



Stay HR Savvy with HR Elements®

Welcome to the UBA Partner Firm exclusive monthly newsletter delivering insights about timely human resources and employee benefits topics.

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1. Dear HR Manager
2. Workplace Culture | Building a Positive Workplace Culture
3. Diversity, Equity & Inclusion | The Power of Pronouns
4. Leadership Tip: Growth Mindset

Dear HR Manager,

I was promoted to management three months ago and have decided it was a mistake to accept this leadership role. I initially thought managing a team of salespeople was the next logical step in my career, but I miss being the person to make the sale. I enjoy the client interaction and the thrill of identifying new prospects. In hindsight, this is not the job I thought it would be. I want to return to my previous role and I feel stuck. What do I do now?

– Hindsight

Dear Hindsight,

Congratulations on your promotion! Your employer has recognized your skills and offered you an opportunity to take them to the next level. You have only been in this new role a short time, but the reality of the job doesn't align with your expectations. Before you opt for a "do-over," be sure you've given yourself a fair chance to settle in to your new responsibilities.

Try these tips to help change your perspective.

1. Seek management training.

In your new management role you're being challenged to draw on a new skill set, but those skills need to be developed. Leadership training may give you the tools to bolster your skillset and boost your confidence and job satisfaction. A mentor may provide the guidance you need if formal training is not available.

2. Talk to your supervisor or HR Manager.

A conversation with your manager or HR is the best way to get coaching and uncover additional options. For example, is there flexibility to customize your role to use more of your strengths? Is it possible to step back into your previous position or a similar role on another team? What training opportunities are available?

3. Look for ways to use your sales skills.

You enjoy client prospecting and negotiating – now is your opportunity to use your experience to help your team develop and refine those skills. Can you serve as a mentor to newer team members? Can you use your negotiating skills to help your sales team achieve its goals?

If you decide that your current company doesn't have a solution for you and you don't see another alternative, you may want to consider options *outside* your organization. Take what you have learned about yourself and apply it to search for a job aligned with your strengths.

- HR Manager

Workplace Culture | Building a Positive Workplace Culture

American workers were willing to depart their jobs for greener pastures during the “Great Resignation.” Unfortunately, one of the contributing factors to the record quit rate was toxic workplaces. For many companies, this reshuffle was a wakeup call to re-examine workplace culture and create an environment that people are excited to join.

Research shows that a dynamic and positive company culture attracts, retains, and engages employees.

While there is no “one size fits all” formula, you can [take steps](#) to ensure you are attracting and supporting employees who will contribute to a positive workplace culture.

Assess character and attitude in interviews.

Make it a priority to hire “culture builders.” A good colleague offers more than just a polished resume and applicable skills. People do not want to work with negative people no matter how much they produce or business they bring in. Recruiters and hiring managers can add behavioral questions to the screening process that demonstrate attitude and values. If using an interview scorecard, make sure these items are given fair weight in evaluating candidates. Character and attitude are also great topics to touch on when checking employment references.

Invest in leadership training.

[SHRM's 2019 study](#), “The High Cost of a Toxic Workplace Culture: How Culture Impacts the Workforce—and the Bottom Line,” showed a high correlation between toxic workplaces and managers. Over half of respondents who left a job due to workplace culture identified their manager as the cause of their departure.

Managers strongly influence the tone and behavior of the team and should model the correct kind of behavior. Ongoing leadership education is a good way to communicate best practices and company culture. And don't forget to include all types of leaders: people managers, project managers, and colleagues.

Make transparent communication a standard.

One way to ensure employees feel valued is to communicate with them consistently and regularly. Transparent communication builds trust with employees and supports a team environment where all are supporting the company's strategic objectives. This can include making information available on everything from company goals to performance standards to knowledge sharing across departments, enabling all to do their job better. Take it one step further and celebrate examples of solid communication.

Companies can proactively create a place in which employees thrive. The best way to [fight a toxic workplace culture](#) is to build a great place to work.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion | The Power of Pronouns

Words are powerful. Names and pronouns, in particular, represent an important part of a person's identity. LGBTQ+ colleagues are validated every time a colleague uses their appropriate pronoun. [Inclusive employers](#) send a strong signal to employees by asking and using their preferred pronouns.

Think how often pronouns are used in everyday conversation – in meetings, greetings, conversations, and emails.

Using the correct pronoun is a way to show respect to colleagues.
It says, "I see you."

This can speak volumes to someone who may be misgendered regularly. Continually being misgendered can leave employees feeling angry, disrespected, and excluded.

The only way to identify someone's correct pronouns is to ask them directly. It acknowledges that gender identity is not always visible and should not be assumed. Employers can update new hire forms and HRIS systems to allow individuals to select their gender identity and pronouns. If possible, expand the pronoun options in HRIS systems to include non-binary pronouns like they, "ze," "zir," and "zem" in addition to binary options. Another supportive move is to standardize pronoun use in company policies and communications. Instead of choosing "he" or "she," select gender neutral pronouns like "they" and "everyone."

Employers can set the example and offer education that invites all to use [appropriate pronouns](#) regularly. For example, including personal pronouns on LinkedIn profiles and email signatures tells others that the company sets a high value on inclusion. This practice can also extend into meetings by including pronouns in group introductions as standard protocol. This may sound like, "Let's introduce ourselves by sharing preferred names and pronouns." It is also helpful to educate staff on what to do in a situation when a colleague has been accidentally misgendered. Employees should be encouraged to advocate for their colleague, even when they are not present. This can be done by correcting the pronoun use in your response. For example, "He is not on time"

could be met with the response, “*They are* running late today.” Alternatively, a simple, “Sally uses the *she* pronoun” also serves as a helpful reminder.

All employees want to feel accepted and respected at work. Asking employees how they would like to be addressed is a great first step to inviting LGBTQ+ employees to come to work as their full selves.

Leadership Tip: Growth Mindset

Leaders who embrace a growth mindset notice something remarkable – employees thrive when given the freedom to try new ideas without fear of failure.