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The newest hiring headache: Ghosting

In a job market rife with opportunities, many top candidates simply drop off the radar--even after they've accepted a job.

By Marlene Satter | July 13, 2018

It doesn't take a psychic to see that at least one tide has turned in the employment market



Even employees who have been with a company for some time are now vanishing—just not reporting for work one day, providing no reasons or contact, and not coming back. (Photo: Shutterstock)

(<https://www.benefitspro.com/sites/benefitspro/2018/07/06/213k-jobs-added-in-june-unemployment-up/>)—recruiters are having to deal with recruits and even employees, newly hired or not, “ghosting” them.

According to [reporting](https://www.inc.com/justin-bariso/what-is-employee-ghosting-how-companies-created-their-own-worst-nightmare.html) (<https://www.inc.com/justin-bariso/what-is-employee-ghosting-how-companies-created-their-own-worst-nightmare.html>) from Inc., while it’s better known in the world of dating, job candidates now simply disappear, never to be heard from again—not replying to [job offers](#)

(<https://www.benefitspro.com/sites/benefitspro/2018/02/02/benefits-and-the-job-offer-5-tips-for-millennials-5-for-hr-pros/>), or even not reporting for work once they’ve actually been hired.

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(<https://www.benefitspro.com/sites/benefitspro/2018/06/26/broken-business-processes-drive-away-employees/>)

Even employees who have been with a company for some time are now vanishing, adds a [blog post](http://www.employco.com/blog/2018/06/26/why-so-many-americans-are-ghosting-employers/) (<http://www.employco.com/blog/2018/06/26/why-so-many-americans-are-ghosting-employers/>) on Employco, just not reporting for work one day, providing no reasons or contact, and not coming back. The employer is left with an empty desk and no answers.

When the tables were turned and the job market is tough on candidates, would-be workers were often subject to company ghosting, going for interviews and then never hearing from the company again. But now the shoe is on the other foot; in a tight job market, candidates have so many opportunities that they simply abandon an interview or the job itself if [something better](#)

(<https://www.benefitspro.com/sites/benefitspro/2018/05/29/the-two-sided-coin-of-social-media-in-the-workplace/>) comes along. And not feeling the need for awkward conversations with HR about the change, they vanish without apology or explanation.

According to Rob Wilson, president of Employco USA and employment trends expert, employees are also quitting “in droves.” In the blog post, Wilson is quoted saying, “According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the amount of employees who have voluntarily left their jobs is almost DOUBLE that of the number of employees who were fired. And, in March of this year, 3 million Americans quit their jobs out of their own volition.”

As pointed out via in a LinkedIn post cited in the Inc. report, “They’re simply getting a taste of their own medicine.”

The LinkedIn post is quoted saying, “Let’s remember that employers ghost their employees all the time. Have you ever worked at a company where management decided to lay off 30 percent of the workforce so they could hit the numbers to earn their bonuses? Employees find out on Friday afternoon that they won’t be allowed inside the building on Monday morning ... ‘At will’ employment is a brutal arrangement in which employees can quit at any time for any reason and employers can fire employees at any time for any reason. Hate the game, not the players.”

Wilson also cites LinkedIn complaints by employers about the trend: “It seems that our booming jobs economy has led to applicants who simply ‘disappear’ during the interview process. According to [LinkedIn \(https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/people-ghosting-work-its-driving-companies-crazy-chip-cutter/\)](https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/people-ghosting-work-its-driving-companies-crazy-chip-cutter/), many employers now say that the tides have turned on them...instead of applicants desperately hoping to get a call-back, hiring teams themselves now find themselves dealing with unanswered calls and candidates who suddenly go MIA without warning.”

Suggestions to avoid being ghosted include being respectful of both job candidates and employees, so that they’re less likely to treat the job opportunity as disposable; being transparent about the job, so that they don’t feel they’ve been deceived if the job turns out not to be what was promised; and moving on from a ghost candidate to find someone else who might be better suited to the company.