

LABOUR MATTERS

Good employees leave because of bad managers

WHAT makes top performers leave?

It's initially thought that it's for more money or better benefits.

But the truth is that it is usually because their managers chase them away.

It doesn't matter how great the company is, what the benefits are or the great perks on offer — if the immediate boss lacks the necessary skills to manage effectively, it's highly likely performers will leave.

The key to successfully retaining talented staff lies in first training managers and supervisors in the skills required to lead their subordinates, as well as initially hiring the most talented individuals for the job.

Employees may have initially joined the company because of the generous nature of their pay package or the perceived reputation of the organisation. But the duration of their stay and quality of their work will be determined by their relationship with their immediate supervisor.

The essence of great management lies in addressing each employee's needs in a way that enables them to build a strong and vibrant work environment.

How do they do this?

Successful managers realise that employees need to feel secure and ensure this by addressing these questions:

Does the employee know what is expected of him or her?

Do they have the necessary equipment and materials to do the job?

Do they have the opportunity to do what they do best every day?

Have they received praise or recognition within the past week for a job well done?

Does the manager care about them as individuals?

Is there a framework in which the employee is encouraged to develop and is there someone who cares enough to encourage this development?

The manager's role is to identify and release the unique talents and skills within each employee and help channel these to the good of the company and individuals. Only by identifying the employee's talents can the manager achieve the company's goals and satisfy clients' needs.

How can this be applied in an organisation's day-to-day business?

First and foremost, select the most talented individual, not just the most experienced, intelligent or determined one. When a manager defines the correct outcome, the talented employee would naturally take the right steps to achieve it.

Focusing on the employees' strengths helps them find the right fit within the organisation. After all, the best salesman does not necessarily make the best sales manager.

Employees leave primarily because they are unhappy in their jobs and their managers lack the skills necessary to address their needs.

An organisation can retain talent by ensuring that each individual has the right tools, knows what is expected of him or her, enjoys the work, is recognised for his or her achievements and is encouraged to develop his or her career. — *John Mulder is a recruitment consultant at Manpower Professional in Cape Town.*