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Predicting How, When Or If ‘The Great Resignation’ Will End



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Leadership Strategy

I cover crisis-related news, issues and topics.

Note on a keyboard of a work computer with the text I QUIT.
concept of the great resignation, ... [+] GETTY

If business leaders think or hope that The
Great Resignation will end anytime soon,

they are likely to be disappointed.

Indeed, according to Joblist’s *2022 Job Market Trends Report*:

- Three out of four full-time employees are planning to quit their job this year.
- 79% of employed job seekers believe that they can make more money by switching jobs than staying put in the current market.

‘Leading The Way’

The *Washington Post* reported that, “Goldman Sachs estimated last fall that more than half of those who had left the workforce during the Covid era’s Great Resignation were over 55.

“An analysis released by the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis found workforce exits are higher among baby boomers than pre-Covid trends would indicate, with a report last month finding women—many of whom work in public-facing positions and are between the ages of 65 and 74—among the groups leading the way.”

Reality Check

An informal survey of experts and observers yielded a wide range of opinions

and predictions about the future of The Great Resignation.

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‘Likely Here To Stay’

[Kevin Harrington](#) is the CEO of [Joblist](#), a job search platform. He noted that, “The pandemic was the catalyst for The Great Resignation phenomenon, but it’s likely here to stay.”

“Job openings are close to record levels, and with the rise of remote work and interviewing, it’s never been easier for employees to switch jobs in search of greener pastures,” he said.

“As long as the market rewards job switching, employees will continue to pursue this path in large numbers. I do not see this dynamic changing anytime soon,” Harrington predicted.

A Seismic Shift

[Robert Kelley](#) is a professor of management at Carnegie Mellon University’s Tepper School of Business. He noted that, “The Covid pandemic is

producing a once in several generations seismic shift in the work world—from what work do we focus on, to who does that work, to where is the work performed, to how much life purpose do workers derive from their work.

“I prefer to see The Great Resignation as the first shock-wave of what I call the ‘Big Sort’ that will have trailing aftershocks. All echelons—from CEOs to front-line workers—are sorting out their relationship with work and how work fits into their overall life-work balance, as well as how much they want to get paid for their work.

“Absent any other severe global disruption, I expect the Great Resignation to slow down as employees and customers return to business establishments which will probably coincide with Covid becoming endemic.

“So, the Big Sort's aftershocks will continue for a couple years or more till we return to a more stable employment environment,” Kelly said.

Cyclical Effect

Brad Biren is a tax and elder law attorney with a specialty in crisis Medicaid

planning. He believed that,
"The Great Resignation will last eight years. This is due to the cyclical effect of normalization between generations.

“The youngest boomers will reach optimal retirement age in eight years. At that same time, the first members of Generation X will begin to enter the optimal retirement age (66 more or less).

“This change in workforce requires replacement. At that point, Generation Z, etc., will fill in roles that are now matured and consolidated around more specific and novel sectors. That is normalization through replacement attrition,” Brien observed.

Never-Ending

[Melissa Dexter](#) is the chief people officer at [Uprise Health](#), an employee assistance, mental health and managed behavioral health platform. She predicted that,
“The Great Resignation is going to last forever, as it's a philosophical change in the perception of work as we have known it in our lifetime.

“It’s not just a period of time. The way in which we work and how people perceive work has changed—there is no going back. Because of the pandemic, employees today

are more aware than ever of their mental health needs, and employers now know they need to provide support and time away in order to keep employees happy and healthy,” Dexter commented.

A Permanent Change

The *HR Industry Trends Report* from Trust Radius found that 76% of surveyed human resources professionals in the U.S. thought that change in the labor market accompanying the Great Resignation is permanent—with 43% considering the attrition movement itself a significant permanent change and 34% saying it will create some small but permanent changes.

Advice For Business Leaders

Listen To Your Employees

[Kelly Rice](#), manager of human resource operations with HR platform [Insperity](#), advised that, "If employers do not listen to their employees, resignations may continue. One specific thing does not usually lead to a resignation. Employees want to be challenged by their work, and with all the positions available, many are taking this opportunity to switch careers. Talented employees want the opportunity to learn something new, move into a new role or take on increased responsibilities.

Focus On Training

“Managers also make a large impact on employee satisfaction rates. Good leaders motivate employees, and businesses should focus training on this critical role. Throughout the pandemic, manager roles have evolved to include enforcing new policies and managing hybrid teams, on top of their regular duties,” she pointed out.

“A great management team that is supported by senior leadership is more likely to stay with a company, and they can help mitigate the wave of resignations. Businesses should focus on retaining their employees, listening intently to what they need to succeed and taking action.

“An organization with employees who enjoy the culture and the work they do is more likely to attract top candidates who align with the company’s values,” Rice concluded.

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