

Organizational Management: Quiet Quitting's Mitigation Strategies for Organizational Response

Zhangshuyuan Dai ^{1,†}, Jinrui Li ^{2,†}, Fushan Wang ^{3,†}, Leran Wang ^{4,†},
Yihan Wang ^{5,*}

¹ DeGroote School of Business, McMaster University, Hamilton, Canada

² International Trade and Economics, Kunming University of Science and Technology, Kunming, China

³ Tianjin Mapleleaf International school, Tianjin, China

⁴ Beijing No.80 Middle School, Beijing, China

⁵ Management and Organizational Studies, Western University, London, Canada

* Corresponding Author Email: ywan4287@uwo.ca

†These authors contributed equally.

Abstract. After the COVID-19 pandemic, the world economy is in a depression and has a high inflation rate, as the unemployment rate gets higher and higher, employment gets lower and lower, young people are very pessimistic about their prospects. Therefore, the employment has become a serious problem in society, which has also caused strong social discontent. Also, all of these factors may lead to a sense of anxiety among today's workers, and it's also accompanied by fatigue, pessimism and insecurity. The status quo of "the rat race" in all fields has become more and more intense under such social conditions. The word "quiet quitting" is widely used by people. The paper will analyze the impact of "quiet quitting" on individuals and organizations and come up with some solutions to reduce "quiet quitting" for organizations, such as job satisfaction and motivation, stress and strains, etc. In addition, this paper will adopt the form of a questionnaire to investigate the data and uses these data to help analyze people's attitudes and idea of the impact of "quiet quitting".

Keywords: Quiet quitting; organizational management; performance management; organizational commitment; job satisfaction; motivation; stress; strains.

1. Introduction

According to the survey of Figure 1, most people believe that their behaviour and emotions will be greatly affected in a "quiet quitting" environment, accounting for 35.45%. This shows that many people do not think of "quiet quitting", so they hope that their environment is positive and motivating. However, Figure 2 shows that 49.09% of people are strongly willing to quit quitting if conditions permit which weighs the largest amount of people. Comprehensively, most people are still willing to quit quitting without affecting their progress and emotions; thus, quitting is also a way to relax and relieve stress.

The term "quiet quitting" describes a phenomenon where employees limit their efforts to only what is required of them, refusing to take on any additional responsibilities or tasks. Some individuals believe that this approach is a passive acceptance of the status quo, a resignation to the fact that change is impossible. Others view quiet quitting as a rejection of the "hustle culture" that emphasizes working long hours and sacrificing personal time in the pursuit of career success. Regardless of the interpretation, the consensus is that this behavior does not involve leaving one's job but rather refusing to go above and beyond what is expected. This approach is becoming more prevalent in today's society, where the pressure to succeed in various fields and industries is intensifying. With concepts like "Buddha" and "lying flat" gaining popularity, young people are actively seeking ways to opt out of the rat race and find balance in their lives [1]. However, the economic climate is not helping matters. Slow growth and high inflation rates create a bleak outlook for the future, leading to disillusionment

and pessimism among many young workers. Furthermore, the International Labor Organization predicts that global unemployment will rise significantly in the coming years, exacerbating the already pressing issue of graduate unemployment.

Overall, the concept of quiet quitting highlights the growing discontent and fatigue among young workers, who are increasingly questioning the value of sacrificing their personal lives for their careers.

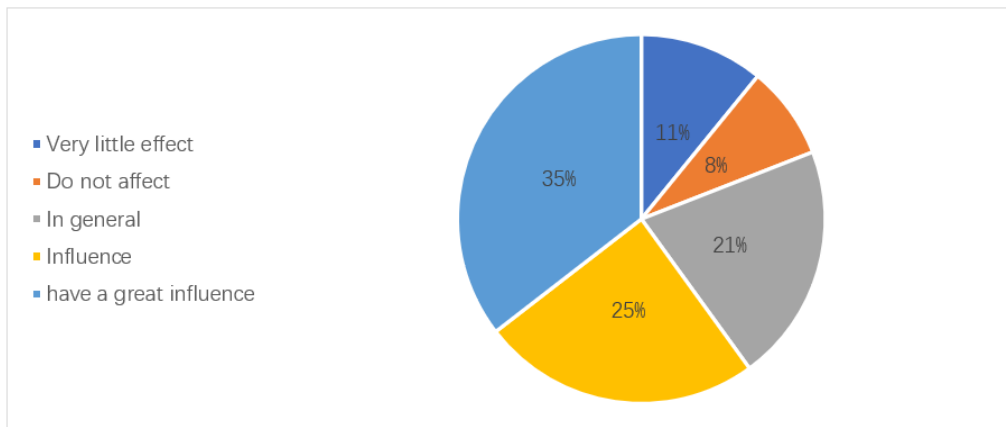


Fig 1. When people are in an environment of "quiet quitting", the extent to which that environment affects their mood and behavior

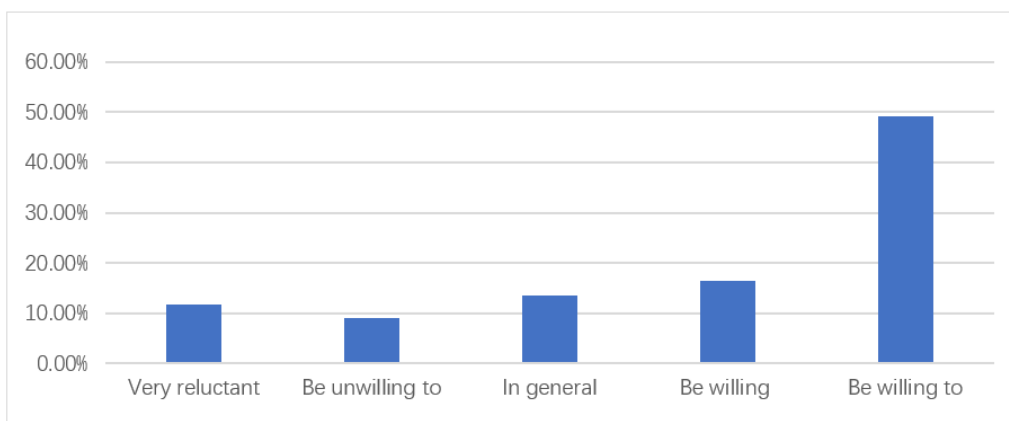


Fig 2. If conditions allow people to "quiet quitting", the willingness to do It

2. Quiet Quitting - the Top-down Strategy of the Organization

2.1. Performance Management

The most direct way to reduce Counterproductive behavior or withdrawal behavior from quiet quitting is to supervise employees through performance management. Effective performance management is critical to companies. It helps organizations align their people, resources and systems to achieve their strategic goals. It can also provide early warning of potential problems and give managers enough time and metrics to make adjustments to get the business on track.

First, for any performance management program, managers should ensure they have set clear requirements, goals or expectations. And managers should ensure that performance goals are relevant and achievable to the organization's objectives.

Quiet quitting occurs in part because of ambiguous goals and lack of communication. Some employees are willing to go further; they mistakenly believe that what they are currently doing is sufficient to meet the manager's needs; however, in reality, the manager's expectations are higher than the employees. It's like telling employees to do their jobs well. What standards do employees have to meet to be "good"? The research indicates that establishing clear, non-negotiable goals and designing

incentives to improve performance and reduce ambiguity are the first steps in changing or upgrading management plans [2].

In addition, managers should regularly review employee performance and provide timely and constructive feedback. When providing feedback, managers should promote open communication to encourage employees to raise issues and solve problems on time.

Regular performance reviews can identify and reward high performers on time, incentivizing more employees to improve their efficiency. In addition, it can give quiet quitting employees frequent reminders and alerts. Finally, regular performance reviews with constructive feedback can lead to the timely resolution of problems and a virtuous cycle of high performance and fewer problems. Effective communication coaching is the strongest driver of perceived fairness; there is a positive relationship between managerial guidance and feedback and the effectiveness of a company's performance management [3, 4].

Finally, managers should recognize and reward employees for their accomplishments and provide reasonable career development opportunities to motivate them.

McKinsey reports that rewarding good performance may be more important than punishing poor performance [2]. That means managers should reward employees for high-performance achievements whenever possible rather than punish ineffective employees. This move aims to increase a positive work culture in the organization rather than using punishment to create a climate of fear and tension at work.

According to the above, Management by Objectives (MBO) and 360-degree Feedback are more appropriate performance management methods for organizations to reduce quiet quitting.

MBO sets specific goals for the employee or organization and evaluates whether the employee is meeting the specific goals. A good goal is key to improving performance. First, it should be achievable. If the goals are too easy to achieve, they will not improve performance; if they are too far away, the employee may give up. In addition, a good goal should be clear and measurable, which means that the criteria for the goal, the reward, and the time for completion should all be communicated in advance.

Moreover, companies may need to overcome other uncertainties, such as cultural barriers. McKinsey's research says that in some Asian organizations, missing goals is considered so embarrassing that managers tend to set them low to ensure that employees can easily reach them. In contrast, in the United States, managers use a more aggressive strategy where setting goals lower than those achieved in the previous period is often considered unacceptable [2].

360-degree Feedback provides timely feedback through Supervisors, co-workers, subordinates, customers and the employees themselves. This program provides more comprehensive and balanced feedback and employee-related guidance and advice and is the most suitable program for improving or developing employee talent.

Lisa Shalett, a chief investment officer of Morgan Stanley Wealth Management, notes that when people give constructive feedback, the recipient may feel stung, aggrieved, or unfair. However, often, that is valuable [5]. Managers should be clear that it is their job to help their subordinates learn from feedback. And employees should be clear that managers who genuinely give them constructive feedback are to be valued.

2.2. Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment is also a guarantee to reduce quiet quitting. Performance management ensures a fair and positive work culture, while organizational commitment brings an inclusive, friendly, healthy and upward culture to the organization [6]. High organizational commitment can be reflected in rewards, job security and good working conditions or support. Employees will largely feel that they are cared for and that their efforts are worthwhile; finally, they will reduce quiet quitting or exit behavior.

At the macro level, high-commitment organizations should ensure the commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion; for example, BCG always insists on racial equality, gender equality, LGBTQ

equality and disability inclusion [7]. And microscopically, improving organizational commitment aims to increase affective commitment, normative commitment, and continuance commitment, respectively.

Affective commitment refers to the desire of employees to stay in the organization and actively achieve organizational goals because of their emotional attachment. The primary strategy to improve affective commitment is emotional communication and communication. Employees who have fewer interactions with colleagues or managers tend to lack emotional ties to the organization and are more likely to exit; this exit may not be physical but psychological, and they are likely to lack the personal commitment to the organization and become less effective, which can lead to quiet quitting.

Organizations should increase communication and emotional ties between people, for example, by setting up counseling and employee communication offices to help and support employees in resolving work and non-work issues and conflicts. Any similar strategy should focus on building relationship contracts with employees.

Normative commitment refers to an employee's desire to stay with the organization and actively give back to the organization out of a sense of obligation. The main strategy to increase the reorganizational commitment is to provide more organizational benefits. Employees can improve themselves or relax with the benefits offered by the organization; they are more likely to help the organization when the organization wants them to work for them or to fulfill their obligations, either out of gratitude or because they feel indebted to the organization (guilt).

The organization can provide more opportunities for employees, such as free corporate training to help employees improve themselves or adapt to new work tools; more reasonable reimbursement policies to help employees share part of the cost of learning (certification exams, part-time college programs). The organization can also provide more employee benefits policies such as travel allowances, more employee holidays or more humane paid time off (maternity, work-related injuries). Any similar strategy should focus on building psychological and relational contracts with employees. The human capital management department at Goldman Sachs says that employees are the company's greatest asset. The department provides benefits and wellness programs to improve employees' health and performance and support them and their families [8].

Continuance commitment refers to employees' awareness of the costs of leaving (either physically or psychologically) and having to want to stay with the organization. The primary strategy to increase organizational commitment to change is to expand opportunity cost. The opportunity cost can be in the form of higher wages or overtime but is not limited to that. It can also be reflected in the strong connection between the employee and the organization or the value of the organization itself. If the employees themselves have a lot invested in the organization, then they may be reluctant to leave or slack off because of this strong connection. And suppose the company itself has a high reputation and value in the industry. In that case, employees may lack better employment options and must continue working hard in the organization.

Organizations can increase overtime pay and reduce quiet quitting because the opportunity cost for employees to give up doing extra work is increased. In addition, organizations should make employees feel engaged or paid so that they will continue to try to get more involved in organizational matters rather than leaving or quiet quitting because of their strong connection to the organization.

Both organizational commitment and performance management managers aim to create a healthy work system and culture to reduce anti-productive behaviors in the organization. In McKinsey's research on culture and change, mentioned that a sustainable and virtuous organizational culture could generate up to 18% of EBITDA for the company [9].

3. Quiet Quitting - the Bottom-up Strategy of the Organization

3.1. Job Satisfaction & Motivation

Strategies that address the high levels of quiet quitting are directly improve employee job satisfaction and motivation. Job satisfaction is positively correlated with normative commitment, as

higher job satisfaction means that employees are more likely to feel obligated to stay with the company. At the same time, employee job satisfaction has a negative relationship with counterproductive behavior because employees want to stay with an organization that satisfies them.

Organizations aiming to improve employee job satisfaction need to consider three aspects. First, the organization should ensure employees know their work is meaningful. Meaningful work increases job satisfaction, organizational commitment, employee happiness and motivation. Employees who find their work meaningful are more likely to go beyond their job requirements and engage in behaviors that benefit the organization and society [10].

Second, organizations should foster a sense of responsibility and make employees feel that they are the key drivers of the quality of the organization's work. Employees are more likely to be accountable to the organization and more satisfied with their work when they feel they are indispensable and responsible for the results of their work [11].

Finally, organizations should make employees knowledgeable of results. Research has shown that letting employees know how well or poorly they are doing their jobs increases job satisfaction, responsibility, motivation, and task performance; in other words, when employees have the opportunity to know how well they are doing, they are more likely to take responsibility for their work and strive for better results [12].

By putting this into action, organizations can adapt and enhance the five core job characteristics to meet the three theories of job satisfaction discussed above and ultimately achieve high levels of employee satisfaction.

First, organizations should take action to ensure job diversity. Organizations can reassign each employee's job to ensure that the job requires as many different competencies and skills as possible. Researchers found that job diversity was positively associated with job satisfaction in a sample of 526 employees from various industries, especially for employees required to work long hours. When employees are exposed to diverse job tasks, they may find their jobs more interesting and engaging, which leads to higher job satisfaction [13].

Second, organizations should put in place practical actions to ensure job completeness. Organizations can reduce the excessive division of labor on projects or jobs to ensure that employee outcomes are as complete and identifiable as possible. Employee work outcomes are employee labels or merit books, and employees may lose motivation if too many people or departments share work outcomes; they know that even if they achieve high levels of success, the credit will not be positioned to the individual.

Third, organizations should take practical action to ensure job significance. Organizations can give employees encouragement and clarity about their jobs really matters. Employees know that their work is essential and meaningful and significantly impacts others. The organization can also increase their sense of accomplishment and responsibility and ultimately increase job satisfaction. Studies have shown that a large proportion of employees are more engaged and more likely to find fulfillment when they feel that their work is personally meaningful and identifiable [10, 14].

Fourth, organizations should take practical action to ensure job autonomy. While ensuring the quality and timeliness of work, organizations can give employees more rights and freedom to make their own decisions within the scope of their work; for example, where they work and how they work. Researchers have found that when employees have freedom, independence, and discretion at work, they are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs, motivated to do well, and perform better [15].

Fifth, organizations should implement practical actions to ensure timely feedback on their work. Organizations can provide automated feedback systems to give employees feedback on their work. Unlike feedback provided by organizational managers, it should come directly from work or results rather than colleagues or supervisors.

External and intrinsic motivation are two ways to increase employee motivation other than improving job satisfaction. External motivation includes recognition, bonuses and promotion opportunities provided by the organization. Intrinsic motivation lies in the personal interest,

confidence and personal experience that the organization helps employees develop. For example, the feeling of accomplishment after the employee has completed the work.

In the process of motivating employees, the organization should take care to ensure equal treatment among employees and even among companies in the industry. Equity theory states that employees compare their inputs and results with others in similar positions to determine whether they are being treated fairly. Employees are likely to be more satisfied when they realize that their inputs (e.g., effort, skills, and experience) are fairly rewarded (e.g., pay, recognition, and career opportunities) [16].

Employees are satisfied when their individual payoffs are the same as those of others.

Equity:

$$\frac{\text{Individual's outcome}}{\text{Individual's input}} = \frac{\text{Other's outcome}}{\text{Other's input}} = \text{Satisfied} \quad (1)$$

Conversely, employees feel angry and disappointed when their individual return is lower than the return on others' pay.

$$\text{Inequity: } \frac{\text{Individual's outcome}}{\text{Individual's input}} < \frac{\text{Other's outcome}}{\text{Other's input}} = \text{Anger} \quad (2)$$

And when employees' individual payoffs are higher than others' payoffs, they may feel arrogant or skittish; because they know that their payoffs are not brightly rewarded for the extra work or quality results they have accomplished.

Inequity:

$$\frac{\text{Individual's outcome}}{\text{Individual's input}} > \frac{\text{Other's outcome}}{\text{Other's input}} = \text{Pride, Over-confidence and Guilt} \quad (3)$$

3.2. Stress & Strains

Studies have found that excessive work stress can overwhelm employees and create anti-productive and withdrawal behaviors [17]. However, stress is not only associated with a bad mood, physical strain and lower productivity, but appropriate stress is seen as a challenge. It can motivate employees [15, 18]. In popular perception, it is generally considered harmful to be under stress, health, anxiety, and burnout are the main examples of strains that could result from experiencing workplace stressors. Stressors are characteristics of the work environment it will cause strain. Sometimes the excessive pressure people feel is unrelated to whether the project is successful and whether they have not achieved the ideal turnover. However, it relates to their poor state today, and their leaders criticize themselves inexplicably. So there are other potential outcomes of stressors besides strains. That is, at the same time, stressors influence strain. Therefore, these two stressors relate to employee personal state and job satisfaction [19].

Organizations should reduce hindrance stressors, i.e., stressors that bring negative effects. Such stressors include but are not limited to role ambiguity, role overload, work-family conflict, negative life events, and financial uncertainty.

It is not only individual employees who encounter obstructive and challenging stressors but also teamwork. Similarly, when a team encounters challenging stressors, although every member will face great pressure, they will experience varying degrees of confidence enhancement after completing their work or projects [20].

Similarly, according to the study, team members tend to become negative and restrictive when confronted with obstructive stressors. As a result, the team develops an emotional, avoidant coping style in response to the obstacles, resulting in reduced commitment and lower individual performance. This kind of avoidant response can drive members away from team interaction and responsibility [21].

Challenge stressors, which are sources of favorable stress, should be appropriately reserved for employees. Such stressors include but are not limited to time pressure, work responsibility, personal development, and positive life events.

Three strategies to reduce excessive negative stress are reducing stressors, providing resources and reducing strains.

Reducing stressors will reduce employee stress at the source, but organizations should aim to minimize hindrance stressors rather than challenge stressors. Organizations can solve problems and get work done by encouraging employees to work in teams. It is often easier for two or more people to share work and overcome problems than for one person. However, organizations need to clarify that sharing work does not mean dividing the work into multiple parts for each employee to complete individually but rather working together as a team to move the work forward. In addition, organizations can offer more employee leave. Employee quiet quitting may be controlled when workplace stressors are addressed, reducing stress-related problems [22].

Providing resources will work to help employees get through difficult times or enhance their ability to cope with stress easily. Organizations can help employees balance stress and demands, for example, by allowing them to work remotely when they have elderly, children, or patients at home or by reducing unnecessary on-site meetings. At the same time, organizations can help employees sustainably overcome stress by developing their personal skills; for example, by providing them with free training and learning so that they can better cope with difficulties at work in the future. Researchers have found that organizations offering resources such as training and development programs, social support networks, and flexible work arrangements have higher employee well-being and job satisfaction [23].

Reducing strains is a strategy to help employees who are already profoundly affected by adverse stress to come out of the gloom. Organizations can provide employees with psychological support to help them solve their problems rationally. Organizations can also provide wellness programs or platforms to help employees with personal issues, alcoholism or smoking. Organizations can also allow and encourage employees to engage in self-relaxation activities; for example, by providing afternoon walks and yoga breaks. Reducing stressors such as role ambiguity, role conflict, and work overload effectively impacts employee health and reduces negative outcomes such as quiet quitting, absenteeism, and turnover [24].

4. Conclusion

Overall, the paper suggests four areas in which organizations can address quiet quitting: effective performance management and feedback; inclusive and positive organizational commitment; sustainable motivation and job satisfaction; and reasonable stress management.

Effective performance management includes management by objectives (MBO) and 360-degree feedback. Organizations should set reasonable goals and follow up on them to monitor and help employees solve problems and improve performance. They can help the organization shape a fair and competitive office culture. Next, the organization's commitment aims to shape an inclusive and positive work culture for employees. Organizations should strive to provide employment support to increase organizational commitment and ultimately get employees to work willingly. In addition, job satisfaction and motivation are enhanced through job variety, completeness, significance, autonomy, and feedback. Organizations help employees improve job satisfaction by enhancing these five job characteristics to achieve higher employee motivation and ultimately reduce quiet quitting. Finally, organizations help employees improve job satisfaction by retaining some of the challenge pressure and reducing other negative pressures. The organization helps employees to emerge from burnout to reduce counterproductive and withdrawal behaviors.

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