

Reality bites: Unmet expectations count for almost half staff turnover

New research* from pre-hire assessment specialists ThriveMap reveals that 48% of employees have left a role because it wasn't what they expected it to be. When asked what these differences were: 59% cited job responsibilities, 42% pointed to the working environment, and 35% mentioned working hours or shift patterns. Only 29% said that their salary or employee benefits played any part in their decision to leave.



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Among Generation Z employees, those aged 18 to 24, three quarters (73%) of those saying they had left a role because it didn't meet their expectations, had left that job because the responsibilities didn't match up to what they thought they'd be. Given that these employees have only just entered the workforce, there seems to be a huge disconnect from what was promised in interview to the reality of the actual job.

These figures point to a very significant problem in the recruitment process, revealing that in many cases the current format is not fit for purpose. Employers seem to be failing to disclose the whole truth of what the job entails, appearing to mis-sell what a potential employee will be required to do. Record levels of employment, coupled with a skills shortage could be making this situation worse, as employers focus on getting the most qualified candidates rather than the most suitable person for the role with the appropriate skills.

The second largest reason respondents gave for the role not being what they expected was the working environment. This shows just how important workplace culture has become to employees and that a significant proportion of them are prepared to leave their job if that culture isn't what they expect it to be. Employers need to think carefully about how they communicate their culture externally, and ensure this matches up with the experience of their current workforce. Any gap between the perception and the reality will lead to disenchanted employees, who will take action and look for employment elsewhere.

Chris Platts, CEO of ThriveMap, said “It’s clear from our research that the current recruitment process is failing many employees, leading them to accept roles that weren’t what they expected. This situation is also harmful for employers, costing them valuable time and resources through increased employee churn. Businesses need to take a fresh look at their recruitment processes to ensure they test effectively for the skills that are actually required for the role, not ones they assume are important. They also need to present both the job and the organisation honestly. Employees will appreciate this open approach, giving them the confidence to know what to expect when they start a new job.”

*Survey carried on behalf of ThriveMap by One Poll in January 2019 with 1,000 full-time employees who’ve had at least two full-time jobs.

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