



advantage



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Boomerang Employees On The Increase

We keep hearing about the millions of people leaving the workforce each month, and yet things may not be exactly as shared. Research reveals that many workers are reentering the workforce not that long after their departure. Some are even returning to their former employers in a move that might seem surprising to some.

These are called “boomerang” employees, and they accounted for [4.5%](#) of all new hires in 2021 — up from 3.9% in 2019. Typically, these workers left their organization under positive circumstances, and for various reasons they have decided to rejoin their organization. Some may have left to fulfill some caretaking duties and now no longer have these responsibilities. Others may have wanted to explore a different career path and now find that it isn't a good fit for them. And yes, some employees may simply have discovered that the grass isn't always greener on the other side. [Research from UKG](#) finds that 43% of people who quit their jobs during the pandemic now admit they were actually better off at their old job. Their study also revealed that nearly 1 in 5 people who quit during the pandemic have already boomeranged back to the job they left.



We all know the concept of returning to a former employer is not new. Back in 2015 UKG did another similar [study](#), and discovered that nearly 40% of workers would consider going back to a previous employer. However, 80% said that former employers didn't have a strategy in place to encourage them to return, with 64% saying there appeared to be no strategy for maintaining a relationship.

The concern is that not much has changed since then. In fact, most organizations still aren't doing enough to keep track of their former employees (let's call them alumni) or maintain relationships with them. And with the Great Resignation showing no signs of slowing down, this could be a critical misstep for organizations as they struggle to fill vacancies and stay afloat.

Employers could also be missing out on some of the notable benefits of rehiring former employees, from more cost-effective recruiting and on-boarding to better long-term performance. However, bringing on boomerang employees can have its drawbacks as well, including the very real potential of them leaving again.

For you it is a good idea to weigh the pros and cons of this approach to obtaining talent. Let's take a look at the advantages and disadvantages of welcoming former workers back to your business.

Advantages:

- It costs less to recruit them: Did you know that hiring boomerang workers saves employers between one-third and two-thirds on recruiting costs? In fact, an average Fortune 500 company can save around \$12 million per year by seeking out former staff members instead of using normal recruiting channels.
- The on-boarding process is more efficient: Employees who are rejoining an organization will become productive more quickly than new hires since they already know the ins and outs of your business (assuming changes have been minimal). They'll also require less initial training from managers and fellow team members. Again, money savings.
- They tend to be more productive and loyal: Even after the initial on-boarding period, boomerang employees are more satisfied and committed than new hires. One study of 13,000 employees found returning team members were nearly always higher performers than new hires even leading to a promotion. Again, these individuals knew what they were saying "yes" to when they came back.
- They already know your culture: If an employee chooses to come back to your organization, it may be a statement of alignment with your culture — and that's a win for all. Often (not always) the returning employee may end up working with the same team members, which can lead to less anxiety about getting to know a new person and what they're like to work with.
- They could bring a fresh outlook to your business: Former employees could provide valuable insights, especially if they worked for another organization during their time away. They might also be able to offer a helpful perspective on how your organization has evolved, and whether these changes are trending in a positive direction.



There can be some disadvantages so take off the rose-colored glasses and pay close attention to the red flags.

- Even if an employee wasn't technically "fired," rehiring someone if their co-workers or manager reported they were difficult to work with requires additional work. Asking the person about their current work style and checking peer references will go a long way in helping to shore up your decision. It's also a good idea to find out why they're leaving their current employer (if working), perhaps for some familiar reasons.

- If they are unable to articulate why they are interested in returning: This could mean they're just looking for a better salary, i.e., they're taking advantage of the hot job market. While there's nothing fundamentally wrong with this, it might be a warning sign they'll leave again if a better opportunity comes along.
- If the individual was not a good performer: Being desperate to fill a role is not a good reason to bring them back if they were not an asset to begin with. Now, this should only be a consideration when the previous employee was coached and counseled about their lack of performance. With the big picture in mind, it might be better to invest in training a new hire who offers a stronger skillset.
- They have been away from your organization too long: While this isn't a red flag per se, it's something to keep in mind if you're weighing other candidates for a role. The benefits of rehiring a former employee will diminish if they've been away for a few years, especially if your organization has progressed and changed significantly during that time. Essentially, they are all new and should be evaluated on equal terms through your non-discriminatory process. This highlights the need for employers to have a re-employment policy which outline at what time re-employment benefits expire.

Although there are risks associated with any hire, a former employee (with some due diligence on your part) can benefit the organization by having them back. Please don't expect these individuals to just come knocking at your door — you'll need to step up your efforts when it comes to recruiting them from your alumni network. After all, people have lots of options in today's employee-driven job market. If you are not actively trying to maintain a relationship with them, they may feel uncertain about whether they'd be welcomed back and decide that it's best to move on.



So, if your business is struggling with a talent shortage — like so many organizations are — maybe now is the time to focus your recruitment efforts on this untapped talent pool. You never know what might come of it!

We'd love to hear from you. Let us know whether your organization is focusing its recruitment efforts on rehiring former team members or if this is a new idea. There is nothing illegal about calling a departed employee and checking to see how they are liking their new employer and learning if the grass was greener.

Digital Body Language In The Hybrid Workplace

There is a new book out that many business leaders, HR professionals, and Supervisors will want to pay attention to. It is called [Digital Body Language](#), the author, Erica Dhawan, combines cutting edge research with engaging storytelling to decode the new signals and cues that have replaced traditional body language in our hybrid world.

She explains what digital body language is and why is it so important now that so many of us are in a hybrid work environment.

“Digital Body Language serves the same purpose as traditional body language does in our face-to-face conversations and is important for all of the same reasons. We rely on non-verbal body language cues to connect and build trust with one another—and those skills are even harder to translate across a screen”.

We now infuse digital body language, which are the cues and signals that make up the subtext of our online messages. In the hybrid office, our digital communication tools—emails, text messaging, Zoom—have the potential of creating widespread misunderstanding and anxiety. Our word choices, response times, video meeting styles, punctuations, and email signatures form impressions that can enhance or damage our work relationships with colleagues, bosses, and clients. In today’s digital world, building empathy and trust is no longer about what we say but how we say it with our digital body language.



The book references the four laws of digital body language.

“The four laws of digital body language are Value Visibly, Communicate Carefully, Collaborate Confidently, and Trust Totally.

“The first law, Value Visibly, is about being attentive and aware of others, while also communicating that ‘I understand you’ and ‘I appreciate you.’ In a digital setting, respect means honoring other people’s time and schedules and not canceling meetings at the last second or delaying your response to an email so long that people must chase you down. It means not using the mute button during a conference call to attend to five other things as someone is talking.”

“The second law, Communicate Carefully, involves making a continuous effort to minimize the risk for misunderstanding and misinterpretation by being as clear as possible in your words and digital body language. It means keeping employees and teams informed and up-to-date, and then checking in constantly to support their efforts. From realizing that a “brief” message is not

always a “clear” one, to eliminating tone-deaf language, to everything in between, communicating carefully restores the alignment lost to lack of clarity.”

“The third law, Collaborate Confidently, is about the freedom to take conscious risks while trusting that others will support your decisions. It involves prioritizing thoughtfulness while reducing groupthink behavior. This might mean allowing the remote member of a team to moderate a live meeting, creating a sense of inclusion, and also reducing the bias we tend to have toward in-person teammates. It could mean using the virtual chat in a video meeting to collect team opinions before calling on people with different ideas to speak up instead of listening to the loudest people who agree with one another first.”

“The fourth and final law, Trust Totally, means you have an open team culture, where everyone knows they’re listened to and where everyone can always ask one another for help. No one wastes time sweating the small stuff, where an ambiguously worded message or late-to-arrive response doesn’t automatically give rise to fear or anxiety and where we confidently assume everyone is on our side. A Trust Totally workplace environment only happens after the first three laws have been implemented, yielding the concept of 360-degree engagement.”



In her book Dhawan goes on to share what good digital body language looks like, in practice in our workplaces. “Reading carefully is the new listening and writing clearly is the new empathy. Before you send off that next email, pause and make sure that it is communicating the right message to the receiver. Every communication channel brings with it a set of underlying meanings and subtexts, so ask yourself if an email is the best way to convey the urgency and importance of the message or if a Slack or phone call would be a more efficient option.”

“When we type, we move at lightning speed, which costs us accuracy, clarity, and respect. While brevity can make a person appear important, it can also hurt your team and your business. Getting an ambiguous email means the recipient must spend time deciphering what it means, causing delays and potentially leading to costly mistakes. Proofreading emails before sending them to avoid making digital errors and if you don’t have time to give a thoughtful attention to an email, send a quick reply acknowledging you received the message and that you plan to get back to it at greater length as soon as possible.”

In a recent interview from Workplace Intelligence Dhawan was asked what does the future hold for digital communication and collaboration at work? She offered the following observation:

“As the future becomes increasingly digital and even the most conservative, long-lasting fields and businesses look to reinvent themselves virtually, it’s more crucial than ever to master a common digital body language in order to enable clarity, speed, and efficiency. When I was writing my book, I learned that understanding the nuances of digital body language doesn’t merely solve problems, but it also opens up deeper, better ways for all of us to relate to one another and foster a sense of inclusion and belonging. In the work environment, this reduces friction, limits bureaucracy, and flattens the differences across genders, generations, and cultures. Alleviating a widespread source of professional confusion and pain, we can access a much broader diversity of perspectives and ideas. By establishing clear digital body language norms, we can succeed in the modern workplace and build stronger trust, connection, and authenticity among our teams in the future.”



A word we have used at HR Answers is intentional - when working with others (especially supervising others) we need to be much more intentional in our communication and our interactions. The “old workplace” had much more “just in time” access for setting expectations and direction for where we need to be. Now, with hybrid workplaces and increased digital communication, we need to plan and execute an equally as beneficial outcome, if not improved. So, what can each of us do to be more intentional (and more observant) in our communications with others?

Oregon: Workplace Exposure To Excessive Heat

On June 15th, Oregon’s new heat exposure law and rules became active. If your organization is engaged in work that exposes employees to uncontrolled or unventilated heat, you will want to make sure you have reached compliance. Oregon Occupational Health and Safety has put together a number of resources to assist in reaching compliance which can be found at their [website](#). As a reminder the keys requirements are:

KEY REQUIREMENTS

Access to shade

Establish one or more shade areas when the heat index equals or exceeds 80 degrees Fahrenheit. Shade may be provided by natural or artificial means that do not expose employees to unsafe or unhealthy conditions and that do not discourage access or use.

Those performing “rest” or light” work, as defined by the rules, are exempt from the provisions for shade when the heat index is less than 90 degrees Fahrenheit.

Shade must:

- Be open to the air or have mechanical ventilation for cooling.
- Be located as close as practical to the areas where employees are working.
- Accommodate at least the number of employees on recovery, rest, or meal periods so they have room to sit.
- When an employee’s access to shade is not possible in a particular situation – during high winds or when an employee is walking through range land, for example – the employer must identify and implement cooling measures that provide equivalent protection to shade.

Drinking water

Other rules require water to be provided at all times, but the specific requirements for these rules are described below.

- Enough drinking water must be available so that each employee can consume 32 ounces per hour.
- Drinking water must be cool (66 to 77 degrees Fahrenheit) or cold (35 to 65 degrees Fahrenheit).
- Drinking water packaged as a consumer product and electrolyte-replenishing drinks that do not contain caffeine – sports drinks, for example – are acceptable substitutes, but should not completely replace the required water.
- Employers are not required to supply the entire quantity of drinking water for employees at the beginning of a shift; employers may begin the shift with smaller quantities of water if they have a procedure that ensures any water consumed during the shift will be replaced.
- Those performing “rest” or light” work, as defined by the rules, are exempt from the specific quantities of water when the heat index is less than 90 degrees Fahrenheit - but still required in other Oregon OSHA provisions.



Supervisor and Employee Training

By June 15, 2022, employers must ensure all employees – including new, supervisory, and nonsupervisory employees – are trained in the following topics, in a language they can readily

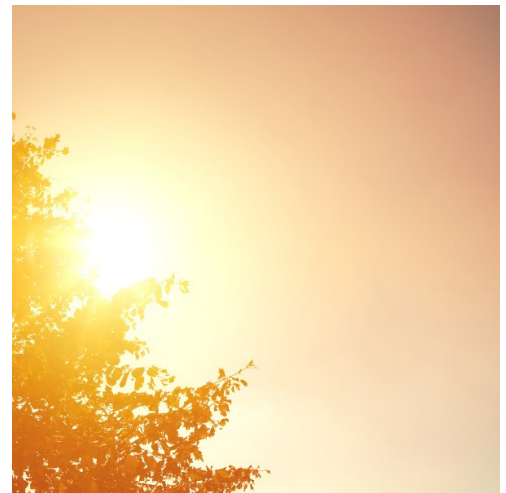
understand, before they begin work at sites where the heat index will be 80 degrees Fahrenheit or higher:

- The environmental and personal risk factors for heat illness, including the extra burden of heat caused by exertion, clothing, and personal protective equipment.
- The procedures for complying with the requirements of this standard, including the employer's responsibility to provide water, daily heat index information, shade, cool-down rests, how to report symptoms of heat-related illness, and access to first aid, as well as the employees' right to exercise their rights under this standard without fear of retaliation.
- How to adapt to working in a hot environment.
- The importance of employees immediately reporting symptoms or signs of heat illness – in co-workers or themselves.
- The effects of nonjob factors – such as medications, alcohol, and obesity – on tolerance to heat stress.
- The main types of heat-related illnesses – heat cramps, heat exhaustion, heat syncope, and heat stroke – and their signs and symptoms.
- The importance of frequent consumption of small quantities of water, up to 32 ounces per hour.
- Those performing “rest” or light” work, as defined by the rules, are exempt from the training requirements when the heat index is less than 90 degrees Fahrenheit.

High Heat Practices

When the heat index exceeds 90 degrees Fahrenheit, employers must implement the following additional high heat practices:

- Ensure that effective communication by voice, observation, or electronic means is maintained so that employees working at the site can contact a supervisor when necessary. Cellphones and text messaging may be used for this purpose only if reception in the area is reliable.
- Ensure that employees are monitored for signs of heat illness, and whether medical attention is necessary, using one or more of the following:
- Regular communication with employees working alone – by radio, cellphone, or other alternative means.



- A mandatory buddy system.
- Other equally effective means of observation or communication
- Designate and equip one or more employees at each site who can call for emergency medical
- Ensure that each employee takes heat illness prevention rest breaks, based upon one of the three options in the rules, regardless of the length of the shift.
- The rest break can take place with any other meal or rest period required by policy, rule, or law if the timing of the break coincides with the required meal or rest period.
- The preventive cool-down rest break is a work assignment.

Emergency Medical Plan

When the ambient temperature at a site exceeds the heat index of 80 degrees Fahrenheit, employers must implement an emergency medical plan that complies with 437-002-0161, Medical and first aid (agricultural employers must implement, per 437-004-1305(4)), and includes procedures for:

- Responding to employees' signs and symptoms of possible heat illness, including the use of first aid and how emergency medical services will be provided. If a supervisor observes or an employee reports signs or symptoms of heat illness, the supervisor must take immediate action appropriate to the severity of the illness.
- If a supervisor observes signs or an employee reports symptoms of heat illness, the employee must be relieved from duty and provided with a means to reduce body temperature.
- If the signs or symptoms indicate severe heat illness – such as decreased consciousness, staggering, vomiting, disorientation, irrational behavior, or convulsions – immediately implement the emergency response procedures.
- An employee exhibiting signs or symptoms of heat illness must be monitored and must not be left alone or sent home without being offered on-site first aid or provided with emergency medical services.



- Contacting emergency medical services and, if instructed to do so by medical professionals, transporting employees to a place where they can be reached by an emergency medical provider.
- Ensuring that clear and precise directions to the site are provided to emergency responders so they can quickly find the affected employee.

Acclimatization

Employers must develop effective acclimatization practices that allow employees to gradually adapt to working at sites where the ambient temperature heat exceeds the heat index of 80 degrees Fahrenheit. Employers may either develop their own acclimatization plan or follow guidance from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH).



Please note:

Washington's Department of Labor & Industries (L&I) opted to adopt similar emergency rules to what it did last year, which are effective **June 15, 2022** until September 29, 2022 and very similar to Oregon's rules.

For additional information you can also reference: [Infographic: Preventing Heat Illness - EHS Daily Advisor \(blr.com\)](#)

Are You A Federal Contractor? Keep Reading... Did You Certify Your AAP? Keep Reading...

If you're not sure, you need to find out. [Certain types](#) of Federal Contractors are required to submit and certify their required written Affirmative Action Plan(s). This is a new requirement and the first certification deadline just passed on June 30, 2022. As long as you maintain a qualifying contract, you will be required to re-certify each year. If you have missed the deadline, your organization will go on the "short list" (which may not be so short) for evaluation. So, if you haven't developed those plans, make haste, and get the work accomplished. If you need help, please call for HR Answers for an estimate.

OFCCP has authority under three laws: Executive Order 11246, as amended; the Vietnam Era

Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, as amended; and Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. Related to these laws, OFCCP holds those who do business with the federal government responsible for complying with the legal requirement to take affirmative action and not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, national origin, disability, or status as a protected veteran. In addition, contractors and subcontractors (hereinafter referred to collectively as "contractors") are prohibited from discharging or otherwise discriminating against applicants or employees who inquire about, discuss or disclose their compensation or that of others, subject to certain limitations.

You might be asking "Why?" The OFCCP has developed this registration and certification process to increase contractor compliance with the regulatory efforts to protect workers, promote diversity, and enforce the law.

More information can be found at [Contractor Portal Frequently Asked Questions | U.S. Department of Labor \(dol.gov\)](https://www.dol.gov/eis/whd/ofccp/contractor-portal-frequently-asked-questions)

Money Left In Your Budget?

For many of you the process of budgeting is approaching. At HR Answers we can help you with many of your targeted HR projects and we hope you will think of us as a resource to assist you with your 2023 planning...we can make your life a little easier.

Now it is possible that some of you still have some budget money left over or not earmarked yet. We encourage you to invest in your people. Opportunities for growth and development is ALWAYS a good ROI for the business and may even serve as a retention tool.

We all know someone who is fabulous technically does not make them a good supervisor. A key question is "Are they good with people?" Just because someone has management experience doesn't always mean they are a good manager. No matter their experience level, all managers require the support of their leaders and a foundational structure to help guide their teams successfully.

Without the right skills, training, and structure, your people are halted from developing into effective full performers. So, we want to share with you some upcoming programs that might be



just the ticket to helping you or some of your employees for what is “next” on the development timeline. Upcoming programs include Employee Opinion Surveys, Recognizing Bias, Emotional Safety, Documentation, Empowerment, HR for Non-HR, Employee Appreciation, Accountability, Emotional Intelligence, Bullying, Handbooks and our very popular Supervisory Success Series is back beginning in late August (and we are already half-full). Click [here](#) to view our events calendar.

Every month we receive phone calls and emails with the question “Can your programs be delivered on-site with us?” The answer is ALWAYS “YES”. Anything we offer can be delivered on your site. Just let us know what you need, we are happy to come to you and to help.



client accolades

CONGRATULATIONS to [Independent Electrical Contractors](#) (IEC) on its successful First Annual Women in the Electrical Trades Event. This event had been a labor of love for the association. They persevered for two years during the pandemic to make this event a reality – their passion shows. One of their goals is to introduce and support women in the trades. They invited several of their partners to participate in the event. HR Answers was pleased to join along with [Milwaukee Tool](#), [Dovetail Workwear](#), and [SAIF](#). Some terrific conversations and networking took place. We look forward to next year's event. Keep up the good work!!!

HATS OFF to the following organizations being recognized by the [Daily Journal of Commerce Project of the Year](#). Every year they honor and recognize the construction industry for their building creations and renovation projects. Their buildings are in the Arts and Culture arena, Health Care, Industrial, Manufacturing, Multifamily, Office, Infrastructure and Telecom, Recreation, Education, Transportation, Hospitality and Public spaces. We are thrilled so many of our clients and their projects made the list.

Organizations Recognized:

SKANSKA USA Building
Todd Construction
LMC Construction
Walsh Construction
Tapani Inc.
R&H Construction

Projects of the Awarded:

Patricia Reser Center for the Arts
Port of Portland
Oregon State University

Sponsors of the Event Included:

LMC Construction
AGC's Oregon Columbia Chapter

To see the complete list of the winners and their projects, visit the Daily Journal of Commerce website [here](#).



Every summer, thousands of people are injured, get food poisoning, or drown while on vacation. To make sure your workers and their loved ones stay safe and healthy this summer, SafeStart has developed free summer safety training resources including PowerPoint slides for your safety committee, employee/family handouts, an educational video, and a children's activity book.

Summer Safety – SafeStart

Yes, the month of June just passed, and it is known as the Safety Awareness Month, however every day, week, and month is safety awareness time because we want our employees to go home at the end of their day in the same condition they showed up, or better.

You'll want to take a listen to this 30-minute conversation on drug testing. On episode 113 of EHS On Tap, Bill Current, president and founder of Current Consulting Group and a consultant with OraSure Technologies, talks about how drug testing impacts workplace safety.

Bill Current is the author of *"Why Drug Testing: Updated and Expanded for 2020,"* as well as nine other books on substance-related issues. He founded the Current Consulting Group in 1998 and it has become the number one recognized brand name in compliance, business development, and operations consulting in the drug testing industry. He created Current Compliance, the only comprehensive online subscription database on all state laws related to workplace drug testing, including marijuana and workers' compensation laws.

[EHS On Tap: E113 The Evolution of Drug Testing and Workplace Safety - EHS Daily Advisor \(blr.com\)](#)



whatever the question

There continues to be an ongoing saga of employers hoping, wishing, and praying their employees do not talk about their compensation with fellow coworkers. And yet we know, under the law, we cannot restrict our employees from having those conversations because it would have a chilling effect. The employer cannot prohibit its employees from disclosing their own salaries, benefits, or other compensation. This may be a scenario that never goes away. However, the question persists.

Q. Is there any idea of how to slow down the salary/wages conversation from spreading out everywhere in the organization? I understand the main reason to keep salary information to yourself is because varying levels of experience and skill make people pay different even with similar job descriptions, and even harder for HR Team to argue with everyone else. I know it is employee's right to talk about their pay information, but it can also spread discontent in others. The company is not ready for culture change or even getting a better pay structure due to being a new start-up business. Any ideas would really be appreciated and might help the HR team do better.

A. Any action the employer takes to suppress employees' [Section 7&8 rights of the National Labor Relations Act](#) is an unfair labor practice and could result in fines or penalties. [Examples of these activities are here](#). The best action you can take is a well-structured fair and transparent compensation policy and process. Also, remember the National Labor Relations Act reaches beyond unionized employers and employees. We are all required to participate in compliance with the regulations.

Is there a question you would like us to answer?

Email the question to info@hranswers.com and include the subject “newsletter question”. We will publish the answer in our next issue.



hr by the numbers

A recent [Gallup and Workhuman joint study](#) found employees who received the right amount of recognition were 70% less likely to be burned out and 56% less likely to be looking or watching for job opportunities.



SHRM put out some research in 2021 from their report [The Cost of Radical Injustice Report](#).

14% of US workers felt they were treated unfairly in the workplace due to their race or ethnicity in the past year. Of that group, here are the percentages of workers across racial lines who felt that way:

- 34%** Black
- 17%** Asian
- 16%** Hispanic Latino
- 8%** White



SHRM also had a 2021 workplace culture supplemental research report showing that 46% of Black workers don't feel respected and valued at work.

If you are a SHRM member there are resources for members only to aid you in your DE&I actions. They have a [toolbox for your reference](#).



When it comes to working remotely there are some new numbers to share. The Becker Friedman Institute for Economics at the University of Chicago surveyed 10,000 employees in 2021 and found that 9 billion hours of commuting time was saved between March and September 2020.

Future Forum surveyed 10,569 employees worldwide in 2022 and found:

- Executives who work remotely are 3x more likely than employees to prefer returning to the office full-time.
- 76% of employees want flexibility where they work and 93% want flexibility when they work.

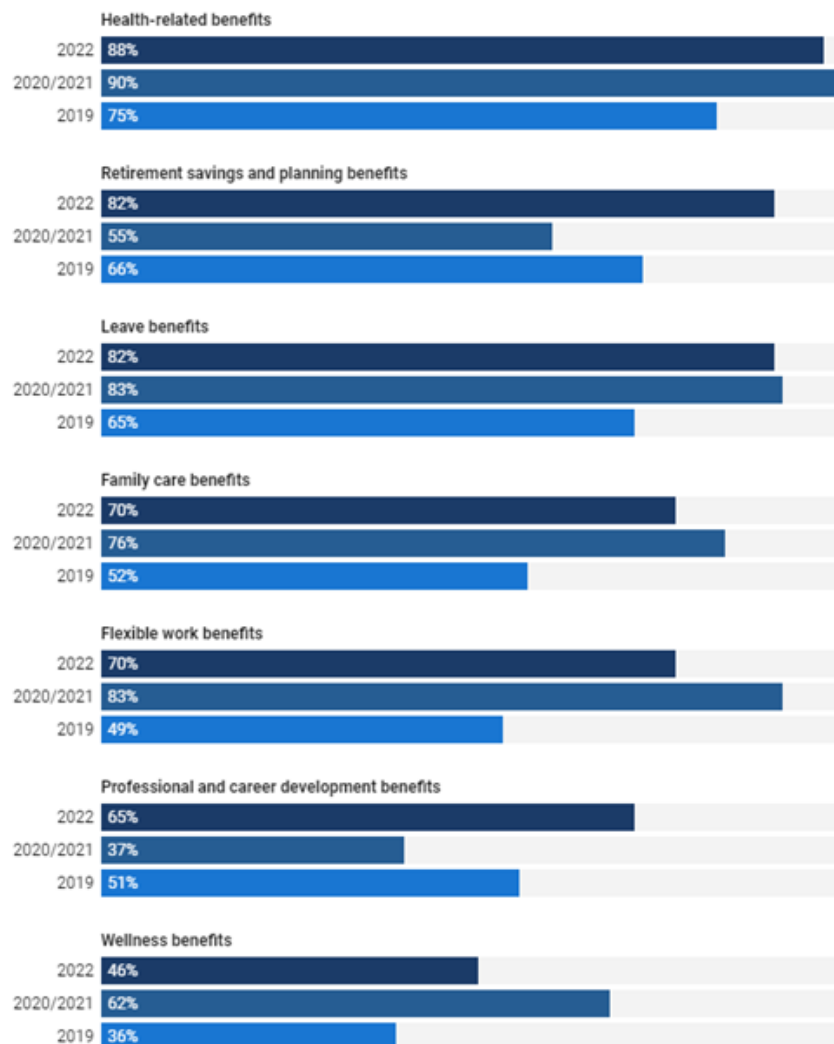
Global Workplace Analytics estimates that employers can save over \$11,000 per year per employee when they work remotely. This comes from lowered cost of office space, increased productivity, reduced absenteeism, and less turnover.



hr by the numbers

SHRM's 2022 Employee Benefits Survey was released last month. Below are some of the results collected from 3,129 HR professionals at organizations across all sizes, industries and sectors and based on ranked importance of top benefits categories.

Percentages represent those who selected Very or Extremely Important.



Source: 2022 Employee Benefits Survey (SHRM, June 2022) and SHRM Employee Benefits surveys from prior years. Created with Datawrapper



hr by the numbers

TOP REMOTE-WORK CHALLENGES

CEOs and CHROs are in widespread agreement about the biggest talent management challenges posed by remote work.



Source: Chief Executive and SHRM, 2021.



thoughts to think about

"If we all did the things we were capable of doing, we would literally astound ourselves." ~ Thomas Edison

"If I believe I cannot do something, it makes me incapable of doing it. But when I believe I can, then I acquire the ability to do it, even if I did not have the ability in the beginning." ~ Mahatma Gandhi

"Personally, I'm always ready to learn, although I do not always like being taught."
~ Winston Churchill

"People are not lazy. They simply have important goals - that is, goals that do not inspire them." ~ Anthony Robbins

"Tell me, and I will forget, show me, and I may remember; but involve me, and I'll remember." ~ American Proverb

calendar of events



06 HR Lunch Bunch: Employee Retention with Enhanced Benefit Options



07 Professional Practices: Employee Handbook – Your Guide to Consistency



13 Professional Practices: Conducting Employee Opinion Surveys



14 Emotional Safety in the Workplace



20 Bias: Recognizing it in Your Workplace



20 HR for the Non-HR Person (4-part series)



21 Professional Practices: HR Records Management

28 Essential Skills: Empowerment

REGISTER

Supervisory Success Series

Registration Now Open for
Fall Series | Begins August 25th

REGISTER

GET YOUR
SPOT TODAY



calendar of events



03 HR Lunch Bunch: Leveraging Turnover

05 Supervisory Short: Documentation Tips



09 Professional Practices: Auditing Oregon Pay Equity

10 The Power of Appreciation

16 Turning Lemons into the Watermelon Credo

18 Essential Skills: Emotional Intelligence

25 Success for Beginning Supervisor (Series) Starts!



02 Supervisory Short: 1-on-1 Employee Conversations



14 Professional Practices: Job Descriptions - A Valuable Resource in Risk Mitigation and Compliance



15 Defining Workplace Culture

20 Essential Skills: Conflict Resolution for Leaders



21 Professional Practices: Corrective Action

[REGISTER](#)

on my soapbox

Ordinarily, parents want to provide a better life for their children than they had. It is one of the strongest parental goals. I can't help wondering what our kids and grandkids are thinking of the world they will inherit. Ordinarily, kids want to grow up faster, be an adult, and have all that freedom they think adults have. (Those of us who are adults, know that supposed "freedom" is illusory.) If the kids were as smart as they say they are, they would want to slow that down. Think about it...



- two and a half years of a pandemic and the loss of more than a million people;
- a continuing Presidential scandal;
- retirement funds being washed away due to our current economic conditions;
- a battle about the role of guns in our society given the number of mass shootings we are experiencing;
- worry over a Supreme Court ruling overturning a 50-year precedent;
- a continuing battle with drugs that are killing our children;
- a homeless crisis that is challenging our cities;
- a war between Russia and Ukraine that threatens the stability of Europe, maybe the world;
- North Korea rattling sabers again with their missile launches; and,
- protests that all too often resemble a group bent on rioting as opposed to peaceful assembly.

When I was growing up, there were more opportunities to shelter children if parents thought there was something kids shouldn't see or hear. They usually controlled the radio and typically there was usually one TV that could be turned off by a parent. Today with six-year-olds having their own phones and TVs in their rooms, it is hard to monitor what they are viewing. But those aren't the major issue, social media is. Now, before everyone jumps to suggest six-year-olds are not checking out the daily news, I agree, but we really don't know what they see and much of it can be disturbing or inappropriate. I am suggesting that they are more worldly than previous children.

Today's world is even more anxiety-producing for adults. Interviews suggest that there is a larger population of people struggling with depression. The suicide rate is climbing. There is a plague of accidental suicides of our teens because of deadly drugs. There are no easy answers to any of the above. Even the above average person can't solve these. All that can be done by

any of us is to try to ensure that we don't contribute to these or any other society ills in our little corner of the world. We can try to set an appropriate example for our kids.

Each of us can take responsibility to make certain our behavior and thinking leans to the positive. We can avoid the negative. (There is song lyrics in there somewhere.) But it is serious business. People like others that make them feel good or affirmed. We aren't so fond of people who have a negative approach to life. It has long been known that if we smile at others, they will react positively. Roy Bennett said it this way:

"Be the reason someone smiles. Be the reason someone feels loved and believes in the goodness of people."

And Zeenat Merchant Syal said it this way:

"The lesser you respond to the negative people around you, the more peaceful your life becomes."

Smiling is not hard. But finding joy and a cheerful mindset each day is. But it pays so many dividends. It is so worth it. Just look at what difference it makes in our lives:

- Increased life span
- Lower rates of depression
- Lower levels of distress and pain
- Greater resistance to illnesses
- Better psychological and physical well-being
- Better cardiovascular health and reduced risk of death from cardiovascular disease and stroke
- Reduced risk of death from cancer
- Reduced risk of death from respiratory conditions
- Reduced risk of death from infections
- Better coping skills during hardships and times of stress

I share this because somedays I find it hard to remain positive. I have some personal challenges in addition to the conditions all of us are experiencing. Some days it feels like a heavy lift. I try to remember to smile as one of my first actions each day. Often smiling amuses me so I am already of the plus side for the day. I offer this simple activity as a road to being more positive and optimistic. If your habits have been more negative, there won't be a change overnight. But if you keep smiling you will feel better, and those around you will respond with their own smiles. Imagine the reaction from the children in your life. If they hear your griping and grumbling. They

can only worry and be concerned. But if you approach them in a positive manner, they will learn not to worry so much. If we demonstrate problem-solving, so will they. If we demonstrate the ability to cope with challenges, so will they. It is at least a two-fer...being positive for ourselves is a good thing, and it is a good thing to share with others. A smile is a simple thing; and it is contagious!!

Judy Clark, Principal and Founder

To see more of Judy's writing and read the history of HRA Answers, [visit our website](#).

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