

# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 1784 Understanding the Disconnection for Front line Workers

As I move around the community and talk with managers and HR directors, I get a lot of questions about young workers, specifically the Gen Z category. How do we reach them? How do we maximize their productivity? How do we keep them on the payroll? It's a huge challenge. I'm Jerry Roberts, and today we're going to look at a fairly large survey of front line workers, no doubt many of them Gen Zs, and let's see what useful ideas we can learn that will help us do a better job of developing and then retaining our young talent. That's coming next on The Extra Point.

A recent survey conducted by Workvivo, an employee experience platform associated with Zoom, reveals that many front line workers feel isolated from their company's culture and communications.

Keep in mind this is a mainland survey of 7,550 front line workers conducted in the first quarter of this year. That being said, I've heard young folks in Guam say the same thing. They don't feel like they're really a part of the organization they signed on with.

Among those in sectors such as food and beverage, retail, transportation and healthcare, a staggering 87% expressed uncertainty about whether the company culture applies to them.

Let me explain what that last statement about culture refers to. These young workers claim there is a significant difference in how they and other workers receive recognition.

They see older and established workers as being praised for their efforts and performance, while they are not.

One in five respondents reported never having been acknowledged for their contributions, and half believe that other employees receive preferential treatment over front line staff.

We briefly mentioned the subject of retention and how tough a topic this is for HR managers

who are trying to hang onto young talent. Buckle up. Only 13% of workers who are seeking career advancement, see a clear path for progression at their current employer.

It's tough to get many Gen Z workers to see anything past this week and maybe this month if you're fortunate. However, for those who do have a career vision, one in ten see something good in front of them where they now work. This is a serious disconnect.

Additionally, 54% indicated they would leave their current positions for better opportunities, even if the pay remained unchanged.

Communication from leadership also appears to be lacking, with 42% of respondents rating it as poor. Although 57% expressed a desire to hear directly from the CEO, nearly half (48%) feel that company communications are irrelevant to their roles.

In other words, all those carefully crafted messages that you're having AI churn out, that look so professional, are probably not cutting it with the front line.

More from this survey, and I think all of it is relevant for us here in Guam. Just a tick short of 70% of those polled wish to gain a better understanding of their company's decisions. How well are you explaining the decisions you make? Are you explaining them at all?

Here's something that always shocks the leaders I mention it to: Many front line workers believe that recognizing their individual efforts is the most effective way to feel valued, with 35% ranking it above compensation.

Additionally, 38% stated that being praised in front of peers is more meaningful than receiving a bonus.

What if you took this survey at face value and taught your managers how to better praise and recognize workers? Could that make a difference for you? (Con't.)

Gideon Pridor, Chief Marketing Officer and Chief Storyteller at Workvivo, emphasizes that this sense of disconnection stems not from a lack of care but from a lack of engagement.

His position is that organizations must actively recognize front line contributions, ensure that their communications are relevant for all employee categories, and...and...and it is absolutely necessary for leaders to create clear pathways for career growth for those young workers who are interested in that.

All this may give you a leg up in retaining your talent.

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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