

## Toxic Workplaces — Pizza May Not Cut It

Take a closer look at employee mental health by first looking at your company culture.

You've noticed a change in behavior among your top employees. They used to be lively and engaging, but now they seem subdued. This isn't just happening with one employee, but several, especially those who have been with the company for a long time. As a manager, what's your take on this?

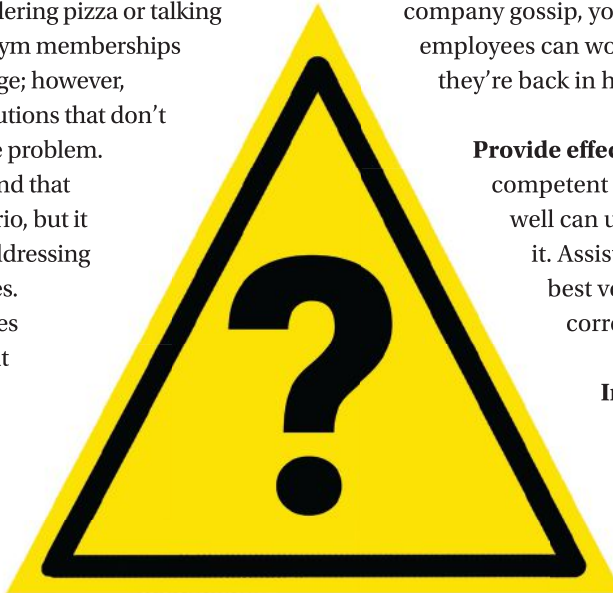
You might think about ordering pizza or talking to HR about reintroducing gym memberships as part of the benefits package; however, these are just temporary solutions that don't address the root cause of the problem.

It's important to understand that this is an exaggerated scenario, but it highlights a serious issue: addressing symptoms rather than causes. Often, management identifies a problem and rushes to fix it without digging deeper to understand what's really going on.

Research indicates that employee burnout, both mental and physical, is frequently linked to the organization's structure and a hostile work environment. This could be due to a manager who shows favoritism, lacks effective communication skills, abuses their power or a combination of various factors.

These issues significantly impact employee retention. It's vital to address these underlying problems to maintain a healthy and productive workforce.

The way the company handles its employees can make the difference between retaining staff or spending resources to recruit new ones. Here are a few strategies that can help:



**Humanize your employees** — Spend extra time getting to know your employees and their families. This not only shows that you care but also softens the blow if you need to discuss issues like attendance or performance.

**Curb company gossip** — By promptly addressing company gossip, you can create an environment where employees can work effectively without feeling like they're back in high school.

**Provide effective manager training** — Having competent managers who perform their duties well can unify the team rather than divide it. Assisting employees in becoming the best versions of themselves, through both correction and praise, can boost morale.

**Invest in your employees** — Utilize your employees' current strengths for their advancement within the company. Focus on their skills and give them a glimpse of what a new position would entail. No one wants to be stagnant. Growth is beneficial and helps retain your talent, showing them they are a valuable part of the team.

Addressing organizational problems can lead to a more balanced workplace where employees are content and well-adjusted. While it's commendable that you provide benefits for your employees' physical and mental health, be mindful not to contribute to the instability of the latter. **P**

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