

ARE YOU ABOUT TO LOSE YOUR TOP PERFORMERS?

By Marilyn Thiet

If you read the title of this blog and immediately said no, think again. Unless you've asked the question and engaged in a recent dialog about your top performers current level of job and career satisfaction, you may be in for a big surprise. Discontent is running rampant and it seems that the only ones who don't seem to know this are those at the top of organizations.

Based upon the multiple conversations that I've had since the beginning of the year, there seems to be an epidemic of people, mostly high performers, currently feeling a lack of job satisfaction. As I listen to the reasons, most of which center on either disagreement with cultural changes or lack thereof, or a perceived lack of appreciation for what they are bringing to the organization, I always ask if they have spoken to their manager about their feelings. In every case the answer is no. I don't blame an employee for not wanting to raise a red flag, but I do fault the managers and leaders out there who are not asking the questions and engaging in dialog with their top performers. Could it be they are spending too much of their time dealing with the underperformers? Are they just assuming if they are compensating well, performers won't leave? Or worse yet, are they afraid of the answer they may get if they ask their top performers about their level of job satisfaction?

I view losing a top performer a much bigger error than holding on to an underperformer (though neither is desirable). Rarely do people leave for monetary reasons. According to a 2013 article in Forbes, millions of people are voluntarily leaving their jobs each month. Citing a study by Accenture, the top reasons included lack of appreciation, dissatisfaction with their manager and a cultural lack of empowerment. Engaging in frequent dialog with your top performers will go far in helping you retain and motivate those who bring the most to the organization. Ask your top performers what's on their mind and respond accordingly...or lose them to your competitor, the choice is yours.