

## The Great Resignation

A term coined by Anthony Klotz at Texas A&M University in May, 2021 to describe the large number of employees quitting in a mass exodus:

- Over 4 million quit each month since August 2021
- Job openings rose to 10.9 million by end of Dec 2021<sup>1</sup>

## Quiet Quitting

When an employee mentally and emotionally checks-out of their position at work without formally quitting or notifying their management of their intent to reduce the effort they put into their role at work. Gallup reports actively disengaged employees made up 18% of the workforce in 2022, up 5% from 2019.<sup>2</sup>

### Did You Know?

Advanced Laboratory Solutions Consulting, LLC provides solutions to improve employee retention/engagement and mitigate the phenomenon of “Quiet Quitting”.



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## The Great Resignation & Quiet Quitting

The Great Resignation of 2021 continues today and is compounded by the phenomenon of “Quiet Quitting”, wherein employees who cannot leave their current employment for various reasons are disillusioned in their role, feel their management has left them behind, and in turn, “check-out” on their job. They are there in body, but not spirit. Oftentimes dissatisfaction with the workplace causing an employee to “check-out” is attributable to a toxic work environment and/or a bad boss. That has not changed. What has changed in the post-pandemic world is the inability to overcome a bad boss or work environment with an attractive salary. The work conditions faced in the pandemic have forever changed the way employees view their work and personal life, and priorities have shifted.

The pandemic forced many to work remotely, and a high percentage of service industry jobs were lost not just temporarily, but permanently as companies, many of them small businesses, were unable to remain viable while having their doors shuttered. Employees considered “essential” that could not work remotely, such as in production manufacturing and laboratory support, were tasked to fill in shifts, add extra responsibilities to their role, and complete menial tasks while trying to fulfill their primary job functions. These extra requirements, particularly for salaried employees, were usually expected for no additional pay, and at times, at reduced pay while corporations looked to mitigate financial losses from reduced supply chain access, contracted public consumerism, and overall uncertainty on the length of closures and their full effect.

This perfect storm compounded the dissatisfaction employees had in their positions, and led people to switch jobs, move into new industries, take on non-

traditional roles, retire early (part of the Great Resignation or Great Attrition), or start their own businesses. I am in the latter category. I took the opportunity to start my own consulting business, [Advanced Laboratory Solutions Consulting, LLC](#) (ALSC) and now work with companies to improve employee satisfaction and retention.

According to an Aug 2022 World Economic Forum Future of Work article, more than 4 million people in the US alone quit their jobs in June 2022<sup>3</sup>. At the time, almost 11 million job vacancies remained unfilled. Other countries and regions experienced more job openings than applicants during the same period. The number one cause of the resignations? As seen in Figure 1 below from the same article, lack of prospects for upward mobility. Not compensation, which was ranked second. Additional concerns included the feeling management, from C-suite execs to direct supervisors were uncaring leaders who could not inspire their employees, who left them with work that was not meaningful, with expectations that could not be maintained (such as increased shifts and responsibilities), and who provided little support for their health or wellbeing and limited workplace flexibility.<sup>3</sup>

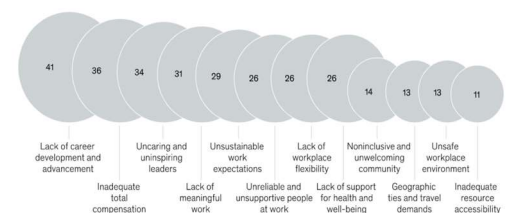


Figure 1: Top reasons for quitting previous jobs, Apr 2021-Apr 2022, %<sup>3</sup>

## The Purpose-Driven Employee

Purpose can be defined as an organization's reason for existing beyond profits, and describes a dramatic shift in the way work is viewed post-pandemic. It encompasses the way a company inspires employees, identifying and empowering the purpose-oriented worker, and integrating purpose into their brands.<sup>4</sup>

According to an article by Elizabeth Davis of Carol Cone ON PURPOSE, there are 42 million purpose-driven employees in the US alone, expanding beyond just the millennial generation. These purpose-driven individuals value helping others as part of their personal fulfillment, and experience 20% longer tenures at their place of employment due to higher levels of fulfillment in their work.<sup>4</sup>

Adding purpose to your brands and into your culture through hiring processes and employee goals and evaluations will attract the most talented candidates to your company and reduce occurrences of Shift Shock and Quiet Quitting. These practices will inspire innovation and collaboration in existing employees, fostering their sense of purpose and putting them in the driver's seat of their own skills and career development.

A Laboratory Manager who identifies a purpose-driven employee should accelerate the career-path of that employee, which in turn will benefit the laboratory by increasing the laboratory skill-set and can satisfy new talent needs when adding headcount is not an option.



Fast forward to May 2023. The jobs outlook has changed from 2022. The labor market is tight in the tech sector and lay-offs have occurred with more expected. It may be regionally varied, but service industry jobs still abound with "Help Wanted" signs posted at restaurants and small businesses. Some big box stores are expected to have layoffs, and the help wanted signs at smaller retailers may dwindle when that happens. But in the industrial manufacturing industry, hiring skilled analysts and chemists remains a difficult endeavor even in a tighter market. Additional forces beyond "Quiet Quitting" are at play here, such as "Shift Shock" and "Rage Applying".

Laboratory Managers looking for skilled analysts face a huge task of just getting through the interview process. Many applicants lack soft (social) skills needed for effective interviewing, leaving the hiring team to guess about the applicant's ability to interact with other laboratory team members, management, and production (which oftentimes they support). It may be easier to garner their technical expertise, but the soft skills needed to be an effective member of the team are just as important, and somewhat elusive. Which is where the phenomenon of "Shift Shock", or "New-Hire's Remorse" comes in.

If the candidates cannot interview well, cannot state the values they are looking for, the career path they want, the things that are important to them in a company they work for – which experts agree are top concerns for candidates, particularly

younger candidates – then imagine their remorse when they start the job and learn it wasn't what they expected. And in today's post-pandemic society, workers are more likely to leave if they experience this "shift shock".<sup>5</sup>

Previously, the consensus was leaving a job before two years of employment would be frowned upon by prospective employers, so employees stayed through that period even if dissatisfied. Now in a 2022 survey of 2,500 respondents, 72% stated they experienced "Shift Shock" after employment, and 80% said it was acceptable to leave a new job in six months if not happy.<sup>5</sup>

Couple "Shift Shock" with "Rage Applying", the practice of mass applying for jobs when an employee feels unhappiness in their current work environment, and it is little wonder identifying good candidates for hire and retaining valuable employees is so difficult for laboratory managers. How many candidates interviewed by lab managers now are there because they rage applied to many companies while upset with their current company? Do the prospective candidates really believe your company and work environment will be better suited for them or that it will just be different and give them the break they seek now?

It is imperative that employers can navigate through the candidates, recognizing those that are interested in a position only because they are

## And Now...Quiet Hiring

Research published by Gartner HR in 2021 reports 58% of the workforce needs new skills to do their jobs, and the total number of skills needed to do a single job has been increasing 10% year-over-year since 2017.<sup>2</sup>

"rage applying" to help eliminate any "shift shock" that may occur once they are hired.

It is equally important to communicate and connect with their existing employees, to engage them with meaningful work and a sense of purpose, and to provide career advancement opportunities and pathways for upskilling.

### Did You Know?

60% of millennials believe that a sense of purpose is part of the reason they chose to work at their current employer.<sup>4</sup>

Providing "upskilling" opportunities for existing employees solves two needs – that of the employer for acquiring new talent without adding headcount, and that of the employee by increasing their skill set and expanding their knowledge bandwidth, possibly leading to receiving a one-time bonus, a raise, or greater flexibility in work hours.

In today's tighter workforce market, this new focus on upskilling is termed "Quiet Hiring"<sup>5</sup> and should be an important topic during any candidate interview, and periodically with existing employees to explore additional roles (departments) or technology the employee may have interest in that can further fulfill new talent requirements of the employer.

## EYES ON IT

## Outsourcing:

ALSC solution to effectively identify laboratory analysis requirements and optimize budgetary expenditures for capital equipment

A client foremost in the Chemical Recycling industry is interested in moving final product testing from a third-party laboratory to the on-site lab within their own manufacturing facility. ALSC was contracted to prepare a Gap Analysis, identifying the capital equipment needed for immediate purchase and future consideration to meet existing and expected analysis requirements.

Utilizing our knowledge of the petroleum industry, the methodologies and test methods required, and instrumentation sourcing to meet these needs, ALSC saved our client an average of 20% on capital equipment purchases and have established a roadmap for our client to easily move to additional analyses based on our experience and understanding of what will be adopted as the chemical recycling industry matures.

This is a valuable example of outsourcing utilizing a consultant such as ALSC to provide decades of experience and in-depth knowledge to areas not fully realized within an organization's staff – whether a new market, new industry, new technology or simply due to limited ability to increase headcount.

## Upskilling and Outsourcing

“Quiet Hiring,” or upskilling employees with new competencies that bridge existing skill set gaps, can cost ~\$24,800 per employee in the US, but the benefits are profound and include:<sup>6</sup>

- Improved employee engagement and retention
- Increased morale, loyalty, and motivation
- Succession planning for aging employees
- Accelerated business growth through increased customer satisfaction, product and service innovation, and profitability

An alternative method for bridging knowledge and skill set gaps is outsourcing. This terminology has negative connotations for many that may have lost their employment when their position was “outsourced”, but there are other applications of outsourcing that can be valuable to employees and employers, particularly for employers with limited budgets and/or lack of training resources.

By utilizing the knowledge base and skill sets of outside resources such as technical consultants, a laboratory manager can optimize laboratory efficiency, streamline procedural documentation, and evaluate new technologies and equipment, often accessing scientific resources not easily available to them, and can do so with minimal interruption to everyday laboratory operations.

An employer benefits through realizing cost-savings from reducing expenses associated with hiring and training additional laboratory staff, remaining agile and up-to-date on new technology that may be out of reach for many businesses, and reducing the risk of losing key personnel in situations where their workload would increase without the assistance from an external resource.

Our mission at [Advanced Laboratory Solutions Consulting, LLC \(ALSC\)](#) is to provide that

external resource to laboratory managers.

We provide solutions to assist laboratory managers in developing and evaluating skill sets for existing roles and future laboratory needs, and establishing career development pathways for your analysts and chemists. Our services include analytical and soft-skill training programs, KPI development, and designing incentive programs to recognize valuable employees and their contributions to the success of the company.

ALSC solutions inspire employee engagement and improve employee empowerment to generally minimize causes for resignation or quiet quitting of valuable employees.

Contact us today to learn more.

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## This Issue's Q&A Technology Tips

Q: What are the differences between a Millennial (Gen Y) and a Gen Z employee?

A: Gen Z are people born between 1997 and 2012 and is the generation after the Millennials born between 1981 and 1996.

- ✓ Gen Z is the first generation born into the internet age, living a large part of their lives on social media and communicating via texts and instant messaging, making face-to-face interviews a bit daunting. Millennials enjoy learning new technology, but may take longer to master it than Gen Z.
- ✓ Gen Z is more conscious of internet security and privacy, preferring to keep professional and personal matters separate.
- ✓ Millennials are collaborative where Gen Z individuals are more independent, prefer to work alone, and more interested in creating start-ups and businesses. Millennials concentrate on stability and don't mind big companies if it suits their needs.
- ✓ Millennials grew up understanding college was the next step after high school, where Gen Z may have already started their career from high school. Gen Z does not read emails or manuals but rather utilizes online classes, instructional videos, and real-world experience. Gen Z is eager to explore new career options until finding the “right one”.<sup>7</sup>





## Professional Development

Advanced Laboratory Solutions Consulting, LLC (ALSC) provides analytical training and professional development courses customized to meet our client's individual needs.

In today's labor market where professional development is critical for both the laboratory manager to maximize the operational capabilities of the laboratory staff and for the lab analyst or Chemist to develop skill sets to expand their professional bandwidth, hiring ALSC to provide specific and customized training solutions satisfies the needs of each member of the laboratory team.

[Training Courses  
\(alsconsulting.tech\)](https://www.alsconsulting.tech)

## Trends in Hiring 2023

- The tight labor supply promises to continue throughout 2023 due not only to the phenomena discussed above but to changing demographics – within 20 years there will be 2x as many workers 60+ years old as there are today – leading to greater bargaining power for the job-seeker
- Remote work is here to stay and flexible, or hybrid, schedules can be used as an upsell to prospective and existing employees
- Attractive benefit packages are a must and can include more time off, better physical and mental health coverage, and even free lunch and snacks (not typical in a manufacturing environment)<sup>8</sup>
- The importance of alignment of an organization's culture and purpose to a candidate's continues to grow, with almost half saying their expectations around happiness at work have gone up in the past year<sup>8</sup>
- Younger workers believe inclusion of DEI (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion) initiatives belong in the workplace, so these initiatives will be required to attract and retain younger talent

## Launching Soon

- Online ordering of standard products and associated hardware directly from the DCG website.
  - ✓ Stay tuned for further announcements
- Analytical Training Courses
  - ✓ Produced Water
  - ✓ Cannabis Training Course
- General Training Courses
  - ✓ Technical Writing

### Newsletter References:

<sup>1</sup>[From Great Resignation to Great Resurgence | gpac \(gogpac.com\)](https://www.gogpac.com)

<sup>2</sup>[The Real Problem Behind Quiet Quitting And Quiet Hiring \(forbes.com\)](https://www.forbes.com)

<sup>3</sup>[Why 40% of workers are still looking to quit their jobs | World Economic Forum \(weforum.org\)](https://www.weforum.org)

<sup>4</sup>[Is "Purpose" just another buzzword for our workplace? | World Economic Forum \(weforum.org\)](https://www.weforum.org)

<sup>5</sup>[What are the biggest workplace trends and buzzwords of 2023? | World Economic Forum \(weforum.org\)](https://www.weforum.org)

<sup>6</sup>[Outsource vs. Upskill: How to Fill Your Post-Pandemic Skills Gaps | LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com)

<sup>7</sup>[Gen Z vs. Millennials: Definitions and Key Differences | Indeed.com Canada](https://www.indeed.com)

<sup>8</sup>[5 Key Hiring and Workplace Trends To Look Out For in 2023 | Indeed.com](https://www.indeed.com)