



7 signs your star employee is quitting soon

By Nick Patch | January 8, 2018 | Employee engagement



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Most workplaces have at least one standout performer. That brilliant, upbeat, efficient model employee that shoulders a heavier load than almost anyone else in the office. That one employee you simply *cannot* afford to lose.

The trouble is, that employee is precisely the type of person all your competitors would love to hire too.

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they're usually eager. So those are the ones you really have to work at retaining."

With that in mind, it's not paranoid to start monitoring your top-performing team members for signs of wanderlust.

Here are seven signs your star employee is quitting soon.

A deteriorating attitude

Does your employee seem as engaged as ever, or have you started to notice signs of fatigue, irritation or frustration?

"I would say that you should be able to see that the employee is getting increasingly disgruntled," says Cissy Pau, principal consultant at [Clear HR Consulting](#).

Keep in mind: your star is a star for a reason, so it's unlikely he or she is outright pouting. But more subtle signs could be there. Has this employee suggested workplace improvements, and if so, have they been realized?

"Sometimes people will make suggestions for changes that can make things better at work and you can see they're getting frustrated that the changes aren't

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they are already quietly interviewing for other jobs.

A request for more opportunities

Most people yearning for upward momentum will first explore opportunities within their own work environment.

If one of your team members approaches you for a conversation about his or her future, recognize it as a meaningful sign that person is looking for more out of their career.

"If they're having conversations with you about their job, and how it's maybe time to take on more responsibilities, or they're looking for increased pay or a promotion – that's probably a sign they're doing some career exploration," says Pau.

A more lavish dress code

Everyone likes to dress up now and then, but if an employee that typically dresses casually shows up one day in some seriously dapper duds, that sudden style shift should set off alarm bells.

"These days, there might be a little more casualness to interviews, but that's certainly one clue if they've never



Sometimes major career changes follow other major changes in our lives. Your top employee could be considering a move for reasons that have nothing to do with job satisfaction or opportunities for promotion.

Perhaps she's just moved to a new neighbourhood and the commute is taking a crushing toll. Or maybe he's just become a dad and needs a more flexible schedule.

Try to anticipate these issues. If a new parent looks bleary-eyed and miserable, initiate a conversation around his or her work-life balance needs and find out if there's anything you can do to lessen the burden.

Often times, high achievers won't want to acknowledge that they're struggling. If you wait for them to bring it up, it might be too late.

Office friction

Though you don't want to coddle anyone, you also want to shelter a top performer from a toxic office situation. Never force one of your best workers to endure an adversarial relationship with a supervisor or colleague.

"If someone's having a very different thought process to their boss or leadership, you should see those signs,"

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colleagues. If your MVP has teammates who have been promoted or moved on to bigger things, he or she will likely soon want to follow suit.

"If people in their cohort, their friends or colleagues of similar levels, are getting promotions and new job opportunities, they'll say: 'Hey, look what my friend did,'" says Pau.

"When those things happen you think as an individual: 'Maybe it's time for me to explore my career when I see all my friends moving up and I'm not.'"

Reference gaffes and other blunders

Pau has seen all sorts of awkward incidents happen to employees discreetly searching for work – everything from putting down a current workplace as a reference to leaving a resume sitting on their desktop.

One can only hope, however, that your very best employee has a little more sense than that.

See also:

[Why people quit \(and how to prevent it\)](#)

[How to be a good boss: 7 tips from an executive coach](#)