



QUIET QUITTING

By Ven. Adelowo Adesina

Post Covid-19 pandemic, studies show that people are reconsidering work; its value and significance on human life including the place and the future of work. Consequent upon these, two significant phenomena has emerged and is emerging in relation to man and his work.



The first phenomenon is what is known as the Great Resignation. Workplace records show that 71.6 million people in America left

their jobs in the one-year period – April 2021 through April 2022. On average, 3.98 million people left their jobs in the said period.

The second noticeable workplace phenomenon post covid is what is known as Quiet Quitting. Quiet quitting doesn't mean quitting the job. It is something of a misnomer because the employee stays on the job, doing the barest minimum expected of him or her but go on collecting the full salary and other entitlements. "Quiet quitters continue to fulfill their primary responsibilities, but they are less willing to engage in activities known as citizenship behaviour: no more staying late, showing up early or attending non-mandatory meetings."

About OPTIMAL

Optimal is a monthly wellness newsletter written, developed and circulated by Sages & Scribes Consultants aimed at informing, educating and improving on the general wellbeing of readers by focusing on the essentials for improved mental health, and how to live a vibrant yet practical life in the present reality.

In this edition, we look at Quiet Quitting – A workplace buzzword made popular by social media. It sounds like some employees resigning their position. In reality, that is not the case, post Covid lockdown, people re-evaluated the value of work, rethink their career and take a position on how to work; what to do and what not to do.

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“The biggest concern for any organization should be when their most passionate people become quiet.”

Henrietta Gibbs



What is Quiet Quitting?

Quiet quitting thus refers to an employee who put no more effort into their jobs than what is absolutely necessary. A 2022 Gallup survey suggests that about 50% - almost half of the workforce consists of quiet quitters.

It is note worthy that quiet quitting is not a new workplace trend. There had always been what is known as presentism – a situation where an employee is physically at work but emotionally and psychologically not there. They are therefore not putting their best into their job roles, duties,

and responsibilities. They are underperforming and unproductive. A commentator aptly put it by saying “Quiet quitting is not a new trend but a trendy new name for workers dissatisfaction.”

Another commentator has this to say, “Quiet quitting is the art of not taking work too seriously. It is not a new concept. It has only recently gained popularity on social media as some employees post covid pandemic reject the hustling and bustling work culture and decided to set job boundaries.”



“Quit living as if the purpose of life is to arrive safely at death.”

Mark Batterson



The Opposite of Quiet Quitting

Employers and management response to quiet quitting are two in the main:

1. Tolerate the employee as it may not be readily easy to replace the “slack” worker.
2. Quietly firing the employee, they see slacking off.

Quiet firing has also become a buzz phase in the contemporary work environment. It is a situation where the slackest job is made so unrewarding that the employee may be compelled to resign. “The opposite of quiet quitting is quiet firing; a situation where employers deliberately offer minimum wage and benefits and denies any

advancement in the hope that unwanted employee would quit.

In other instances, the employer reduce the scope of employee’s responsibilities, status, rewards and benefits to encourage the employees to quit voluntarily.

At this juncture, mention must also be made of the phenomenon known as quiet hiring. It is a strategy where employers give additional responsibilities and rewards to hard working employees who are performing, and productive, delivering on their task, goals and work targets.

The two sides of: *Quiet Quitting...*

When it comes to quiet quitting, there are two sides to the coin:

- Employees see it as “setting reasonable boundaries – working to rule.”
- Employers see quitters as “slackers” who willingly and willfully underperform.

Some work study experts are of the opinion that quitting is a coping mechanism. Quitters are dissatisfied employees who are actively disengaged to cope with such psychosocial risks as workplace stress, anxiety, insecurities, uncertainties, burnout, even depression.

According to the Pew Research Centre, employees suffering from burnout are likely to be less engaged, make more mistakes, be more prone to accidents, are at higher risk for low morale and depression.

The Covid-19 pandemic brought quiet quitting to the spotlight as it flipped work culture upside down.



SIGNS OF QUIET QUITTING

Signs of quiet quitting take various forms and they include:

- » Not attending meeting promptly and regularly.
- » Arriving late at work or/and leaving early.
- » Reduction in performance and productivity.
- » Not taking initiative or making contributions when necessary
- » Not participating in workplace activities, events, and functions
- » Attitude of indifference and dis-interest in team projects
- » Lack of passion or enthusiasm in workplace enterprise

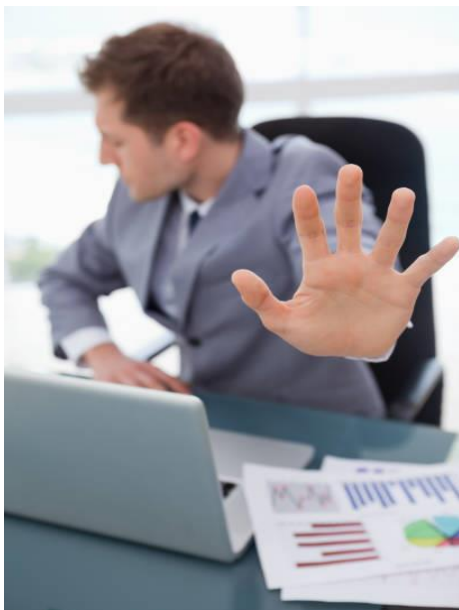
Studies show that quiet quitting may have some negative psychosocial effects on the employees. Quitters may have:

- ‡ A lower sense of purpose, significance, and influence which in turn may negatively affect their physical and mental wellbeing
- ‡ Being less engaged is known to create a sense of meaninglessness which can lead to depression and suicidal tendencies
- ‡ Quiet quitting has been known to also affect quitters’ esteem, sense of self-worth, value and personal fulfilment which can result in guilt complex.



“97% of the people who quit too soon are employed by the 3% that never gave up.”

Daymond John



“As a manager, I can understand people’s concerns with the idea of “quiet quitting” but if done right, I believe quiet quitting is a helpful strategy to prevent burnout from completely consuming you because so many of us are feeling burnt out these days.”

Emily Aries

HOW TO HELP QUIET QUITTERS



1. Share the Vision

Management and Employers should share the organization's vision, goals and strategies in a manner that will excite and engender confidence in the employee, so they have a buy in and run with it.



Forward thinking organizations, employers and managers can do the following to help quiet quitters:

2. Create Employee Experience

Talk and engage with employees periodically to get feedback and ideas that will make them feel appreciated and encouraged and drive them to effortless performance.

3. Set Realistic Targets

Organizations should make sure that workloads, performance targets and KPIs are realistic and humane. Appropriate boundaries should be set and maintained to allow employees work-life balance, prevent overwork and burnout.

4. Build Trust and Psychological Safety

Employers should honour and keep their commitments. Walk the talk. Do work and action match. Establish an open, honest and transparent systems and processes that make for psychological safety, creativity, relationship management and support that encourages peak performing work teams.

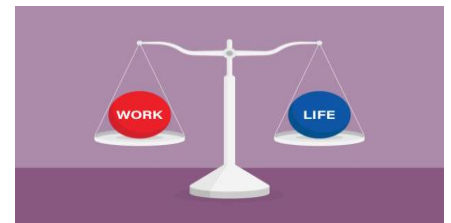
5. Career Development & Progression

Work process, performance appraisal systems, recognition and rewards must be objective open and transparent enough for employees to be willing to put their best knowing this will facilitate the opportunities for personal development, career growth and progression, job satisfaction and fulfillment.

6. EAP & Wellness Must Become Organizational Priorities

Organizations must begin to show enough care and concerns about employees and their dependants wellbeing, to promote:

- ♥ workplace wellness
- ♥ Regular health and wellness checkups
- ♥ Advocate wellbeing as a workplace culture
- ♥ Truly consider people as their most valuable asset, promote and fund their needs.



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