



The rise of quiet quitting:

A UK growing phenomenon

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In recent years, the UK has seen a significant shift in workplace dynamics, with a rising number of employees engaging in what has been dubbed "quiet quitting." This term refers to the practice of employees becoming increasingly disengaged from their work and doing the bare minimum. With people working remotely it can be harder to spot the signs of an unhappy employee.

We have carried out our own research and compiled this guide to highlight the root causes of quiet quitting, how it impacts your business and ways to address this trend in your organisation.



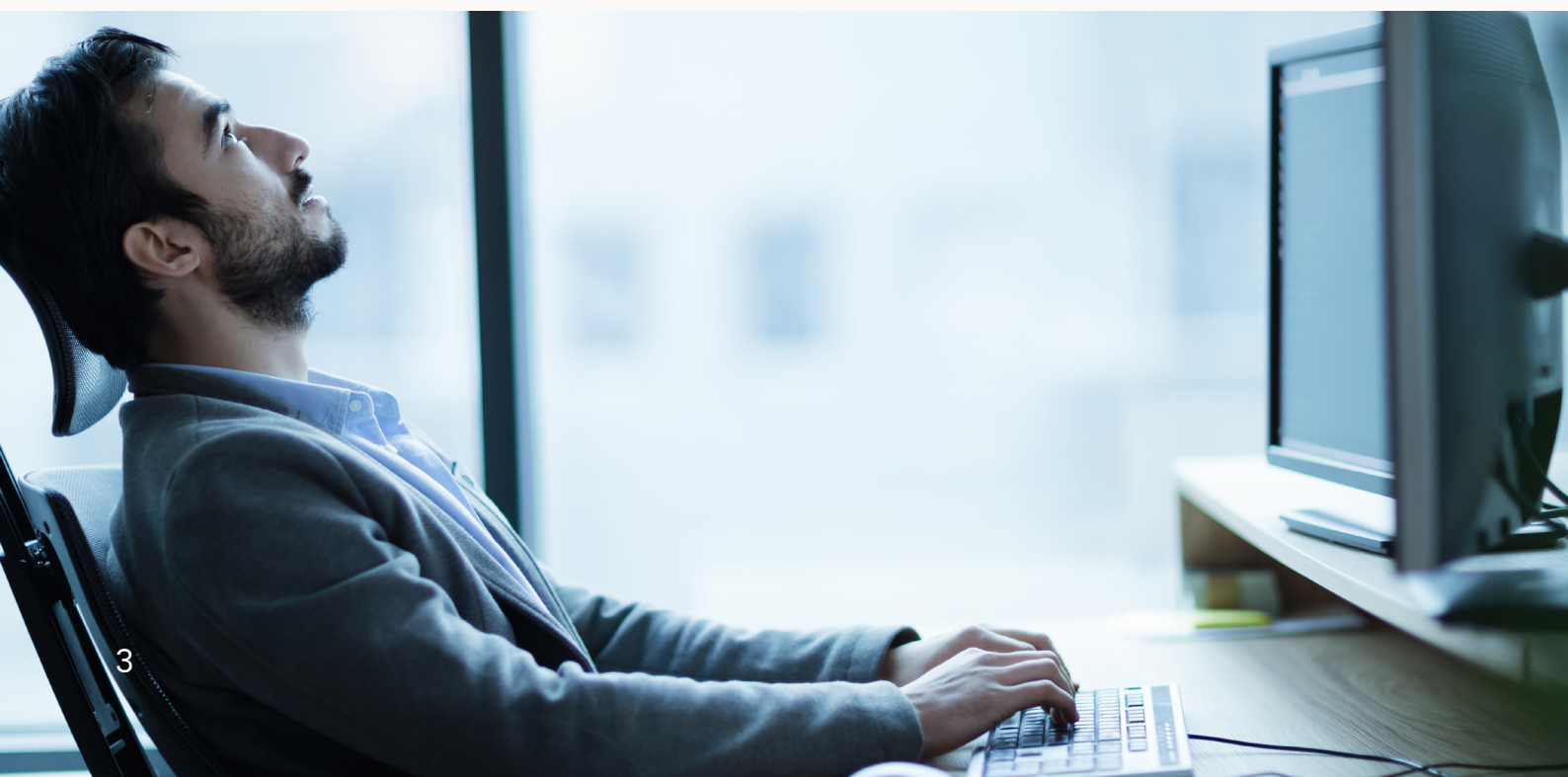
What is quiet quitting?

Quiet quitting is another change in the work dynamic found in a modern workplace. It doesn't mean people are lazy, just that they are not prepared to do higher levels of work if they aren't being rewarded or given the recognition that they deserve.

Unlike the more visible and disruptive forms of quitting, quiet quitting is subtle, often going unnoticed by employers until it begins to impact overall productivity and workplace morale.

The London School of Economics recently conducted a study using over four million datapoints to map the actual hours worked in the UK labour market, including overtime, over the last 15 years. Results showed a decline in the number of hours worked post pandemic compared to pre pandemic levels, on average people worked 4.5 less days a year. This decline in working hours was not accompanied by a decline in wages.

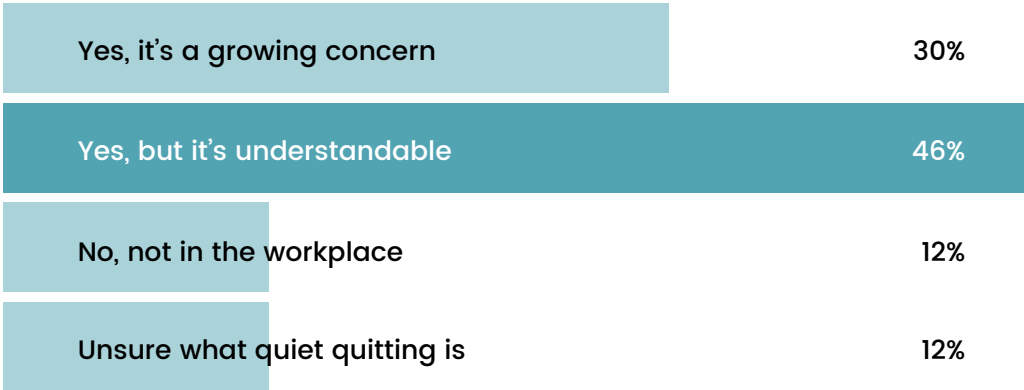
Whilst analysis from the 2023 paper **'Does the Tendency for 'Quiet Quitting' Differ across Generations? Evidence from the UK'**, reveals that actual hours worked, from the start of quiet quitting phenomenon declined in three of the four generational cohorts that were analysed: GenZs, Millennials & GenXers.



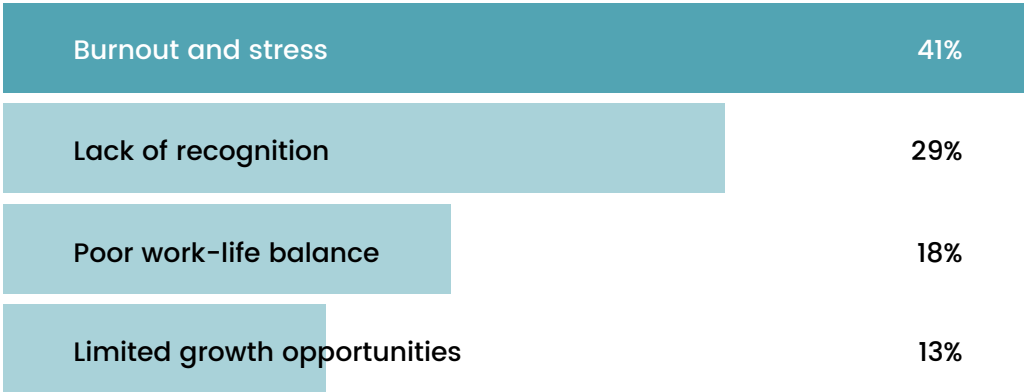
Our poll results

We carried out a series of recent polls from over 600 people and these are the results:

Have you noticed 'quiet quitting' in your workplace, where employees do just the bare minimum? How do you feel about this trend?



What do you think is the main reason people engage in quiet quitting?



What's the most common way people engage in quiet quitting?



The roots of quiet quitting

Quiet quitting is not a new concept, but its prevalence has surged, particularly in the post-pandemic era. Several factors have contributed to this trend:

Burnout and mental health:

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted mental health, with many workers feeling exhausted and disengaged. The blurring of lines between work and personal life during lockdowns has led to widespread burnout, prompting many to reassess their work-life balance. Quiet quitting has become a coping mechanism for those who feel overwhelmed by the demands of their jobs but are not ready or able to leave them outright.

Dissatisfaction with work culture:

Many employees report feeling underpaid, and unsupported in their roles. According to **BBP media** nearly 1/3 of employees in the UK feel undervalued at work. The lack of recognition and career advancement opportunities has led to a disengagement, where employees perform only what is necessary to get by, without any additional effort.



Shift in work priorities:

The pandemic has also caused a shift in work priorities. Employees are increasingly valuing their personal time and well-being over traditional career aspirations. This shift has led to a rejection of the “hustle culture” and a move towards more sustainable working practices, even if it means quietly stepping back from their roles.

Remote work dynamics:

The increase in remote working has further fuelled quiet quitting. Without the physical presence in an office, it becomes easier for employees to disengage without being noticed. The lack of direct supervision and a more isolated work environment can lead to decreased motivation, resulting in a minimalist approach to work responsibilities.

The impact on employers and workplaces

Quiet quitting can have a profound impact on businesses, often more so than traditional resignations. When employees quietly disengage, it can lead to:

Reduced productivity:

Employees who are not fully engaged in their work contribute less, leading to a decline in overall productivity. This can be particularly damaging in team-based environments where collaboration is key to success.

Low morale and engagement:

Quiet quitting can create a ripple effect, spreading disengagement across teams. When one employee steps back, others may follow, leading to a broader culture of low morale and minimal effort.



Increased turnover rates:

While quiet quitting is characterised by employees staying in their roles, it often precedes actual resignations. As dissatisfaction grows, the likelihood of employees leaving for better opportunities increases.

Challenges in talent management:

For HR departments, quiet quitting poses a unique challenge. It is difficult to identify and address, as the signs are often subtle. Traditional performance management strategies may not be effective, requiring a more nuanced approach to employee engagement and satisfaction.

5 top tips to address quiet quitting

To combat quiet quitting, employers need to focus on creating a more supportive and engaging work environment. Key tactics include:

1 Fostering open communication:

Employees who are not fully engaged in their work contribute less, leading to a decline in overall productivity. This can be particularly damaging in team-based environments where collaboration is key to success.

2 Enhancing employee well-being:

Providing resources for mental health support, offering flexible working arrangements, and promoting a healthy work-life balance are crucial in preventing burnout and disengagement.



3 Recognising and rewarding effort:

Acknowledging employees' hard work and providing opportunities for career advancement can go a long way in boosting morale and motivation.

4 Reevaluating workloads and expectations:

Employers should assess whether their expectations are realistic and manageable. Reducing excessive workloads and ensuring fair pay can prevent the frustration that often leads to quiet quitting.

5 Building a positive work culture:

Cultivating a workplace that values collaboration, respect, and mutual support can reduce the likelihood of quiet quitting. Employees who feel valued and connected are more likely to stay engaged in their work.

Quiet quitting is a silent but significant trend in the UK workforce, reflecting broader changes in employee attitudes towards work. While it presents challenges for employers, it also offers an opportunity to reassess workplace practices and foster a more supportive and sustainable work environment. By addressing the root causes of quiet quitting, employers can not only prevent disengagement but also enhance the overall well-being and productivity of their workforce.



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