

RETENTION HACK: UNDERSTANDING WORKER HABITS THAT DRIVE TURNOVER

In our study, *The Head and the Heart*, we looked at the job life cycle and concluded that the longer an assignment lasts, the less workers quit for practical reasons (the things their heads desire, like a good commute or better benefits) and the more they quit for emotional reasons (the things their hearts desire, like social inclusion or the ability to advance). (See Figure 1.) To complement that study, we recently took a look at how worker behavior changes over a lifetime. We'd be remiss if we didn't point out the majority of our assignments end successfully—but it's those unsuccessful ends that kept us up at night, sorting through spreadsheets and making improvements.

ACTIONS CHANGE OVER A LIFETIME

Rookie errors dwindle as the years pass, which paves the way for taking control of one's career. As our workers mature, quits outweigh involuntary terminations, rising steadily from a 50-50 split among 18-29 year-olds to a 57-43 split among the pre-retirement cohort. (See Figure 2.)

POOR DECISIONS DRIVE DEPARTURES FOR YOUNGER WORKERS

Nearly 1/3 of turnover among 18-29 year old workers happens because of attendance violations, a figure almost double that of more mature workers and three times higher than that of performance-related endings. Tons of qualified, younger workers lose jobs because they simply don't follow attendance policies or do not have a backup plan in place if unexpected circumstances arise. (See Figure 3.)

Additionally, younger workers abandon jobs more than older workers. Considered one of the most egregious offenses, ghosting renders many employees jobless and ineligible for rehire with Elwood and many of our clients—forever. (See Figure 4.)

BETTER JOB OPPORTUNITIES LURE MATURE WORKERS

The story brightens for folks who have had time to learn from the school of hard knocks, as they are more likely to be pursuing greener pastures when they leave a job—which we know, because they actually communicate with us when they quit! (See Figure 5.)

Figure 1

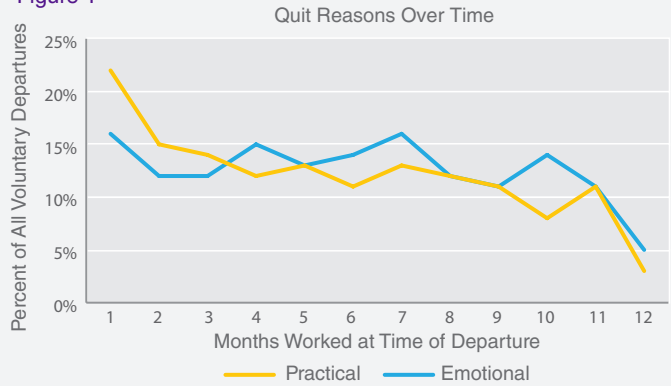


Figure 2

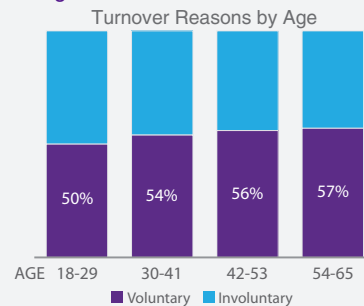


Figure 3

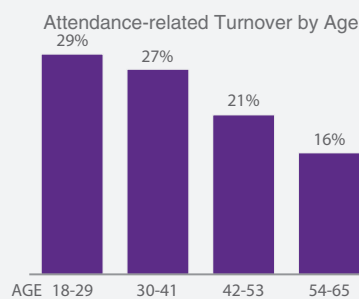


Figure 4

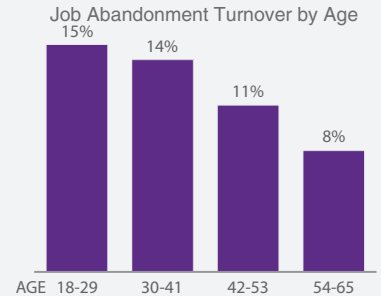
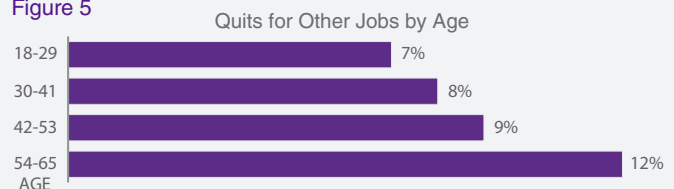


Figure 5



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STAYING THE COURSE

As part of our commitment to building careers—not just assigning jobs—every job seeker (425,000 and counting!) learns valuable skills through our proprietary learning module, Success Through Associate Readiness (STAR). STAR reinforces the skills we know are most critical to completing assignments and furthering careers, the same soft skills many workers learn the hard way as the years pass: responsibility, teamwork, communication, and attention to detail. We absolutely believe training is a key component to success, and because our workers overwhelmingly possess the hard skills our clients require, we've committed to ensuring all workers (especially our younger, less mature workers) receive soft skills training prior to starting an assignment.

How can you use our data above to improve your hiring and retention efforts? Remember:

- Young workers aren't a bad bet (in fact, they've got the skills you require), but they may need additional coaching. This isn't a bad thing! If you can overcome some easily corrected flaws, you'll have a workforce with the skills you need.
- Older workers aren't a bad bet either, but you probably don't need to focus heavily on skills training. These workers have the hard and soft skills they need to get "better jobs," so you need to focus on retention.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CHECK OUT THE HEAD AND THE HEART AND THE TRAINING SECTION OF OUR DECISION MAKERS' DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND RETENTION AT WWW.ELWOODSTAFFING.COM/BRC.

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