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SIX REASONS YOUR BEST EMPLOYEES LEAVE

Adapted from an article by Louis Efron, Contributor, Forbes Magazine (2013)

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"It has been said that employees don't leave companies, they leave managers" and, according to Louis Efron, contributing author for Forbes Magazine, "it is happening more than ever." Citing US Department of Labor statistics, Efron notes that the average tenure of employees in the United States is only 1.5 years.

This is particularly significant in light of the costs associated with turnover which as most Human Resources practitioners know, is often underestimated. The costs associated with recruitment, assessment, selection, training, and support until an employee is fully functional and able to contribute to organizational success is lost if that employee leaves for another job after a short time. Why do employees leave? According to Efron, there are six major reasons. Those he identified are presented below.

No Vision. "Most employees don't get out of bed each morning trying to hit a profit number. In the majority of companies, only a handful of employees truly care about it." Efron recommends that managers not confuse financial objectives with a company Vision. "Vision feeds financials and not the other way around."

No Connection to The Big Picture. Citing Gallup's *Q12 Survey*, Efron notes that there is a direct correlation between employee's perception that their job is important to achieving the organization's goals and objectives and retention. "The best workplaces give their employees a sense of purpose, help them feel that they belong and enable them to make a difference."

No Empathy: Employees tend to feel a commitment to employer's who appear to understand them and their individual needs. It would appear that by taking the simple steps to remember that people are, well, people and to treat them as such goes a long way toward retaining talent.

No (Effective) Motivation. Managers should remember that "intrinsic motivations" are what really drives people. While financial compensation is important, it is what scientists call a "necessary but not sufficient" reason for employee loyalty. An effective manager seeks ways to tap into the intrinsic motivations of their staff.

No Future. Creating career paths that are well defined and communicated is not something that is done well in many organizations. Retaining (and attracting talent) becomes much easier when employees see an end game where their careers can grow.

No Fun. Efron says that today's young workforce are not lazy. Rather, their expectations have changed. They expect work not to be a drudgery. Attracting and retaining top talent requires organizations to reinvent work in a way that blurs work and play. This is perhaps the most difficult of Efron's recommendations to implement, but it is one worth spending significant time considering.

ARE TEAMS BECOMING OBSOLETE?

Adapted from: Adaptive Action: Leveraging Uncertainty in Your Organization, by Glenda Eoyang and Royce Holladay

For at least ten years, the business world has emphasized the importance of building effective teams in order to increase productivity, product quality, innovation and, ultimately, profitability. However, authors Glenda Eoyang and Royce Holladay write in *Adaptive Action: Leveraging Uncertainty in Your Organization*, "like antiquated office tools, [traditional work] teams were set up to fit a workplace environment that no longer exists."

In the past we played finite games, where boundaries, goals, rules, and winning could be constant and reliable. Back then it made sense that teams had lists of members, regular times to meet, specific goals, schedules, plans, and predictable products. Today, this kind of stability is rare. Therefore, teams built on that stability are anachronisms. They just don't work.

Today's organizations don't just play winnable games; they also engage in *infinite* games. Those games are characterized by many different tasks performed simultaneously; diverse resource and skill demands; global and virtual interconnections; tight timelines, emergent targets; and evolving rules. Radically different relationships and structures are required to achieve complex objectives in today's chaotic environments.

As an example, Eoyang writes "I experience this shift in my own life. Last week, I had 21 meetings, not counting the weekend. Each meeting involved different people, goals, products, timelines. Members of what Fast Company called 'Generation Flux' may thrive with this pace and flexibility, but I'm from a slower-paced era. Yet, I have to function in this new kind of work, and so do all the people my life intersects with in all these meetings. So how do we bridge the gap between the old way of doing business and the new?"

The answer, according to Eoyang, is what is called *Adaptive Action*. What is Adaptive Action? It is a model based on an endless cycle of three questions. These are: a) **What?** b) **So what?** and c) **Now what?** Asking these questions allows both individuals and organizations to engage intelligently with a fast-paced and uncertain world. And it helps groups come together quickly and seamlessly to accomplish discrete tasks and then rapidly move on to address new issues.

Where old-school companies depended on traditional teams to get work done, today's more flux-friendly organizations are embracing what Eoyang has dubbed *Coordinated Adaptive Action Networks*, or CAANs for short.

What is a CAAN? Basically, it's a group of individuals or institutions who recognize how a shared interest will be served by sharing resources. They come together for a short period of time, with a specific goal, to coordinate data collection (What?), understanding (So what?), and action (Now what?). After a brief encounter, the components are free to pursue other potentially fruitful CAAN engagements.

Implementing CAANs is not complicated, Eoyang insists. It is simple, even when it isn't easy. There are four basic rules that should be followed when implementing CAANs. These four rules are basically outlined below.

For more information on CAANs or a review copy of *Adaptive Action*, contact Dottie DeHart at (828) 325-4966.

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POTPOURRI

■ New Program to Focus on Workplace Chemical Isocyanates

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has announced a new national emphasis to help protect workers in general workplaces, construction and maritime industries from the safety risks of isocyanates. These chemicals are found in building insulation, paint varnishes among other materials. Illness resulting from exposure can cause severe personal suffering and significant costs to employers resulting from insurance and medical costs.

Source: <http://dol.gov/sec/newsletter/> June 27, 2013*

■ OFCCP says "Making Good on the Promise of Equal Pay"

According to the OFCCP Blog, in the past 3 years the OFCCP has resolved more than triple the number of race- or gender-based pay discrimination cases compared to the previous three years.

Source: <http://social.dol.gov/blog/making-good-on-the-promise-of-equal-pay/>*

■ OFCCP settles Hiring Discrimination Case With Bertucci Contracting Co.

Bertucci Contracting Co., LLC settled allegations of hiring discrimination against African American, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American job applicants who applied for positions as laborers and deckhands between 2009 and 2011 at its Jefferson facility for \$70,000 and requiring at least 6 offers of employment.

Source: <http://social.dol.gov/blog/making-good-on-the-promise-of-equal-pay/>*

* If clicking the link does not work, please copy the link into your browser and click enter.

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ARE TEAMS BECOMING OBSOLETE? *(Continued from page 2)*

Synchronize work; don't delegate (even more!) tasks. When a group comes together, focus on synchronizing their various work rather than creating new task lists and agendas. Align with others to leverage the tasks that are already on the list.

Assess and exploit differences; don't merely accommodate them. CANNs access unique skills and features as they're needed, use them to their fullest potential, then release the resources to serve elsewhere.

Move information; don't accumulate and hoard it. A CAAN comes together, does its work, and moves on. Negotiating opportunities, giving and getting feedback, connecting to additional resources, explaining what is (or is not) required are all functions central to working in a CAAN.

Expect self-interest, not dogged loyalty. Even the most fundamental rules of the CAAN game are different from those for a team Eoyang. Team members felt loyalty and commitment and identity with their mates. They would do their best to meet the needs of their team community. CAAN members have a different motive. They are committed to a larger level of performance that reaches beyond this project or this task, but they also are wisely self-interested.

Adapted from: Dr. Glenda Eoyang and Royce Holladay are coauthors of [*Adaptive Action: Leveraging Uncertainty in Your Organization*](#) (Stanford University Press, 2013)

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