

Why Can't I Find Quality Employees?

It seems everywhere you go today, you see Help Wanted signs. You see them at restaurants, fast food companies and department stores. And in my discussions with association members, I constantly hear, “I can’t find anyone who wants to work.” These discussions have evolved from members looking for quality employees to hire to looking for anyone to hire. These conversations caused me to focus on two things. First, what happened to all the people that were working before the pandemic? Two, what can be done to fix the problem?

Demographic shifts due to the pandemic

We have heard for years that the American population is aging and that retiring baby boomers would cause an employee shortage. The global financial crisis of 2007 to 2009 slowed the retirement process for many baby boomers. Many older workers delayed retirement due to the strong labor market and lingering concerns about their financial stability. These dynamics



kept the labor participation rate largely stable from 2012–2020. Then the pandemic hit.

When the pandemic hit the US, many older workers understood that, due to their age, they were more vulnerable to the disease and thus were uncomfortable working in a riskier environment. These baby boomers were also in a better financial situation than in 2009. It took a while for the financial markets to rebound from the Great Recession.

Today is different. The downturn in the markets due to the pandemic was short-lived. Individuals interested in retirement before the pandemic are financially better off today. Thus retirement is a viable option.

Younger people working from home during the pandemic were able to assess their work-life balance. In a recent article in the Financial Times, Betsey Stevenson of the University of Michigan explained that the pandemic has resulted in significant shifts in society. She believes

that more Americans are staying home, cooking their own food and taking care of children and elders. Stevenson said, “I do wonder whether there has been a shift in preferences to wanting a little bit less work and a little bit more, ‘do things for ourselves.’”

The shift in work-life balance can be seen in the participation rate for females aged 25–54. The number of working females in this demographic plummeted during the pandemic and has yet to return to the pre-pandemic level.

In addition to work-life balance, the steep rise in inflation has some individuals asking if it’s even worth going to work. Nela Richardson, the chief economist at payroll processor ADP, was quoted in the Financial Times as saying, “We have this situation where it’s not really worthwhile to participate in the labor market. It’s expensive to go to work, especially if you don’t make a lot and you have to find childcare. You have to put gas in the tank ... clothes are

Continued on back

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Bill’s Short Attention Span Sales Tips



“I’ve got a vacation coming up and I’m nervous about leaving”

You need a break. Your family needs to get away and God knows you could use some downtime. The problem is, you are afraid you might lose customers and opportunities if you don’t check in and remain available.

There’s a lot to talk about here, but let me give you one quick tip: Before you leave, change your outgoing voicemail to something like: “Hi, this is Bill. Thanks for calling. I will be checking messages every day at 3 pm. If you call me before that, you can expect a call back at three. If you call me after that, I’ll get back to you the next morning. If you need immediate assistance, call the main line and ask for Allison.”

This simple message delivers a lot of information. It tells customers/prospects when they can expect a return call from you. It sets their expectations. It gives you peace of mind so that you can enjoy the day, get the rest you need, but still service your accounts.

In a perfect world, of course, you shut down completely. If that’s not possible, this tip will help.

The cure to “no one answers my calls”

“I’m not getting appointments. No one is picking up. No one is returning my call.”

It’s been my experience as a sales coach, as well as my firm belief, that you can get an appointment with the prospect; people will pick up the phone or reply to your email or even return your voicemail message.

It is possible... But one thing has to be in place.

There is a skill all salespeople must possess. It’s so important that if I was only allowed to teach one thing to a sales team, it would be how to improve the quality of the sales call. That is, if you have something of value to say, people will want to hear from you.

Consider these two voicemail messages:

Call #1: “Hi, my name is Bill. I understand you’re the person who buys the [x]. I am confident my company can save you money. I’m hoping to find a time when we could meet?”

Call #2: “Hi, my name is Bill. I understand you have a trade show coming up in a few months. I can help make that event a huge success for you and will call again.”

In the first call, Bill is getting into a product/service-based conversation. It can only end well if he has the lowest price. In the second call, Bill does his homework and not only will it be a solutions-based conversation, it will also be at an entirely different level within the organization.

The difference in those two calls is a skill set all salespeople must possess. It gets to the core message from Dale Carnegie’s, “How to Win Friends and Influence People” when he wrote, “You can get what you want when you figure out with the other guy wants and help him to get it.”

By improving the quality of your sales call, you have a stronger message to deliver, will leave a better voicemail, and will drastically increase the odds of connecting with not just a Buyer, but a decision-maker. Net result? A better, more profitable sale.

Source: Bill Farquharson, *The Sales Vault*, <https://SalesVault.Pro>

GOVERNMENT & LEGISLATIVE

On Our Radar

Proposed regulations and other issues that we’re following:

- **Potential PAGA replacement** – A measure to replace California’s Private Attorneys General Act (PAGA) has qualified for the November 2024 ballot. If passed by voters, the California Fair Pay and Employer Accountability Act would put workers’ labor claims back in the hands of the Labor Commissioner.

Approved regulations and other issues that we’ve been following:

- **Pre-employment drug testing not compensable** – On June 13, 2022, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that employers are not required to pay job applicants for the time required to take a pre-employment drug test or the travel expenses associated with taking this test.

STATE HAPPENINGS BY RJ

SB54: A Huge Victory for Our Industry

On June 30, 2022, the Plastic Pollution Prevention and Packaging Producer Responsibility Act (SB 54), the most comprehensive single-use packaging bill ever passed in the U.S., was signed into law.

Thanks to the efforts of the printing community—including the many calls made by Lou Caron, PIASC’s President and CEO—we were able to get two amendments into this bill. Both are enormous wins for the printing industry!

Without these amendments, members of the printing and paper industries potentially would have been left holding the bag. They would have been required to join what’s called a Producer Responsibility Organization (PRO) and be subject to regulatory and cost pressures.

Win #1: Paper is not considered a covered material under the bill

An amendment to the bill ensures that the “covered material” is defined in such a way that paper will never be considered a covered material due to

its high recycling rate in the state of California.

Win #2: Printers are not responsible for potentially huge fees

In the sections of the bill that govern who has to pay the new producer responsibility fees and also follow the regulatory scheme of the bill, most printers are exempt (the exception would be those that print on plastics).

The amendment we succeeded in inserting into this section is written in such a way that, because paper is not a covered material, those who use paper for commercial and industrial processes, including printers, are not required to join the producer responsibility regulatory scheme. They also do not have to pay the costs of the litigation fees outlined in the bill or the producer responsibility fees the bill is forcing on others.

Let’s all celebrate this huge victory for printers and the paper industry!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Arizona Par-Tee on the Green



DATE: Friday, Sep. 16, 2022
LOCATION: Raven Golf Club
3636 E Baseline Rd
Phoenix, AZ 85042
COST: \$159 per member, \$179 per non-member
Includes: breakfast, coffee, lunch, 5 raffle tickets, polo shirt, koozie and 2 drinks
6:30 am - Registration
7:30 am - Shotgun Start
\$2000 worth of raffle items!

Register today at conta.cc/3C6W360

For information, contact Cathy Skoglund at 602.999.1304 or cathy@piasc.org.

Interested in sponsorship opportunities? Visit conta.cc/3AniUcC

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more expensive, food is more expensive. So are you really winning by working?"

With inflation making everything more expensive and the residual economic effects of the pandemic, the state and federal governments have stepped in to "help." The question is, has the litany of government programs helped or hurt people? The Pandemic Unemployment Assistance, Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation, Pandemic Additional Compensation and the Mixed Earner Unemployment Compensation programs paid individuals who were unemployed due to the pandemic. Those programs ended on September 4, 2021. Yet, other programs, including rent and utility relief, remain in effect. And in California, Governor Newsom will soon provide "inflation relief" payments to 23 million Californians. Have these "relief" programs made it easier for some people to stay home rather than work?

The hard numbers

In addition to retiring baby boomers and government relief efforts, California's population is shrinking. Every year since the 1990s, more people have exited California than have moved in from other parts of the country. Between 2007 and 2016, California lost a net of one million residents to other states. In 2020, nearly 650,000 people left California, and another 275,000 left in 2021. Add to this the 69,000 excess deaths in 2021, due primarily to COVID, and you have a big reduction in population. The reduced population in California is so bad that it has resulted in the state losing

a congressional seat for the first time in its 170-year history. It's believed that this trend will continue.

People will continue to leave California as they follow companies like Apple, Oracle, Tesla and others that have moved to other states. According to Stanford University's Hoover Institution, nearly 300 corporations have moved their headquarters out of California since the beginning of 2018. This may not seem like a lot of companies leaving California. Still, it's essential to understand that this is undoubtedly an undercount since many relocations are not made public, especially by smaller, less newsworthy companies.

The exodus will likely continue. The Hoover Institution stated, "The data presented here show that headquarter relocations are accelerating substantially, with no sign of reversing course, reflecting a California business environment that ranks near the bottom of all U.S. states in many dimensions, including taxes, regulations, litigation costs, labor costs, energy and utility costs, and employee cost of living."

California's chief demographer, Walter Schwarm, agrees with the Hoover Institution's findings. In a recent NY Times article, Schwarm said, "I don't know that we're ever going to have growth rates over one percent anymore."

What the numbers tell us

As people continue to move from California, some states that belong to our association will benefit. According to the New York Times, the top five states



to which Californians are moving are:

- 1. Texas
- 2. Arizona
- 3. Nevada
- 4. Washington
- 5. Oregon

Even as this population shift hurts California and benefits others, the country will still have to contend with increased demand for goods and services as the economy returns to pre-pandemic levels. Add the 1.5 million baby boomers retiring yearly, and the employment situation will continue to be stressed. Perhaps a further examination of the unemployment rate can provide an answer to elevate the employment situation.

In April of 2022, there were over 11.4 million job openings in the country. During that same time, there were 5.9 million unemployed individuals. That means if every single unemployed person in April had a job, there would still be 5.5 million jobs left unfilled. And, because those 5.9 million individuals

would have a choice of 11.4 million jobs, the 5.5 million unfilled jobs would be the least desirable jobs in the country. And therein lies the answer to our industry's employment situation.

People today are not looking for a job. They are looking for a purpose. The pandemic has caused a shift in what people want in life. Whether baby boomer, Gen X, millennial or Gen Z, there's been a fundamental change in how Americans view work-life balance.

This change does not mean Americans are looking to "save the world" to give their life a purpose. It means they are looking to belong and be a part of something bigger than themselves. They want to be appreciated for their contributions.

Now that we have a better understanding of Why we can't find employees, in my next blog I will discuss Where to find and how to keep quality employees.

Source: Lou Caron, PIASC President/CEO

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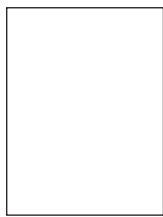
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On Our Radar

Arizona Par-Tee on the Green

Feature Article

Business Management

Government & Legislative

Upcoming Events

PIASC Events Calendar

OCT 18-20 Mail Design Certification Tuesday-Thursday, October 18-20 Online Webinar <https://bit.ly/MailDesign>

OCT 19-21 PRINTING United Expo Wednesday-Friday, October 19-21 Las Vegas, NV <https://www.printingunited.com/>

OCT 22-23 LA Printers Fair Saturday-Sunday, October 22-23 Carson, CA www.printmuseum.org/los-angeles-printers-fair

For full list of events, please visit www.piasc.org/events