

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1488 Why Are More People Bored at Work?

What if I said that about half of the workforce is bored with their job — does that seem about right to you? Are you bored with your job? I'm Jerry Roberts and we'll talk about boredom at work, how big an issue is it, and what can be done. That's next, on The Extra Point.

Nearly half of Americans are bored at work, according to a 2023 survey conducted by research firm OnePoll for Colorado State University Global.

So, are you bored with your job? If you don't think so, then it's that person next to you. If they look at you and shake their head, then maybe you're more bored than you think you are.

2,000 working U.S. adults participated in the survey, and the number they discovered was 46% of respondents admitted to experiencing at least three days of workweek boredom.

It doesn't mean that bored workers are bored all day, every day, but the math means that workers are bored on 60% of the days they come to work.

Another research and consulting firm, Gartner, reported results of a 3,500-person survey in June of last year. The survey found that only 31 percent of employees reported feeling engaged, enthusiastic, and energized by their work.

We regularly give the results of various research projects of the Gallup Organization, and that 31% figure is almost identical to the workplace engagement scores they've generated for many years. Only about three in ten workers are actively engaged; five more are kind of just watching the parade go by them, doing enough to stay on the payroll; and two of ten are doing the bare minimum — or are disengaged.

Could there be a connection between these low engagement score and workers who report they are very often bored?

A Gartner spokesperson thinks the answer could be burnout. That being said, it begs the question, "Is burnout caused by 'bored-out'?"

Bored workers don't produce at the same rate as other employees. The quality of their work may also suffer. In addition, these people may be a part of higher turnover numbers.

One issue that is likely at the heart of boredom is repetitive work that is not challenging, and they may see a clear purpose behind the work. Do these people understand the purpose of their job, and why it matters?

Let's talk repetitive. There was a day when you could ask someone to sit at a desk and pound out the same tasks, day-in and day-out, for weeks and months and years — and they performed those duties in a productive manner.

A lot of Baby Boomers signed on for that kind of work, and were okay with it. Less so for their kids, Gen X, and that concept really fell out of style with Millennials. As for Gen Z, my advice is don't even think about it.

HR experts advise that managers hold one-to-one meetings with their staff to go deeper into how employees feel about their work, beyond the usual daily "to-do" list.

If you're a manager, can you provide your employees with new opportunities, such as involving them in new projects. Can you put together a cross-training opportunity to expand skillsets?

Sometimes, HR managers will talk to two workers who do show the boredom signs, and they agree to swap jobs.

The result of this may be two people who find value in a new position, and won't be bored any longer. As well, you have workers who both increase their skills, which is a plus for the organization. (Con't.)

If boredom could be an issue where you work, hopefully these ideas can help.

That's the Extra Point. Be responsible and make something good happen today. For 93.3FM, the Ray Gibson Show, and First Hawaiian Bank, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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