



advantage



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HR Emails High On Phishing Attacks

By Eric Wilson

A press release issued by [KnowBe4](#), (the world's largest provider of security awareness training and simulated phishing platform) announced the results of its second quarter 2023 top-clicked phishing report. The results were quite shocking and republished on many noted news feeds. Their findings provide a cautionary note that we wanted to pass on to our clients, especially with the probability of increased emails that you may be sending around year-end and benefits enrollment times.

Phishing emails remain one of the most common malicious attacks. Cyber criminals focus on trends and methodologies that improve the probability of an errant click getting them the data and revenues they are seeking. The result of this report noted that the top email subjects and content that resulted in errant clicks to take place were HR related ones.

Stu Sjouerman, CEO, KnowBe4 reported, ***“The trend of phishing emails revealed...50% of these emails appear to come from HR...These disguised emails take advantage of employee trust and typically incite action that can result in disastrous outcomes for the entire organization.”***

This is important both because employees seem to be responsive to this category of email and also that cyber criminals will probably step up the targeting utilizing this vulnerability.

What is phishing and why does that matter to me? In summary, as Microsoft offers, “Phishing attacks come from scammers disguised as trustworthy sources and can facilitate access to all types of sensitive data.”

Here are some of the “categories” of Phish in the “virtual sea”:

- Email Phishing: the most common form which uses phony hyperlinks to take the target to seemingly valid destinations which actually starts the “clicker” on the nefarious hacker’s path.
- Malware Phishing: another common attack where malware is included as an attachment to a trusted email, activated with its click or opening.
- Spear Phishing: a very targeted attack that utilizes detailed information regarding the individual lowering their guard as a result of the degree of specificity. Consider the potential



additional risk of this being incorporated into all phishing attempts, with the continued enhancement of AI technology.

- Whaling: when the individual or individuals that are targeted are organizational leaders with credentials that allow for deep penetration into the organization's systems this is known as whaling.
- Smishing: the combination of the acronym SMS and phishing where a text message is leveraged and again will be identified as though coming from a trusted source.
- Vishing: where the attacks are instigated through call-center efforts, scamming individuals into accessing and installing malware, manipulating the unwary individual.
- Quishing: phishing attack that uses the "QR" (quick response) code, directing recipients to a malicious website location. QR code redirections can sometimes circumvent email system protections.

What are you to do to protect your employees and organization from this real, and potentially escalating risk? We suspect that getting rid of all technology and no longer using email or SMS messaging is not realistic. **The first suggestion is to make people aware that the risk exists so that they can be sensitive and therefore less likely to fall prey to a phishing excursion.**



Beyond that, here are other suggestions from various sources on the web:

Organizationally consider:

- Mandating a strong spam/virus filter at the end user level and at the server for the organization as a whole
 - Install and mandate multifactor authentication
 - Educate the workforce as to the protocols, risks, and reasons behind them
 - Include identification when emails are received from outside of the organization
- Develop appropriate internal support with notification protocols for individuals to investigate and address potential phishing scams
 - Make it easy for employees to report and investigate potential systems and phishing concerns through an individual, internal department or contracted service provider
 - Apply software updates and patches in an aggressive cadence

- Block IP addresses, domain names and file types from being accessible through your systems
- Reduce the amount of personal information you post online for the global audience to have access to. The more specific the information available the more credibility the recipient of the phishing attack will perceive from the attacker
- Consider implementing internal phishing simulations to enhance employee understanding and allowing them to detect and avoid phishing attacks in a safe environment
- Perform regular backups of information to allow for recovery when a malicious attack occurs (this will minimize the degree of frustration felt when such an attack does occur).

Each individual should:

- Not trust the display name as the name may not match the sender
- Check for typos, spelling mistakes, poor grammar. and words that are composed with spaces between the letters are often found in phishing emails
- Hover before you click. With many emails and browser links hovering your mouse over will show the destination which may in fact be different from what is presented visually prior to offering.
- Avoid sending sensitive information over emails and texts
- Be wary of fake unsubscribe messages and links
- Block pop-ups
- Use a firewall
- Go with your gut. If you feel something's not right assume that you are correct, and it isn't
- Evaluate. If you do not recognize the name or person, you're not expecting a shipment or not expecting the email, do not respond



With the growth of AI technology, we can only believe that the challenges with regard to “mass personalization” of phishing attempts will increase. With year-end employee communications, benefit enrollment season for many, and the clear “vulnerability” caused by employee “trust” in clicking HR-related email communications – we must **inform** and **be vigilant**.

We hope this information is valuable to you ... or maybe just friendly reminders. There are benefits associated with the growing capabilities in technology...there are also growing risks to be aware of in its use.

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Nonqualified Deferred Compensation Plans

A nonqualified deferred compensation (NQDC) plan is an arrangement between an employer and one or more employees to defer the receipt of currently earned compensation. You might want to establish an NQDC plan to provide your employees with benefits in addition to those provided under your qualified retirement plan, or to provide benefits to particular employees without the expense of a qualified plan.



NQDC Plans vs. Qualified Plans

A qualified plan, such as a profit-sharing plan or a 401 (k) plan, can be a valuable employee benefit. A qualified plan provides the employer with an immediate income tax deduction for the amount of money they contribute to the plan, while employees aren't required to pay income tax on your contributions until those amounts are distributed from the plan. However, a qualified plan must comply with strict and complex ERISA and IRS rules, and the plan must generally cover a large percentage of your employees.

In contrast, NQDC plans can be structured to provide the benefit of tax deferral while avoiding most ERISA requirements, with no annual dollar limits and no requirement to cover the rank-and-file along with highly compensated employees.

Funded vs. Unfunded NQDC Plans

NQDC plans fall into two broad categories — funded and unfunded. An NQDC plan is considered funded if you have irrevocably and unconditionally set aside assets with a third party (e.g., in a trust or escrow account) for the payment of NQDC plan benefits, and those assets are beyond the reach of both you and your creditors. In other words, if participants are guaranteed to receive their benefits under the NQDC plan, the plan is considered funded. These plans provide employees with maximum security that their benefits will be paid. Funded plans are rare, though, because they provide only limited opportunity for tax deferral and may be subject to all ERISA requirements.

Unfunded plans are far more common, because they can provide the benefit of tax deferral while avoiding most ERISA requirements. With an unfunded plan, you don't formally set aside assets to pay plan benefits. Instead, you either pay plan benefits out of current cash flow ("pay-as-you-go") or you earmark property to pay plan benefits ("informal funding"), with the property remaining part of your general assets and subject to the claims of your general creditors. In order to achieve the dual goals of tax deferral and avoidance of ERISA, your NQDC plan must be both unfunded and maintained solely for a select group of management or highly compensated employees. These unfunded NQDC plans are commonly referred to as "top-hat" plans.

Income Tax Considerations

Generally, you can't take a tax deduction for amounts you contribute to an NQDC plan until your participating employees are taxed on those contributions (which can be years after your contributions have been made to the plan). Additionally, employees generally don't include your contributions to an unfunded NQDC plan (or plan earnings) in their taxable income until payments are actually received from the NQDC plan.



The taxation of funded NQDC plans is more complex. In general, your employees must include your contributions in taxable income as soon as they become nonforfeitable (i.e., as soon as they vest). The taxation of plan earnings depends on the structure of the plan; in some cases, employees must include earnings in current taxable income as accrued, and in some cases, earnings aren't taxed until they're actually paid from the plan.

Who Can Adopt an NQDC Plan?

Most NQDC plans are adopted by regular (C) corporations. In S corporations or unincorporated entities (partnerships or proprietorships), business owners generally can't defer taxes on their shares of business income. However, S corporations and unincorporated businesses can adopt NQDC plans solely for regular employees who have no ownership in the business.

NQDC plans are most suitable for employers that are financially sound and have a reasonable expectation of continuing profitable business operations in the future. In addition, since NQDC plans are more affordable to implement than qualified plans, they can be an attractive form of employee compensation for a growing business that has limited cash resources.

How to Implement an NQDC Plan

NQDC plans have many options for customization, which can make them complex to establish. They should be established and implemented under the combined guidance of an ERISA

attorney and third-party administrator. If you think an NQDC plan may be a good fit for your company's needs, email us at newsletter@thecommmco.com to begin the conversation.

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Fostering Psychological Safety and Cultivating Stronger Workplace Bonds

In the current hustle and bustle of the professional workplace, where individuals spend the majority of their waking hours, the significance of cultivating a positive work culture is becoming increasingly important to leaders. An essential facet of culture is psychological safety – an environment in which individuals feel at ease expressing their thoughts, ideas, and emotions without the looming dread of backlash or criticism.

Leaders who champion psychological safety are instrumental in encouraging trust, fostering collaboration, and elevating productivity. We recently delivered a program on psychological safety and shared the value of adopting a human-centered leadership approach for nurturing employees and a flourishing workplace culture. Here are several leadership practices that can effectively foster psychological safety within your organizational landscape.



Embrace Ongoing Dialogue

Refusing to engage can inadvertently ostracize. Such behavior can amplify anxiety and detachment within your team. Rather than bluntly declaring, "I'd rather not discuss this," consider an alternative approach such as: "I'm feeling a bit overwhelmed at the moment and not quite sure how to respond. Could we revisit this conversation in about an hour?" This acknowledges your emotional state while conveying your genuine interest in the conversation, allowing both you and the other party time to manage your emotions and engage constructively. This is using your emotional intelligence and being wise with both sets of emotions.

Nurture Emotional Equilibrium

Emotions wield tremendous velocity and potency. Their influence on team dynamics can be transformative, for better or worse. A grasp of your team's emotional level empowers you to cope with and regain your own emotional balance.

Swap a reactive retort like, "What kind of question is that? Are you insinuating my competence?" with a reflective response: "Your comment has left me feeling disheartened. It seems to suggest I might lack proficiency." Addressing your discomfort promptly preemptively curtails the accumulation of resentment and mistrust within your interpersonal relationships.

Acknowledge Sensitivity

Friction frequently arises when fundamental attachment needs are disregarded. Ignoring these "causes" creates distance and sparks a cycle of negativity. Self-awareness regarding your emotional triggers, sensitivities, and apprehensions is important. This understanding empowers you to foster safety during interactions.

Instead of avoiding or dismissing your feelings, strive to identify them, name them. Share your own vulnerabilities while validating the sensitivities of others. Normalizing the presence of these sensitivities acknowledges emotions.

Prioritize Relationship Dynamics

Strong and secure relationships are the bedrock of motivation, engagement, and efficiency. Strengthening your sensitivity to emotional nuances within yourself and others empowers you to empathize and comprehend the challenges faced by all parties involved. Focusing on strengthening the relationship, not just the content of discussion, reestablishes connection and provides a solid foundation for resolving the issues at hand.

By pivoting your focus, you reshape the course of interaction.



Embrace Vulnerability

Vulnerability is not easy for everyone. Making mistakes, ill-chosen words, and poor decisions do occur in most work environments. Concealing these occurrences not only isolates you but also intensifies feelings of solitude. Emotional isolation induces distress. Rather than succumbing to the urge to mask vulnerabilities, strive for openness regarding your emotions. This approach tends to draw others closer and encourages dialogues that facilitates comprehensive learning for all.

Slow Down the Conversation

The art of communication significantly shapes the tenor of relationships. Engaging in rapid, uninterrupted speech can be overwhelming and hinder true engagement. By being attentive to the pauses in conversation, you can alleviate anxiety and bolster participation.

Cultivating the skill of slowing down requires patience and practice. A productive starting point involves heightened awareness of the emotional undercurrents within the conversation.

Render Indirect Matters Specific

Feeling connected to colleagues spurs engagement, productivity, and a collaborative spirit in the workplace. Our most basic human desires are to be connected, to have a sense of belonging and be valued by others.



Making sure these elements are happening increases the connection and the safety inherent within relationships and reinforces the culture we are wanting. For instance, having meetings where we acknowledge individuals by name, reiterating your genuine interest in their contributions to the organization, and expressing your sincere gratitude for them as individuals.

Leaders who commit to making these actions habits will nurture safety in relationships inspiring those around them to communicate openly and frequently, thereby establishing a robust foundation for a culture characterized by engagement and unity.

Workers Pursue Self-Improvement Despite Employer Training Offerings

In response to dissatisfaction with employers' training programs, employees are taking the initiative to enhance their skills outside of working hours, according to recent research conducted by [ManpowerGroup](#). With the job market gradually tightening and becoming more competitive, workers are diligently seeking ways to gain an edge.

Beyond Work Hours

ManpowerGroup's [2023 Workplace Trends Report](#) reveals that 57% of employees are actively engaging in external training endeavors. These individuals largely perceive company-sponsored training initiatives as inadequate in furnishing them with pertinent skills, aiding their career progression, or bolstering their competitiveness within the job market.

Training programs offered within an organization often target specific job functions, such as on-the-job training. However, for skill enhancement, employees frequently need to seek certifications externally or return to educational institutions. Many organizations are deficient in robust programs for this purpose.

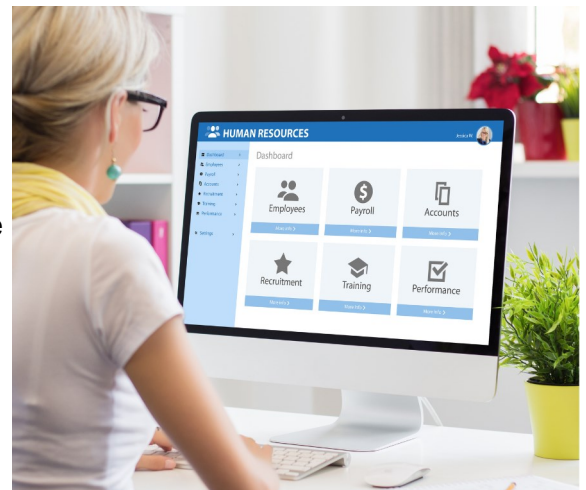
The report further reveals that employees exhibit a greater inclination towards acquiring new skills and broadening their experiences rather than merely striving for career advancement. Some even opt for lateral transitions that offer greater personal fulfillment and increased adaptability.

Power Dynamics and Employee Motivation

In addition to the inadequacies in training provisions, employees feel employers are doing little to boost employee morale. The survey conducted by ManpowerGroup reveals that 66% of employees believe employers hold the power to determine where and when they work. Nearly half (48%) express their tendency to overwork weekly, while almost a third (29%) wish their managers would exhibit a greater understanding of the effort required to complete tasks.

Addressing Regret and the Significance of Upskilling

A trend that has emboldened employers is workers expressing remorse about departing from their former positions. A recent study by [Paychex](#) revealed that 80% of workers regretted leaving their jobs in 2021, with around 70% of them making attempts to rejoin their previous workplaces. Many employees regret their decision to leave their prior roles after realizing they lacked the skills required for their new positions. According to one expert "People initially believed they could transition smoothly to any job, but they're not acquiring new skills or growing within their organizations. Consequently, their resumes display a series of short-lived tenures. Subsequently, when they seek to progress, potential employers view their resumes skeptically, which diminishes their prospects."



The principal significance of upskilling should not be underestimated. A survey conducted by Great Learning, a professional learning platform, revealed that 43% of workers in India experienced career advancement through upskilling. Furthermore, 23% managed to pivot into different domains, and 18% secured entirely new job roles.

Boosting employee skills and continuous learning (in all its forms) needs to be a focus now and as you enter 2024 and beyond. There is a skills gap in the U.S. In the past there was talk that skills gained a decade ago might not prove beneficial in today's workplace, however, we're rapidly approaching a point where skills acquired more than a year ago could become obsolete. The scenario might not be about ambitious individuals seeking career advancement but rather providing indispensable tools for all employees aiming to retain their positions and continue to be productive. As of June 2021, U.S. workers gained an additional 8.6% in annual income, or an average of \$8,000, after participating in upskilling programs. This seems like a win-win formula.

Emotional Wellness: Five Ways To Have A Great Day

How you see the world determines the world you see. That's why it's especially important to start each day with a positive perspective. Remember...positivity is like a muscle, the more we exercise it the stronger it gets.

Attack Today with Enthusiasm - If you want an exciting life, get excited about life. Many of us wake up and just go through the motions. Our lives become routine. It doesn't have to be like that. Remember your WHY today. We don't get burned out because of what we do. We get burned out because we forget why we do it.



Stay Positive - Instead of focusing on your problems, focus on your purpose. Instead of seeing yourself as a victim, see yourself as a hero. Heroes and victims both get knocked down, but heroes get back up, and armed with optimism and a greater purpose they create a positive future.

Be Thankful - When you are grateful for the things in your life, big and small, you always seem to find more things to be grateful for.

Replace "Have to" with "Get To" - Live life as a gift, not an obligation. We GET TO, we don't HAVE TO. This simple shift can have a dramatic impact.

Be a Blessing to Others - We are blessed to be a blessing. This doesn't have anything to do with material things (although it can). It's about loving, serving, and caring. It's about choosing to make a difference in the lives of others each and every day.

Second Wellness Note and Gentle Reminder - Please continue to use caution and use good judgement! According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) we are experiencing a small uptick in COVID. The amount of coronavirus being detected in wastewater, the percentage of people testing positive for the virus, and the number of people seeking care for COVID-19 at emergency rooms all started increasing in early July.

With school starting in the Fall and the weather turning cooler (hard to believe) more and more individuals will be gathering together and in closer proximity. While Oregon and Washington are not hot spots at all for the uptick, we all can do our part to maintain that status. Please take care of yourself – we care!

There will be a release of an updated booster, which federal health officials have said is expected around late September or early October. This new booster will target the XBB offshoots of Omicron, which are the now-dominant strains.



client accolades

We would like to congratulate Natalie Heacock, CFO of [Patrick Lumber](#) for being included on the [Portland Business Journal's 40 under 40 List!](#)



hr links

Here are several links we thought you, our friendly readers and others would benefit from knowing about and learning more from.

EEOC Proposes Regulations for New Pregnant Worker Accommodation Law: 7 Key Takeaways for Employers to be Aware of.

<https://www.fisherphillips.com/en/news-insights/eec-proposes-regulations-new-pregnant-worker-accommodation.html>

Personal Debt, Stress, and the Workplace. Around 25 million Americans are behind on their credit card, auto loan or personal loan payments, according to a recent Moody's/Equifax data analysis.

The Federal Reserve of New York reported that credit card debt in the United States stood at \$986 billion in the first quarter of 2023. The implications to those who are responsible for this debt can be crushing. Not only is it challenging these individuals personally, but it is also hurting their ability to perform at work.

“Excessive financial stress caused by excessive debt will adversely affect attendance at work, performance at work, physical health, and will exacerbate the health insurance coverages,” according to Doug Lennick, CEO of Think2Perform.

Doug was on a podcast (season one of 12 Geniuses), where he talked about why developing emotional competence is important to developing financial competence. In the interview, Doug

also talked about how dangerous debt gets started, how to avoid it, and he shared his views on how to create a responsible financial framework.

As leaders within your organization, you may be faced with helping one of your people through the difficulties financial stress can cause. Doug's wisdom, experience, and advice might help you navigate that situation and give them tools to work with. In addition, a great reminder of the benefits of an organization providing resources to employees for financial education and planning for the future (bring in the experts). There is a correlation between money, health, and happiness. Let's prepare our employees for financial wellbeing (leading to emotional wellbeing). Listen to Doug's episode [here](#).

"Unlocking Success: A Comprehensive Guide on How to Secure an Internship"

As we are headed back into the school year some organizations are thinking about part-time internships. Help your applicants be successful by sharing these tips and tricks from [Intelligent.com](#).

In today's competitive job market, landing a fulfilling career often begins with the first step: securing an internship. It serves as an invaluable steppingstone that bridges the gap between classroom learning and real-world application. They offer hands-on experience, networking opportunities, and a chance to explore different industries. If you're eager to dive into the world of internships, Intelligent.com's resource on "[How to Get an Internship](#)" is your compass to navigate this transformative journey.

From crafting an impeccable application to mastering interviews and leveraging networking, this guide equips you with the tools you need to secure a transformative internship experience. Remember, an internship isn't just a steppingstone – it's a launchpad for your future career success. So, dive into the guidance provided by Intelligent.com and set yourself on the path to unlocking a world of opportunities.



whatever the question

As many of our readers know, we have a Hotline Service called the Advantage Plan – the Advantage of calling an HR expert. Many use the service because they truly do not know, and they need clarification on a compliance concern. Some employers need assistance walking through a situation and running a list of pros and cons of how to handle an employee issue. And then there are some who just need a sounding board and ask questions to ensure their understanding and make sure they are not missing anything. Whatever the question, we are here to help.

These questions recently came in and we want to share them with you.

Q: What is job abandonment, and how is it typically defined with employers?

A: Job abandonment refers to a situation where an employee fails to show up for work according to their scheduled shift and demonstrates no intention of returning to the job. Importantly, the employee does not communicate their intention to quit to the employer. This absence disrupts work operations and can create challenges for employers.

Q: How can employers address and manage instances of job abandonment?

A: Employers are advised to establish a clear policy that outlines the criteria for identifying job abandonment. While no federal law specifies the exact number of days, many states rely on case law or guidance from state unemployment agencies to define a reasonable time frame. Commonly, three to five full business days are considered reasonable. This period allows employers sufficient time to investigate the absence without unnecessarily holding a position open.

Q: Are all instances of no-call/no-show absences automatically considered cases of job abandonment?

A: Employers should exercise caution and not automatically assume that every instance of a no-call/no-show absence constitutes job abandonment. Sometimes, employees may face extenuating circumstances such as medical emergencies, incarceration, or personal crises that prevent them from communicating with their employer. Therefore, it's important for employers to establish investigation procedures. These procedures could involve attempts to contact the absent employee and sending a termination letter that explains the employer's position while inviting the employee to provide context or information that could potentially alter the employer's decision.

Q: What steps should employers take when addressing job abandonment cases?

A: Employers should follow established termination procedures thoroughly. This includes documenting the situation in the employee's file, specifying both the last day worked and the termination date. Employers must adhere to state requirements when issuing the final paycheck and provide relevant documents such as COBRA and insurance forms if applicable. The termination date may not align with the last day worked, as it depends on the organization's job-abandonment policy. In scenarios following a three-day rule, termination may occur at the end of the third business day or retroactively from the last day worked after the three-day period has elapsed. A well-defined policy ensures consistent handling of job-abandonment situations.

If you need any guidance in creating language for such a policy, feel free to give us a call. Of course, if you find that you have any HR-related questions, and you would like some help with it we are here to help!

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

Did you know that 85% of employees are experiencing conflict at work? According to CPP Global

- over a third (36%) spend a significant amount of time managing disputes
- Another third (29%) deal with conflict frequently
- 27% of employees have actually witnessed conflict morph into personal attacks
- And a quarter (25%) reported that avoiding conflict resulted in illness or taking time off from work

Workplace conflict is one of the most pressing issues for companies today, with serious consequences, significant costs, and damage to company culture.

According to the Harvard Business Review, 85% of executives agree that it's important for organizations to make workplace mental health a priority—but only 27% say their organization actually does. In this current economic climate, how can employers prioritize different benefits and leverage innovative strategies to improve the mental health and well-being of their employees?



Increased incidents of active shooters in our communities, extreme rises in temperature throughout the country, the ongoing threat of a pandemic, and the annual occurrences of wildfires, tornadoes, and floods raise the question, is your business prepared to address these natural or person-made disasters effectively?

According to [AlertMedia's 2023 State of Employee Safety Report](#), **84% of employees think their employers can do more to make them feel prepared to face emergencies at work.**

Employers can help to build employee confidence in their commitment to safety by taking actionable steps to prepare for and respond to emergencies, leading to a safer, more productive workplace for everyone.



The Gift of Time?

How are your meetings functioning? About 30% of meetings are deemed unnecessary by workers, according to a recent [report by Steven Rogelberg](#), a professor of organizational science

management at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, in partnership with software maker Otter.ai.

Nonmanagers spend an average of 13.7 hours in meetings a week, while supervisors with four or more direct reports spend an average of 22.2 hours of their week in meetings.

More than 80% of the 632 U.S. professionals, managers, directors, and executives surveyed said their productivity would improve if they could skip unnecessary meetings, and 70% said their job satisfaction would rise.

In addition, fewer meetings give employees more time to perform their tasks: 86% of those surveyed said they work more effectively when they have longer, uninterrupted periods of time.

Reducing the number of unnecessary meetings that employees attend also can save money. Organizations with 100 employees could save nearly \$2.5 million annually, according to research by Rogelberg.



From [Clear Company's](#) April 2023 Blog they share the following observations when it comes to a talent management plan to help with employee well-being, recognition and retention so employees can produce their best work.

- Just 29% of employees say they receive well-being support from their employer
- 69% of people who are unlikely to look for a new job say they find their work fulfilling
- 72% of employees prefer to work hybrid
- 35% of employees who quit said feeling uncared for was among their top three reasons for leaving
- In fact, most of the top reasons U.S. employees quit their jobs are related to their well-being. Other reasons included feeling disrespected at work (56%), a lack of flexibility around work hours (45%), and poor benefits (43%)
- Employees dealing with mental health challenges are four times more likely to want to quit
- More personal recognition would motivate 37% of employees to do better work more often



thoughts to think about

"Don't worry about failures, worry about the chances you miss when you don't even try." – Jack Canfield

"The pain you feel today is the strength you feel tomorrow. For every challenge encountered there is opportunity for growth." – Unknown

"Build your own dreams, or someone else will hire you to build theirs." – Farrah Gray

"The only thing that stands between you and your dream is the will to try and the belief that it is actually possible." – Joel Brown



"Self-confidence is the most attractive quality a person can have. How can anyone see how awesome you are if you can't see it yourself?" – Unknown

"We learn something from everyone who passes through our lives...Some lessons are painful, some are painless... but, all are priceless." – Unknown



"Being happy doesn't mean that everything is perfect. It means that you've decided to look beyond the imperfections." – Unknown

calendar of events



- 06** HR Lunch Bunch: Technology and AI - Is HR Ready to be an Organizational Change Agent?
-  **12** Professional Practices: Job Descriptions - A Valuable Resource in Risk Mitigation
- 15** Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Understanding Micro Aggressions and Micro Inequities
-  **27** Professional Practices: Corrective Action
- 27** HR: Party of One








- 04** HR Lunch Bunch: HR Records - Getting Them Back in Place
- 06** Supervisory Short: Safety and Wellness
-  **10** Professional Practices: Americans with Disabilities Act
- 11** Looking to Promote Internally for a Supervisor
- 18** Before You Say “Yes” to the Promotion
-  **24** Professional Practices: HR Compliance - What You Don’t Know Can Hurt You
- 25** Interviewing for Culture and Emotional Intelligence

[REGISTER](#)

calendar of events



- 01** HR Lunch Bunch: Wellness that Works
- 03** Supervisory Short: Blended Learning for Employees
- 07** Workplace Civility and Etiquette
-  **08** Diversity, Equity, Inclusion: Managing Generational Differences
-  **14** Professional Practices: Auditing Oregon Pay Equity
- 15** Coaching Essentials: People, Purpose, Passion
-  **16** Professional Practices: Employee Leaves
-  **28** Professional Practices: Internal Investigations
-  **29** C-Suite: How to Influence; How to Wow

[REGISTER](#)

Judy Clark Retirement Event

Please join us in celebrating Judy Clark's career and all that she has accomplished. The event will take place on November 3rd, 2023. Please add your email to the guest list so you don't miss any details!



[JOIN US](#)

on my soapbox

Given that I will be retiring at the end of this year, I want to share some of my favorite Soapboxes with you. I was delighted to write a bit about my Dad. The concept about being a builder was one that he spoke of often. So, when I ran into this poem, I instantly thought of Dad. I encourage you to read it out loud. It seems to be better that way. And my last request of you regarding this is to ask yourself what are you building?



*Isn't it strange that princes and kings
And clowns that caper in sawdust rings
And ordinary folks like you and me
Are builders of eternity?
To each is given a bag of tools,
An hourglass and a book of rules,
And each must build before life is flown
A stumbling block or a steppingstone.*

~Author Unknown

My father was an architect. As a small child he used to take me to work sites, and I had the opportunity to watch the evolution of his designs. I scampered over scaffolding, probably causing a missed heartbeat or two in the process. I collected the slugs from electrical boxes, and they became my "currency" long before I had real money to spend. I fancied myself an expert at being able to determine the purpose of rooms before the identifying plumbing and electrical fixtures were installed. I was proud of my Dad's role in building, and my role as his "assistant."

It wasn't until much later in life that I realized that each of us is a builder. Everyday each of us is engaged in "manual labor." Some build structures of strength and integrity, others build facades, while still others seem to concentrate on building hurdles. Most of us rarely think about being builders. We are busy with the activities and tasks that confront us. We live our lives enmeshed in "process" work. We create "to do lists" for both personal and professional lives and take great pride in crossing off the items on our lists. There is nothing wrong with that; in fact, it is an excellent time management tool. But our lives must be viewed in a larger sense.

Through each action, taken or not taken, we build for ourselves and others. It doesn't take much imagination to understand the role of adults in building the lives of children. It isn't a big stretch to envision how managers/supervisors build the work environment for their employees. What requires some thought is recognizing that through every interaction we build the world in which we live. If you have ever watched a child play with Lincoln Logs, Tinkertoys, or Legos, you know how much imagination is being demonstrated and how children work from an internal vision as they construct. It is unfortunate that as adults we can lose sight of that.

It is appropriate for each of us to consider what we are building. Are we building strong foundations for future generations? Are we building a better community for our needy or underserved populations? Are we building a positive model of professional and adult behavior that others can emulate? Are we building walls or obstacles that distance us from others? Do we lament our current conditions instead of problem-solving to correct our situation? Do the structures we build have enduring value, or are they temporary self-serving edifices?

Our thoughts and behaviors are the building materials. Our behaviors identify the type of building we do, and it can easily be seen by the people around us. If we are positively intentional about our building process, it will be said of us, "They built steppingstones wherever they went."

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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