

Editorial

Javier Bajer

Work is not a dirty word

Despite titanic efforts to lure talent with a mishmash of perks and benefits, almost 6 in 10 employees are now quiet quitters, costing \$8.8tn to the global economy (about 9% of global GDP [1]).

Maybe it is time we dare to question what is in our toolbox.

If someone from another planet shows up tomorrow, they are likely to believe that humans hate work, so it is important that we persuade them to do it. Soon, they might conclude that our methods do not work, wondering why we insist on using variations of the same premise. They will hear us talk about compensation, incentives, rewards and even work-life balance, suggesting that life is what happens when people are *not* working.

Not long ago, work was one of the main things we did in life. It not only defined who we were but gave us meaning, made us want to learn and grow, helped us connect with others and took us to new places. For most, work gave humans the identity they needed to navigate life.

What if our insistence on using the same old tools had something to do with the increase in loneliness and depression we are experiencing today? What if, like our ancestors, humans engaged better when having others around to share a common goal with?

What if, as we tried to maximise performance, we unintendedly minimised the central role that work plays in our being humans and how this connects us with life and the rest of society?

I hope you enjoy this amazing issue of Strategic HR Review.

Warm regards,

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Note

1. Gallup's State of the Global Workplace: 2023 report.