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Quiet Quitting: What Is It & What Can You Do About It?

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Quiet quitting? What is that? You may never have heard of that term before.

These days, the workplace environment has become more and more competitive. The competition for jobs is so fierce that many people are willing to do anything to get a good position in their company. They will even sacrifice their health, family life, and personal time just to achieve this goal.

If you have ever been in such a situation, you know how hard it can be to quit your job. It's not easy at all.

For many, though, the word "quit" itself implies that someone has left their job, which is not always the case in actuality. Some people use the term to describe a change in responsibilities without necessarily leaving their current position. This is especially true among millennials, who are often hesitant to call themselves unemployed.

So more and more employees behind the scenes would do whatever they could to do something else during work hours when they can do so. This means they will try to find ways to distract themselves while doing the bare minimum for their jobs.

You may wonder: what "quiet quitting" actually means. So let's find out further.

What is Quiet Quitting?

By literal definition, quiet quitting is when an employee engages in activities other than what their job entails within their working hours.

For example, if you are a salesperson, you might spend some of your free time reading books or watching videos about starting a business. On the other hand, if you are a teacher, you could go on Facebook or Instagram to get some inspiring ideas to pursue a side hustle.

In general, quiet quitting refers to any activity performed by an employee outside their regular duties.

Why Do People Do Quiet Quitting?

There may be several reasons why people engage in quiet quitting, though the main reasons are:

1) To avoid getting fired

2) To earn extra money

Let's take a look at each one of them.

#1 - Avoiding Getting Fired

The first reason why people engage in quiet quitting is that they want to avoid getting fired.

This is very common among millennials. Many don't like the idea of being fired from their job. They think it is unfair since they put a lot of effort into their work.

They also feel bad about having to leave their current employer. After all, they worked with these people for years. So they feel guilty about abandoning them.

This is where quiet quits come in handy. By engaging in quiet quits, they can keep their jobs while still earning additional income.

#2 - Earning Extra Money

Another reason why people engage in silent quitting is to make extra money.

Many people are struggling financially right now. And they need every penny they can get their hands on. So they are willing to do anything possible to earn extra cash.

One way to do this is through online businesses. For example, you can start an e-commerce store, sell products on Amazon, or create content for websites.

These are just some examples. Of course, there are countless ways to earn extra money. But the point here is that you should never let yourself get trapped by the fear of losing your job. Instead, focus on finding ways to earn money.

What Do Employees Exactly Want?

While the term quiet quitting may sound like something out of a dystopian novel, it's pretty common.

Michael Timmes, a Senior Specialist at Insperity, said that there were people who respond to burnout by doing the bare minimum. He attributes this trend to both millennials and Generation Z.

He adds that while some companies have tried to address the issue by offering flexible working hours, others are still struggling to find ways to support their employees during this pandemic.

Similarly, **Jaya Dass** from Randstad Singapore & Malaysia agrees that the Covid-19 pandemic is driving this shift towards quiet quitting.

She added that Gen Z, typically less experienced than older generations, are feeling the pressure of juggling multiple roles, including those related to their families. This makes them even more sensitive to burnout.

In short, the unfavourable working conditions have made many employees feel stressed and overwhelmed. As such, they are looking for ways to cope with stress. One of which is to quit quietly.

But Can The Quiet Quitting Attempt Backfire?

In essence, each person had a unique reason for quitting their job. This led researchers to conclude that the concept of quiet quitting is far more complicated than just striking a better work-life balance.

But what if the employee has no energy to dedicate to the work they are supposed to do? What if you are too exhausted to continue working?

There's a risk that your job would be at stake if you don't perform well. In fact, there are several instances when employers were forced to lay off workers because they didn't meet expectations.

Not to mention, there would be no progression in your career as you could not show any results.

Thus, quiet quitting can backfire if it's a bit excessive and your employer does notice it.

So What Can Employers Do About It?

As mentioned earlier, employers can try different strategies to help their employees cope with burnout.

For starters, they can provide flexibility regarding scheduling and working hours.

Employees can choose to work from home as much as possible. Or they can take advantage of flexi-time options.

They can also offer remote working opportunities. This will allow employees to continue working without being physically present at their workplace.

Moreover, employers can encourage their employees to seek professional help. If necessary, they can refer them to counselling services.

Providing a conducive working environment is another crucial factor in helping employees cope with burnout effectively.

It helps to ensure that employees don't feel overworked or underappreciated. In addition, it allows them to be more productive.

Employers must understand that not all employees want to quit their jobs. Instead, they may simply be trying to cope with the current situation.

If so, they need to ensure that they create an environment where employees feel supported.

Overall,

Quiet quitting is not a new phenomenon. However, the current situation has brought about a change in how employees deal with burnout.

Many employees choose to quit quietly rather than risk losing their jobs.

However, this does not mean that all employees are suffering from burnout. Some of them are simply trying to make ends meet.

That said, employers must be aware that silent quits could backfire. Therefore, they need to do everything they can to retain talents in their company.

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