

Individuals Quitting Their Jobs Causing Employee Shortages Creating Major Issues and Problems for Businesses, Companies, and the Economy ¹

By Michael Marshall, PhD

Do you think this social and psychological phenomenon is new?

Do you think employers and businesses have blindly neglected this potential problem and issue for so many years, that it finally happened?

Do you think that this a social and business evolution long over-due?

In the US news over the last year, much has been reported about the many people quitting their jobs and causing shortages, economic problems and issues.

Many businesses do not have enough employees to do the work needed.

The Covid Pandemic, with its challenges and affecting society and individuals' lifestyles and sense of safety, has been blamed for much of this.

So has government stimulus and subsidies to help people through these times and help to keep the US economy healthy, been blamed.

Many people who have quit their jobs have moved on searching for better work and jobs that they feel is a better fit for them.

Some people have re-evaluated their life and priorities and have changed their lifestyle to allow them to search for different careers, work, jobs that fit them better in many ways.

Individuals of all levels in career, job and income levels are changing their jobs and careers and lifestyles.

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Back in the early 1970's when I was in my undergraduate university psychology and sociology classes at SIU, Southern Illinois University in the US, I had some excellent professors teaching me.

Back then, I knew that I was fortunate to have such good professors teaching me but as I got older, I realized that the teaching professors were even better than I realized.

Now, I feel so fortunate to have had such high-level learning experience and learned so much from them.

These professors and university classes taught me about what is happening today with today's phenomenon of people quitting their jobs, changing their careers, jobs and lifestyles, and re-evaluating themselves and their lives.

Kurt Goldstein a specialist in neuroanatomy and psychiatry in 1942, wrote and talked about individuals going through stages of life to understand and improve themselves mentally and with self-fulfillment, to higher levels of understanding, that he referred to as 'Self-Actualization'.

Abraham Maslow a psychologist in 1943, wrote about and discussed individuals working through different levels of life needs such as physiological, safety, love and belonging, esteem, then onto the highest level of 'Self-Actualization'.

Carl Rogers a psychologist in 1949, wrote about and discussed how individuals continually seek to develop higher levels mentally, a deeper understanding of themselves and seek higher levels of their own self potential that he called 'Self-Actualization'.

All of these professionals talked of few individuals ever reaching their highest level of Self-Actualization level, saying, most individuals struggle with this and only 1% ever reach the level of Self-Actualization and deeper meaning of themselves, their real full potential, happiness and their life.

Is this current situation of so many people quitting their jobs to seek out higher potential for themselves, a new sociological or psychological phenomenon? NO

Have employers and business management been neglectful to manage this natural phenomenon and have they been ignorant and maybe even incompetent with this? YES

Is this taught in business schools/universities and MBA programs? NO, there is not much effort to include this in the curriculum.

'Self-Actualization' is one of many things needed to be taught in business schools and MBA programs related to 'The Psychology of Business'.

Back in the 1990's, I remember doing some business advisory and consulting work for a manufacturing company in the US that had a significant amount of immigrant Polish workers who could not speak much English or struggled with it.

They were low wage factory earners.

We discussed the possibility of pay increases tied to good positive behaviors and productivity and special incentives even with maybe classes on learning to speak better English language. We also discussed special recognition awards and bonuses for good progressive behaviors.

The ownership and senior management were against all of these things and said that they preferred keeping employees at low levels of pay and lower levels of treatment, struggling, keeping them thinking that they were lucky to have any job at all, to keep them loyal to the company to stay on their jobs and not move on to better paying jobs. This seemed to be a slave mentality even in the 1990's.

This mentality exists in many businesses and companies even up to today.

The more progressive businesses and companies are now changing and advancing their own mentality, behaviors, employee pay structures, incentives and meeting more of employees' important personal needs at many levels.

This business evolution seems to be over-due for many years.

Some businesses and companies are starting to wise up, take notice and acknowledge more of the employees needs far more and significantly expand their understanding of this.

Businesses and companies are reinventing themselves internally to address the needs of employees' and workers, far more. Businesses now understand the importance of being far more progressive to retain their employees and staff.

Some businesses are creating management training programs to advance the skills of employees, job advancement programs, change-of-job assignment programs, offering special incentives of paid-for school classes of many types, college tuition, flex-work hours, work-at-home hours, day care for their children programs, and many other important things.

Business leaders and managers need to be trained and educated in 'Self-Actualization' of individuals that most strive for and now more than ever. This has become and evolved to be so important to most employees and workers.

Businesses and companies cannot look the other way or Not acknowledge this situation anymore.

There is a new awakening in so many, for 'Self-Actualization'.

'Self-Actualization' is not new.

Maybe it has been subdued some but now it has awakened aggressively.

Leadership and management need to study the teachings of Kurt Goldstein, Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers, to learn how to advance their business and management to meet more of the important needs of employees and workers, or their businesses and companies will fail.

About the Author



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Michael Marshall has over 40 years of business experience to senior leadership levels and advisory/consulting in many markets and industries, national and global, with responsibilities in sales management, marketing and business development along with a PhD in business and degrees in psychology and social human behavior before teaching internationally at university level (China, Korea, Vietnam, Saudi Arabia, United States). Michael continually seeks out knowledge with additional education, trainings, research, and experience, to keep on the leading edge of business effectiveness and business development. He has over 47 international publishing's on many business and business development subjects.

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