

# Fire fighter retention

## 'People don't quit jobs, they quit bosses'

By Wayne Bailey



**H**ave you ever thought about why people quit their jobs? What about the last job you had, why did you quit?

More money? Better hours? Maybe you moved further from work and it wasn't economically sound to keep driving the miles and putting fuel in the tank verses the money you were being paid.

Some numbers from a recent Dale Carnegie study said, "There is a disconnect between workers and their employers as it's related to turnover issues. The study revealed that 89 percent of employers believe that workers leave their company for more money. In reality, a mere 12 percent of workers actually leave for more money. That's a pretty big perception/reality miss and it may have to do with the theory that ignorance is bliss."

The same study from Gallup revealed, "75 percent of workers who voluntarily left their jobs did so because of their bosses and not the position itself. So conventional wisdom is in fact true – people don't quit jobs, they quit bosses."

If we've determined people quit their bosses, what are some of the reasons in doing so?

### Do you care about your employee?

When you have a desire to help your employees succeed and help them have the proper tools such as knowledge skills and a positive attitude and it's not done to make you look good, you're on to something. Remember what Zig Ziglar said, "The only thing worse than training an employee and losing them is to not train them and keep them." Since complements go a long way, make it a habit.

Wal-Mart founder, Sam Walton, knew how important it was to listen. He said; "Asking for and hearing people's opinion has a greater effect on them than telling them they did good job." We have to be effective leaders and allow others to tell them what they

need to hear, not necessarily what they want to hear.

### Belief

It's wonderful when the people believe in their leaders but it's more wonderful when the leaders believe in their people. Coach Jimmy Valvano said, "My father gave me the greatest gift anyone could give another person, he believed in me." When you have belief in others, it's like you give them permission to succeed.

### Honesty

Leo Buscaglia said, "Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around." Being honest with your boss, peers and or someone that answers to you is very important. Some individuals require some filters and others, well, you just have to be blunt. We will never grow in our honesty unless we're honest with others. If you we're being told something just to be flattered, you know that person can't be honest with you on other things. I respect the person that's brutally honest with me over the one that is telling me what I want to hear.

### Helping hand

I often say people need a hand up and not a hand down. Audrey Hepburn said; "Remember, if you ever need a helping hand, it's at the end of your arm, as you get older, remember you have another hand: The first is to help yourself, the second is to help others." It's our obligation to help our self before we help others. If you're at a point that you always need help, it's difficult to help others. It's difficult to give someone else attention when you're starving for attention yourself.

### Doing the right thing

Sometimes you have to ask yourself, what is the right thing to so? Zig Ziglar said; "With integrity, you have nothing

to fear, since you have nothing to hide. With integrity, you will do the right thing, so you will have no guilt." Doing the right thing takes maturity and if that's not there, find yourself a mentor, someone that is doing and going where you want to be. You never want to take financial advice from a broke person. Why would you take advice on integrity from someone that is constantly making bad decisions? Ask advice from someone that is successful and has fruit in the life.

### Vision

George Washington Carver said, "Where there is no vision, there is no hope." Just think about waking up tomorrow without hope. There was a story about a man and others in prison that was being accused of crimes they didn't commit. As his prison mates were led off to be beaten for the 100th time, the cell mate would say; Find out what you can and report back to me and the others." He knew if the man went into the room without hope, he may admit to being guilty to a crime he didn't commit. By asking him to report back what he saw, gave him hope. Without hope, man will perish.

### Potential

Bruce Lee quoted; "Ever since I was a child, I have had this instinctive urge for expansion and growth. To me, the function and duty of a quality human being is the sincere and honest development of one's potential." Lee had the discipline to grow as a human being. What can we do to grow and expand our potential? Read books that will help you unleash your inner strengths, be accountable to someone you respect and to one that is doing what you desire in life. It's our duty to recognise the gifts and talents in others and if the desire is there in that person, help them be the best they can be.

### Trust

Once trust is broken, it's difficult to gain back. Trust can be lost in many

ways such as stealing, speaking words that are untrue. Stephen Covey said, "Trust is the glue of life. It's the most essential ingredient in effective communication. It's the foundational principle that holds all relationships." If you lose trust in your spouse or a coworker, the glue becomes weakened and lives and careers are destroyed. It's often said, "Crow is easier to be eaten when it's still warm. Make sure if you have broken the trust of someone, you apologise in hope to salvage your relationship. Albert Einstein quoted, "Whoever is careless with the truth in small matters cannot be trusted with important matters." When you lose

trust, especially your boss', it takes a long time to earn that trust back.

#### **Accountable**

It's easier to point the finger at others when things go bad. I say when you're pointing a finger, you actually have three fingers point back at you. Try it. As a leader, you have to be transparent and be willing to explain your actions. When the team performs badly, it's your responsible to take the hit. Henry Cloud said, "If you are building a culture where honest expectations are communicated and peer accountability is the norm, then the group will address poor performance and attitudes."

Sometimes the group can police their peers much better than the boss coming in with a heavy hand.

#### **Thoughts to consider**

If our decisions and actions are healthy, we have accountability and our desire is to see others exceed, your organisation will grow and you're employees won't quit you as the boss. Your people are already evaluating you, so, it would be in your and you're department's best interest to reflect and ask, are you earning the trust of others? Adding more value to others? Showing them you care? If not, start today with something heading towards that goal. 