putting new computers in the mail room because they didn't have enough space for them elsewhere. I learned from that experience that form should follow function—but often doesn't.

CF: There's a common trap of using office space to differentiate among levels of employees—a practice that can be demotivating for junior team members who have great potential. To differentiate performance and level, I recommend focusing on paychecks and benefits instead. Let your office space and amenities bring people together. When done right, work spaces create energy and can even create trust between employees and managers.

BF: During the buildout for the New York publishing company, things became very personal for some people. Many were upset about the sizes of their offices, for example, or about the partially blocked views from their windows. As an HR guy, I quickly learned that people believe that their workspaces say a lot about their importance in a company.

CF: It's human nature to think that your assigned workspace speaks to your value. One way to manage that is by offering employees multiple places to work. And by all means, give people plenty of opportunities to provide input about the types of spaces that work best for them—then incorporate that feedback where you can. Throughout the process, it's important for team members to hear messages from the top about the company's mission and how their work supports the mission.

Here are some questions and topics to consider with your project team and designer during the research process for creating a new office space:

- Ask Millennials how they like to work. Consider the importance of community in the culture. (Don't forget to ask Generation X employees, too!)
- What cool features and hygiene factors matter most to team members? Coffee stations? Game rooms? "Chill-out" rooms?
- How much collaboration space is needed? Do team members need enclosed rooms, or can they collaborated within work stations? (Or do they need both types of spaces—or something completely different?)
- Put yourself in the shoes of a job applicant and ask yourself, "Is this where I would want to spend most of my waking hours?"

BF: The designer is crucial to this process. A good designer will study how your teams work today and help you understand how they will use the new space. A great designer will analyze that information in light of your strategic goals and will help you create a space that meets those goals, gives employees what they need, and comes in on time and on budget.

BUILD YOUR OFFICE AROUND ONE OF YOUR BEST RECRUITING TOOLS: YOUR BRAND

BF: When I joined the marketing firm Red Ventures, it had 200 employees and was poised to grow but had difficulty attracting talent because few people had heard of it. (It was known mostly for two products it represented, DIRECTV and Sirius Satellite radio.) With expansion in mind, Red Ventures built a new greenfield office that proudly showed off the company's addiction to data analytics, with large, statistics-displaying monitors throughout the offices.

As the VP of human capital, I had the job of attracting talent. So we put a Red Ventures basketball hoop in the parking lot, we built a game room, and we created a wall of monitors in the reception area to rotate through promotions for our brands or display welcome messages to new hires and visitors. Our office became a showcase for our culture, and open houses were our best recruiting tool. Red Ventures has since taken it to another level with its new headquarters. An indoor basketball court, a yoga studio, game rooms, restaurants, and other amenities create an attractive office environment that's also an amazing recruitment tool.

CF: Clearly the Red Ventures management team understood the value of your HQ as a brand platform—and the team supported the development of that space with a major investment, encouraging project team members to dream big. It's a great example of how a CEO can use the design process to drive business results.

DESIGN WITH FLEXIBILITY IN MIND

BF: My final corporate job was at an industrial company in Charlotte, North Carolina. The buildings were stale—mostly holdovers from manufacturing days—and we embarked on a project to redo one of them. Through the design process, we wanted to supercharge a culture change and foster innovation and entrepreneurship. Unfortunately, the intended business unit was restructured during the renovation: the employees the building was supposed to house were permanently relocated, and a different group moved into the new space. Layout choices would have been different if the organization had considered the reorganization prior to building design.

CF: That's one reason it's so important to design offices with flexibility in mind. Consider how work will get done in the future. Pay attention to technology such as smartboards, digital signage, power sources, and wireless capabilities—and leave room for new technologies, too.

GET THE RIGHT TEAM IN PLACE

BF: From the start, leverage the right people. In addition to the in-house team, consult external experts, such as an office designer (of course) and also someone with expertise in workplace culture. An organizational development expert can add a lot of value.

CF: That's a great point. Often the office project team is enthusiastic about the changes, but that excitement doesn't permeate the rest of the company. I recommend designating a team or person to manage the change. Their job is to educate employees, inform them about timelines and details, and promote a positive attitude around the change.

FINAL THOUGHTS

When building a new office, be both deliberate and aspirational. Consider choices carefully, because they reflect the company's corporate culture to employees, job applicants, and clients. Listen to and communicate with teams throughout the design process, and include enough flexibility to allow space reconfigurations as the business's needs change. Most importantly, be sure that the new office space announces the organization's purpose!

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THE IDEAL STRATEGY FOR COUNTERING THE GREAT RESIGNATION

BY BRIAN FORMATO

Together, the record 47.4 million voluntary quits in 2021[1] and the current (as of February) 3.8 percent unemployment rate[2] are leaving organizations short staffed and scratching their collective heads. Maybe the combination of the gig economy and the COVID-19 pandemic is to blame for the surplus of open positions. Or maybe Americans are just burned out by the grind and looking for a different approach to work.

The term "forward fill" describes an alternative approach to filling jobs. In contrast to the usual backfilling strategy, which involves filling a position after it has become open, forward filling requires thinking about open positions with an eye to the future rather than to the past. With the Great Resignation exacerbating the staffing shortage, this is the ideal time for organizations to implement a forward-fill strategy that emphasizes five key areas.

FLEXIBILITY

Today's employees desire and require more flexibility in their work arrangements, starting with the locations of their jobs. Once the pandemic started, "searches for remote work on LinkedIn tripled"[3]; during its first six months, remote job listings on LinkedIn increased sixfold.[4] Clearly, there's been a shift, and organizations must now meet workers where they are and where they want to be. The pandemic has proven that, thanks to technology, employees can be productive without having to be in the office. Workers want flexibility not just in job location, though, but also in areas such as working hours, benefits plans, technology choices (for example, whether to use a Mac or a PC), and PTO policies. The organization's goal should be to meet each employee's individual needs and also maintain equity among workers.

CREATIVITY

Employers must approach marketing job openings more as if they were marketing products: they must present a value proposition, entice job seekers to apply for a position, and be able to deliver on the promises made in the recruitment process. The high number of openings and the shortage of workers give job seekers lots of choices; therefore, companies must outcompete other employers to land quality hires. Hiring managers must be creative in their candidate sourcing, and consider strategies such as offering referral bonuses for existing staff and writing clever and unique copy for job advertisement placements that go beyond LinkedIn and Indeed to include social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok.

INGENUITY

During the pandemic shutdowns, many companies had to rethink how they interacted with clients, how their employees did their jobs—pretty much how they did everything. As they innovated new practices, organizations often found that those new approaches were actually better than their old ways of doing things. For example, companies that had deployed their sales forces geographically before the pandemic found that when salespeople lost the ability to call on their customers in person at their offices, being in the same city as clients and prospects became less important. As they assessed sales territories and industries, organizations that were willing to let go of their past ways of doing things often found that aligning salespeople around verticals produced higher close rates and more sales than aligning around geographies. This major shift enabled organizations to focus on hiring salespeople with industry experience regardless of where they lived, which in turn opened searches to national candidates with deep expertise in critical verticals. By reengineering the approach to their sales teams, those organizations boosted sales, attracted better candidates, and increased margins.

EMPATHY

Over the past two years, the leadership trait that has grown in value the most is empathy. During these professionally and personally challenging times, the best leaders have been in tune with their employees and the evolving needs of the business. Many of the workers who have resigned have done so because they did not feel valued, were treated poorly, and worked for rotten bosses. With more choices as to where to work and what to do, job seekers are being much more selective. Leading with empathy is critical to building the trust that can attract and retain top talent, and leaders who lack this skill must prioritize developing it. "Would I thrive working for me?" is a good starting point for leaders who want to measure their own empathy.

AUTHENTICITY

Every organization is not a good fit for every person. Every organization must be true to itself, then to its current employees, and finally to its applicants. By being clear and authentic about who it is, an organization gives candidates a realistic preview of what it will be like to work there (and why they should want to work there). An assessment of why people are leaving is a good starting point, because a revolving door for talent could indicate a toxic culture. Being honest with the candidate about what they are walking into—sharing the good and the bad—increases the likelihood of finding someone who is a good fit and ensuring that they are not surprised once they start the job.

Organizations that seek to forward fill their roles need to be flexible, creative, ingenious, empathetic, and authentic. They also need to be consistent: each team member must buy into these behaviors and model them for candidates. Companies with strong core values that are lived out every day tend to have fared better through the pandemic and have seen lower turnover rates. That said, turnover is inevitable, so organizations should forward fill roles as much as possible. By thinking about their future needs—rather than focusing on the past—companies can mitigate the effects of turnover and the Great Resignation.■

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"Culture Crusaders," not "Office Monsters"

BY BRIAN FORMATO

As the business world tries to define its post-COVID landscape, the media is full of news stories about the CEOs who want their employees to return to the office after working from home for two years. Many of these stories seem to paint these CEOs as cruel "monsters" for enacting back-to-the-office policies. But this interpretation is a mistake.

Although working from home provides many freedoms and benefits, it is undeniable that company culture, with workplace camaraderie and creativity, has suffered from the lack of in-person interaction. As inflation rises, the economy trends toward recession, and employees continue to consider other job opportunities, these CEOs recognize the negative impact that remote work has had on their businesses—and on the vital function of company culture. Employees are much more engaged when working alongside each other and interacting socially with their colleagues in break rooms, in elevators, and in other office spaces. Such interactions are almost impossible to achieve when people are working remotely.

> **CEOs who want their employees to come back to the office need to entice them to do so.**

For most organizations, some form of a return to the office is inevitable. There will continue to be room for hybrid work, and perhaps having everyone in the office five days a week might not make sense any more. But having employees in the office at least one day a week will be extremely beneficial to both organizations and their employees.

How a leader frames their desires has a big impact on how their employees respond to them. No one likes to be told what to do; people prefer encouragement and a well-framed case for why they should do something. CEOs who want their employees to come back to the office need to entice them to do so. (For example, to persuade its workers to return to the office, Google is offering them free electric scooters to use as part of their work commutes.) Additionally, by focusing on the positives of having employees in the office, such as its impact on company culture and the opportunities it creates to connect with colleagues and to learn and develop, CEOs will be more likely to convince more employees to embrace the return.

Hopefully, the media will look at the big picture and reframe how they present "return to the office" stories. Many employees actually do miss going to an office: they enjoy the routines there, the interactions with people from different departments, and the opportunities to collaborate in person. So rather than talk about "office monsters" who are forcing everyone back to their desks, perhaps the media should leave the monsters at home under the bed and instead talk about the "culture crusaders" who are motivating their employees and getting them excited to return to the workplace. ■

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Business Is Good, Thanks to My Highly Engaged Employees

BY BRIAN FORMATO

Even though business is booming these days, many companies are still having trouble keeping their best employees around. Why? Some experts think that poor salaries drive people to leave their organizations. Others maintain that lack of upward mobility, meaningful work, or clear business strategy are the reasons. Still others point to incompatibilities between employees and their companies' cultures.

All of these reasons are valid. But none of them tells the whole story: people leave for different reasons. The key to retaining top employees is to customize your strategy to meet the specific needs of each person you hope to retain. Determining why people leave can help an organization to craft a retention program. But is retention really the goal? Rather than figure out how to get people to stay, the goal should be to figure out how to get people to want to work for your organization and to feel so fulfilled that they are never tempted to look for a job elsewhere. Stop trying to block the exit door. Instead, focus on getting your employees engaged in opening new doors within your organization.

When describing situational leadership, management expert Ken Blanchard writes about "different strokes for different folks, but also different strokes for the same folks"—that is, the need to tailor a management approach to each specific employee. Getting the best out of employees is about creating individualized plans based on what motivates each person (and also modifying those plans based on his or her changing needs and interests). The five-step strategy outlined below can help organizations improve each employee's engagement and culture, therefore maintaining peak employee performance.

Stop trying to block the exit door. Instead, focus on getting your employees engaged in opening new doors within your organization.

STEP 1: Engage in a development dialogue with each direct report at least twice a year.
Ask what is most important to him or her over the course of the next six to twelve months. You might find that certain personal concerns outside the office are creating work-life balance issues in the short term. Awareness of such issues can help a manager to meet the employee's specific short-term needs (with the understanding that the employee must take some ownership for understanding his or own motivations as well).

STEP 2: Communicate often to each employee about the business strategy and how his or her role affects it.
People need to feel that what they do *matters*. Connecting each employee's work to the strategy is the best way to show how he or she is adding value to the organization.

STEP 3: Provide timely feedback to each employee.
People need to know where they stand. When you catch people doing something great, praise them publicly. And when you catch them doing something wrong, let them know that, too, but do so privately. Timely feedback is a great motivator that can be a very effective way to inspire someone or to correct mistakes and poor performance.

STEP 4: Make work more fun.
Even the stodgiest workplace can be more exciting if the manager is open to mixing things up a bit. Hold team meetings outside on a nice day or in another part of the building (and serve a tasty snack!), for example. Employees who are having fun while at work will be more productive, so make the effort to find news ways to make the workplace more interesting.

STEP 5: Provide stretch assignments periodically.
Everyone wants to grow and learn, and the usual work can become monotonous. Providing each employee with work opportunities outside of his or her daily responsibilities is a great way to keep work interesting and to give employees growth opportunities.

As you pursue these strategies, remember to keep in mind that not everyone can be satisfied. There will always be employees who continue to complain that they are underpaid, undervalued, overworked, etc. They are taking up seats within your organization that can be better filled by people who appreciate the company. So your best course of action is to help those unhappy employees exit gracefully. Parting ways is not always a bad thing.

If you tailor your approach to each person on your team, you will find that your best employees not only stay, but continue to grow and have an even greater impact on the organization. Their success justifies additional compensation, reflects well on you as a manager, and lifts the performance of the entire organization. So stop talking about retention and start talking about engagement and development. ■

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Employee Churnover?

By Brian Formato

Organizations have the on-going task of attracting, retaining and developing their talent. Today more than ever employees view jobs as temporary. Gone are the days of joining an organization and staying for an entire career. While it does still happen, most employees tend to change jobs and companies many times throughout their careers.

Turnover is inevitable. Companies that recognize this build talent pipelines and bench strength for each and every position. They evaluate turnover monthly, dig into the root cause of why people leave and try to improve the organization's ability to attract and retain great people. At Groove Management we define turnover as a position opening created by someone leaving the organization either at will or because they were terminated. Turnover does create opportunities for advancement in organizations for other employees and it provides an opportunity for hiring managers to Forwardfill the position and improve the quality of their teams.

Churn is a much worse type of turnover. Churn refers to a cycle of continuous turnover. If an organization has high turnover, they experience churn. If the turnover occurs in the same position multiple times, we refer to that as Churnover.

Churnover defined: A recurring opening in the same role or position in an organization due to the fact that new people hired into the role do not stay.

The root cause of churnover requires research and analysis. Some root causes may include poor working environment, low pay, poor management, undesirable hours, job fit mismatch, etc. Getting to the root cause is an important step towards eliminating churnover. Churnover is a lot like the cliché definition of insanity; trying the same thing over and over again expecting a different result.

CHURNOVER (Continued)

Organizations that experience high turnover typically improperly focus their attention on fixing the problem rather than the root cause. The organization quickly goes back out into the recruiting market to replace the open role. The cycle continues until the organization chooses to determine the root cause.

If your organization experiences Churnover there are some clear steps to eradicate the problem:

Step 1: Analyze the turnover data to determine patterns. Does turnover occur after certain lengths of employment? Is there a gender, age or racial bias in the turnover data? Is the turnover voluntary or performance based? By looking for patterns in the data a root cause might become clear.

Step 2: If the turnover is voluntary conduct exit interviews with those who left the organization. Seek to understand not only why the person left, but what had initially attracted them to the company and the job? This can often lead to where things soured along the way.

Step 3: Identify the knowledge, skills, abilities and behaviors of your most successful employees. Work to understand what differentiates those that are engaged and successful in your organization from those that leave.

Step 4: Change your approach to hiring. Hire people that fit a different mold. Provide a realistic preview of the job duties and responsibilities in advance of making hiring decisions. Create incentives and implement tools to recognize and reward performance.

By implementing these four steps most organizations can improve their churnover rate. The cost of any turnover can have a dramatic impact on the bottom line, but churnover is by far the most costly. Organizations that recognize the importance of creating an inclusive and collaborative culture tend to have lower attrition rates, better customer service and overall better business results.