

**Q. News reports have frequently mentioned “The Great Resignation” over the past year, referring to how many employees quit their jobs and why. What can supervisors or managers do to help curb the loss of good workers?**

A. Research studies showed that when the crisis subsided enough for employees to return to work, millions had moved on. What followed was a worker shortage allowed employees to compete for greater benefits, including attractive remote jobs. A desire to not return to the original job also played a role in adding to a labor shortage. Suddenly, “employers needed employees more than employees needed employers.” One study concludes that factors that can exacerbate the loss of workers are “toxic” company culture, low salary, poor management, lack of healthy work-life boundaries, and not allowing remote work. Are you able to influence change with any of these issues? Some are not related to pay but soft skills and relationship management. It is here that the EAP has expertise. “7 Gallup Workplace Insights: What we learned in 2021 explores the supervisor’s role in staff retention. Strive for a positive and engaging relationship with workers. Most will think twice before giving it up, even for additional pay in another job.

**Q. What is the #1 way to motivate an employee?**

A. Thousands of resources have been authored on motivating employees, but the one thing that appears to dominate most lists is “personally thanking employees for good performance.” Sound simple? It is for some, but not all. A critical part of the strategy is communicating gratitude with sincerity. Humans easily detect non-sincerity, so one must get this part right. Start by examining your own personal reaction to something the employee has done well. Feel the gratitude. Appreciate its impact. Visualize the benefits. Then use this energy and awareness to communicate appreciation. Praise put in writing will “10X” your positive impact on the employee. Some managers offer praise naturally. It’s a critical soft skill for supervisors to know, but it will feel awkward without sincerity accompanying it. Can the EAP help you be a more genuine and authentic praise giver? Yes.

**Q. There is debate about which employees are more stressed, those on-site or those who work remotely. What does the research say?**

**UR Medicine EAP**  
315 Science Pkwy  
Entrance C  
Rochester, NY 14620

(585) 276-9110  
1-888-764-3456

**Email:**  
[EAP@urmc.rochester.edu](mailto:EAP@urmc.rochester.edu)

**Website:**  
[urmc.rochester.edu/EAP](http://urmc.rochester.edu/EAP)



A. When a supervisor suggests the EAP, it can be helpful to explain early on that the basis for your recommendation is job performance, not your belief that a personal problem exists, and that all EAPs work this way. This issue, perhaps more than any other, is what prompts defensiveness. Also, do not mention the EAP for the first time late in the process of an attempt to correct performance. If weeks and months of difficulty, arguing, or tension have existed, your employee may believe that your motivation for referring now is to “cover your bases” as you prepare for termination of the worker.

**Q. I strive to know my employees well so I can assess their needs and develop their talents. When employees don't perform well or keep commitments, or come to work late, I feel taken advantage of and angry. This causes me stress. How can I react differently?**

A. The Gallup organization examined employee stress during the pandemic. They discovered that remote workers generally experience more stress than on-site workers. Although there are clear benefits to working from home, like avoiding the need to commute, remote workers often manage their personal lives and domestic issues in tandem with expectations by employers to deliver high levels of work performance, both in quality and quantity. The research found that remote workers may be more engaged, meaning they appear to demonstrate more enthusiasm, eagerness to perform, and desire to do a good job. This increased engagement may help others support their position and see its positive benefits. Supervisors should be watchful for signs of stress in remote workers who may tend to minimize or mask them, thereby risking burnout.