Pay Still Not the Main Reason Employees Leave, Despite What Managers Believe

The author of The 7 Hidden Reasons Employees Leave, Leigh Branham, has updated the first edition originally published in 2005, based on more than 1,000 post-exit surveys that reveal why employees have been leaving their employers in the intervening years. The seven root cause reasons remain the same, and pay is still not the main reason employees leave, contrary to what many managers believe.

Overland Park, KS (PRWEB) February 21, 2013 -- In spite of the fact that many managers believe pay is the main reason employees leave their employers, the author of The 7 Hidden Reasons Employees Leave says otherwise.

Leigh Branham, whose updated second edition of the book was recently released, has analyzed more than 20,000 anonymously submitted post-exit surveys from employees in 17 different industries. His finding: only about 11% of departing employees cited pay as a significant reason for leaving. "There are a couple of understandable reasons managers believe pay is the main driver of employee turnover," said Branham. "First, it's the reason most employees give in company-conducted exit interviews. Why?

Because most departing employees who leave for another job usually do get a pay increase. And second, exiting employees don't want to burn a bridge by revealing the root-cause reason that triggered their decision to leave in the first place."

Branham cited a survey conducted by the Harvard Management Update that indicated 89% of managers believe dissatisfaction with pay is the number one reason employees leave. He also referenced a Harris Interactive survey conducted in November, 2012 reporting that 70% of 3,991 workers said that pay was the key factor to keep them on the job. "The problem with the Harris survey is that it asked employees why they would leave, not why they actually did leave. I put my trust in the reasons given by employees who actually left."

The main reasons Branham uncovered in his most recent post-exit surveys of 1,000+ employees who left a previous job are:

1. Loss of Trust and Confidence in Senior Leaders (reported by 26%)
2. Not Feeling Valued, Recognized, or Rewarded, including Pay (22%)
3. Stress from Overwork and Work-Life Imbalance (15%)
4. Quality of Manager Coaching & Communication (13%)
5. Insufficient Career Growth and Learning (11%)
6. Unrealistic New Hire Expectations (4%)
7. Job-Person Mismatch (4%)

The remaining 5% of employees cited non-preventable reasons such as relocation, retirement, returning to school, an unexpected job opportunity, and other such "pull" reasons. "It's important to distinguish between the reason employees give when they leave--typically 'more pay' or 'outside job opportunity'--and the root-cause avoidable 'push' reasons they decided to leave in the first place,"
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