



Business experts: Reasons for quitting work range from poor pay to feeling undervalued

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December 25, 2021

Business Insider magazine interviewed numerous employment experts to identify the complex interplay of factors linked to worker shortages:

1. **Child care issues.** We are in a child care crisis. According to a McKinsey & Co. study, 45 percent of workers who quit their jobs cited a need to take care of family as a major factor in their decision. As child care centers struggle to fill staffing needs, many have to offer better wages to compete — thus driving up child care costs. In response, some two-income households may find it cheaper for one parent to stay home and care for the kids.
2. **A need to feel valued:** While many businesses have assumed more money is the answer, an international study by McKinsey & Co., found that it's even more important for workers to feel like their employers value them and that their work has meaning.
3. **An expanding “gig” economy:** The US has seen dramatic growth in self-employed, unincorporated workers in the last year, as aspiring entrepreneurs jump in to provide contract work which used to be done by full-time employees.
4. **Outdated biases in choosing workers:** The US has about 40 million STARS — folks who don't have college degrees but are “Skilled Through Alternative Routes.” Unfortunately, they may never even get the first interview because of educational requirements. Employers need to rule out old biases and assumptions to fill their labor gaps, whether that means tapping into the country's 20 million former felons — who typically encounter major obstacles finding work — or hiring more workers with disabilities, according to the Insider.
5. **Fewer immigrants:** Over the last five years, immigration restrictions have reduced the number of workers who typically fill jobs in manufacturing and construction. “There are about 1.2 million adult foreign workers or work-eligible immigrants who are just not here because of the restrictions that have been imposed during the pandemic,” David Bier from Cato Institute told NPR in October. “That's about a quarter of the increase in job openings.”

6. **A need for liveable wages.** Fry says low wages meant people had to work several different jobs, which kept them from “upskilling” — either by going to school or earning a certification — as a way to improve life for them and their family. Better pay makes it easier to work just one job and have time to gain new skills.
7. **Lack of flexibility.** Once people sampled the freedom of remote work, many weren't anxious to return to cubicle culture and hovering bosses.
8. **Mismatches between workers and jobs.** Just because there are open jobs doesn't mean the candidate pool matches them. Programs like Minnesota's “Good Jobs Now,” are meant to connect job hunters to jobs, while also providing employment counselors, aptitude tests and other tools to help jobseekers gain new skills if they wish to switch vocations.
9. **A growing ‘anti-work’ mentality:** An “anti-work” community has arisen on platforms like Reddit, where over a million users gather to share stories of narcissistic bosses and soul-killing conditions. Their version of the American Dream is based on the type of work that works for all humans vs. the notion that humans need to be molded to fit a single template to fit a job.
10. **Health concerns and vaccine hesitancy linger** as the pandemic continues. We're still very much in a pandemic and health concerns may stick around. S&P global economists said in a note that 1.4 million workers may not return until "pandemic-related issues are resolved."

And with the Omicron strain already spreading, the virus is still very much with us.