

Why They Leave

How to Attract and Retain Talent in 2025



5 Takeaways

1. Don't Neglect the Fundamentals

Salary, work-life balance, job security, and perks & benefits are firmly the top reasons people join and stay at a company. Factors like remote working and a shared mission are great, but they won't by themselves bring you the top talent.

2. Salary Will Draw Talent, but Won't Stop an Exit

When people join and stay at a company, salary is by far the top factor. But when employees leave, job insecurity, a loss of work-life balance, poor management and a worsening of team culture are what drive them away. Salary is your greatest attraction tool, but it won't fix retention.

3. Employees and Alumni Are Your Greatest Recruitment Asset and Liability

Word of mouth from peers influenced Americans' perceptions of employers most. It was selected nearly twice as often as than the next factor "customers and brand visibility"

4. Glassdoor and Social Media Are Key to Attracting Next Gen Talent

The current workforce prioritizes your website to evaluate you as an employer, but students today about to enter the workforce will go to Glassdoor and social media first.

5. Performance as an Employer Drives Brand Reputation

Today, how well brands treat their employees is the number one factor driving a company's employer reputation. Since tracking began in 2023 it has remained a top 4 reputation consideration.

The Quiet Power of Fundamentals in the War for Talent

Letter from the CEO



Companies have tried novel tactics to lure talent, including kombucha on tap, nap pods, and “hangover leave”. Yet the latest survey evidence suggests something more prosaic: the basics matter most when it comes to why employees join, stay, or leave an organization. According to our Reputation Leaders Reputation Pulse (July 2025), Americans rank salary, work-life balance, and job security as the top 3 reasons to join a firm.

But the picture changes when employees walk out the door. Not only salary and job security drive exits, but also the quieter, harder-to-measure erosion of team culture and productivity. People stay for stability; they leave when the day-to-day experience of the job or team turns sour. This distinction shows why investment in perks without fixing structural fundamentals is wasted, and why “culture” can no longer be dismissed as soft. How staff are treated matters, as word of mouth recommendation, both in person and amplified through platforms like Glassdoor, is a prominent shaper of your credibility as an employer.

For the next generation of talent, the website is no longer the sole place to assess employer reputations; social media and Glassdoor play a bigger role. In all cases, the employer brand is less about advertising than about lived reality. Those who treat employees well, balance workloads, and maintain trust will find their best recruitment tool is not an expensive campaign, but the quiet advocacy of their own people.

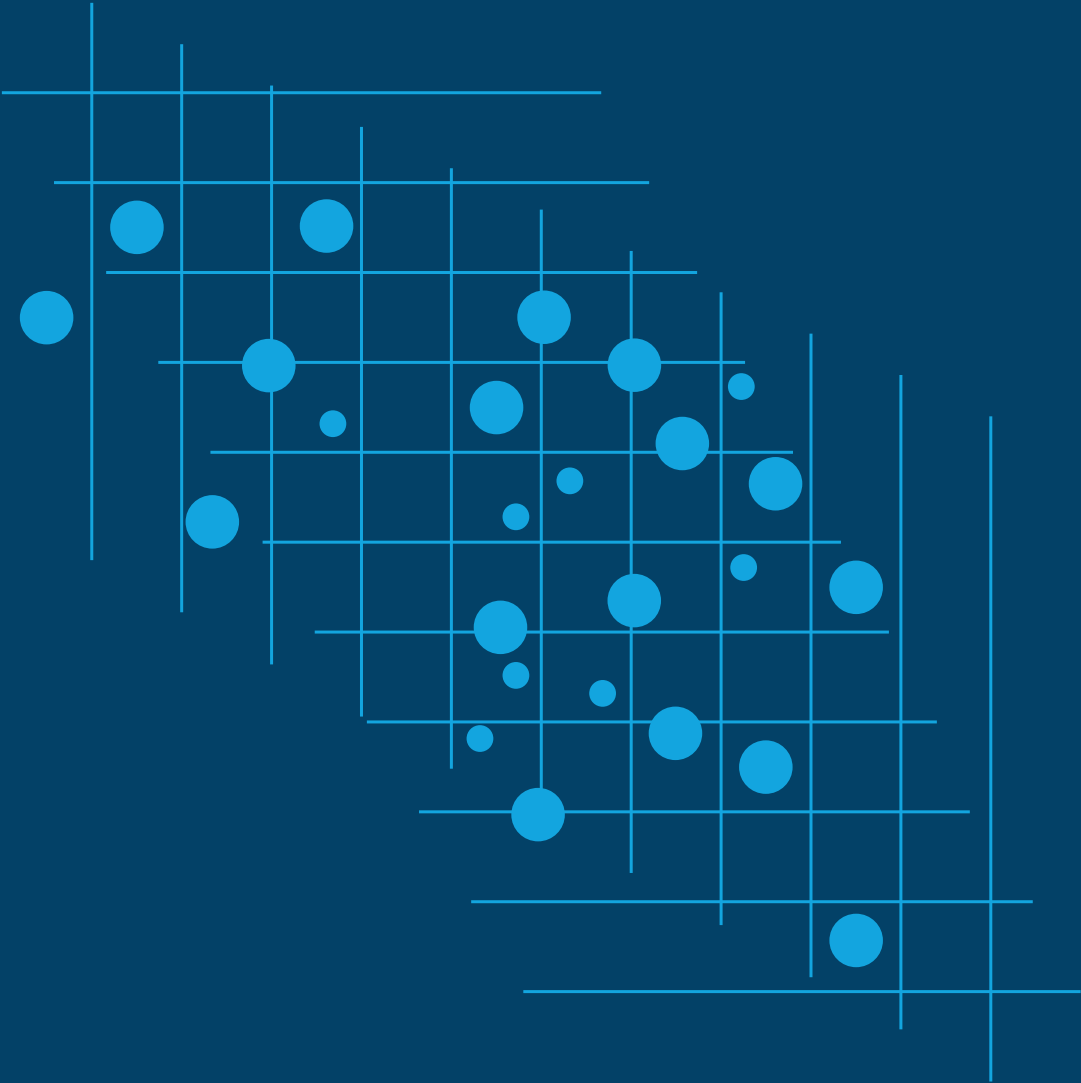
For CEOs, HR leaders, and consultants, the message is clear: gimmicks won’t fix a talent leak. Employers must manage, compensate, and behave well—their employer brand and their current and future talent pool depend on it.



Laurence Evans
CEO & Founder
Reputation Leaders



The Data



Why Employees Join, Stay, and Leave



Salary, Work-Life Balance, Job Security, And Perks & Benefits Are Top Reasons Americans Join A Company

Thinking about work, which 3 of the following factors are the most important when you are considering joining a company?



Work-Life Balance And Job Security Are More Important To Staying At A Company

Team culture becomes the 4th highest ranked first factor

When thinking about employment, which 3 of the following factors are the most important for staying at a company?



Job Insecurity, A Reduction In Work-life Balance And A Worsening Of Team Culture Drive Employees Away

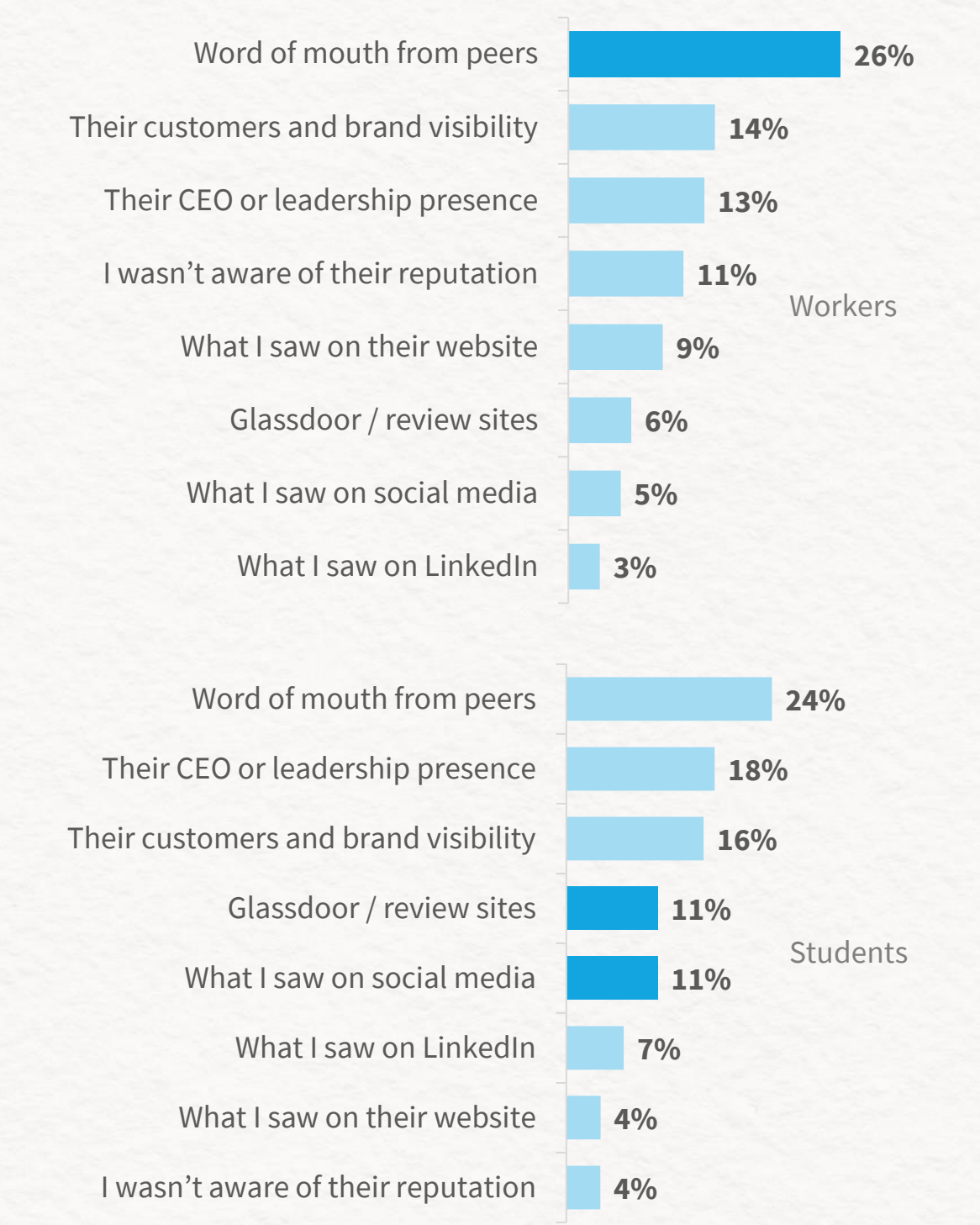
Thinking about work, which 3 of the following factors are the most important when considering leaving a company?



Word Of Mouth Has The Most Influence On Perception Of A Company’s Reputation As An Employer

Glassdoor and social media more important with students

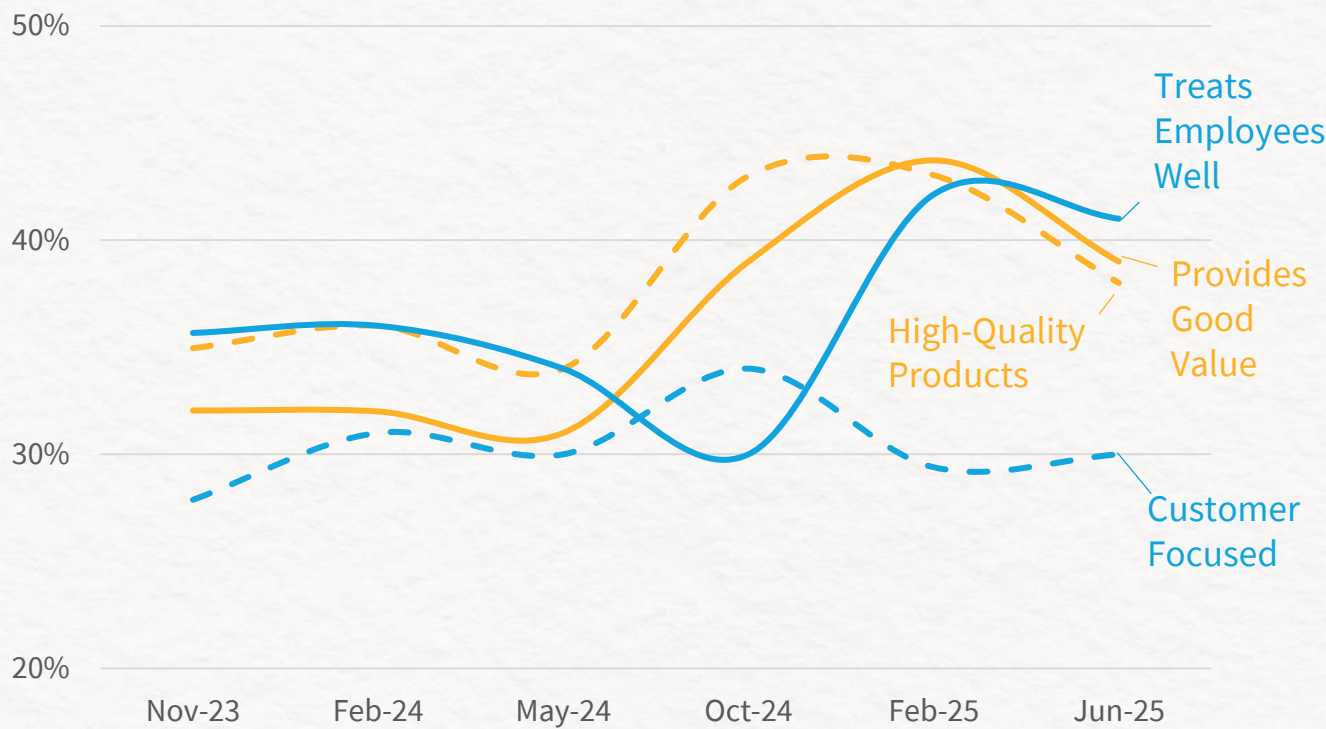
Thinking about your job, before you accepted your current role, what most influenced your perception of the company’s reputation as an employer?



How A Company Treats Its Employees Is The Most Important Factor In A Company's Reputation

Glassdoor and socials more important with students

When you think about a company's reputation, which of the following matters most to you?

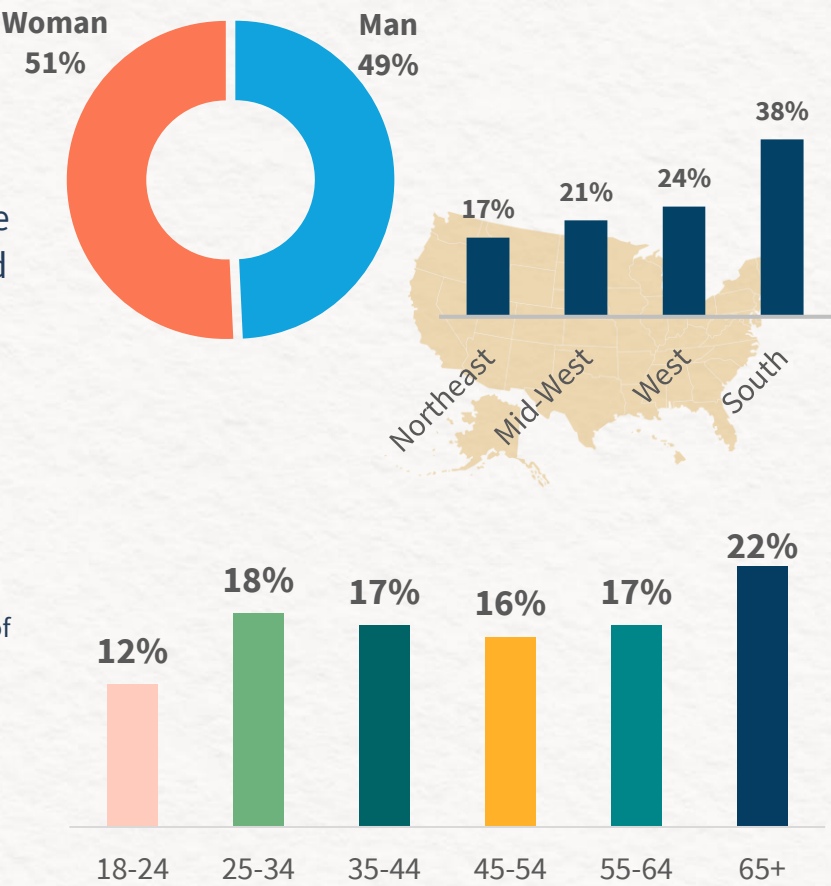


Methodology

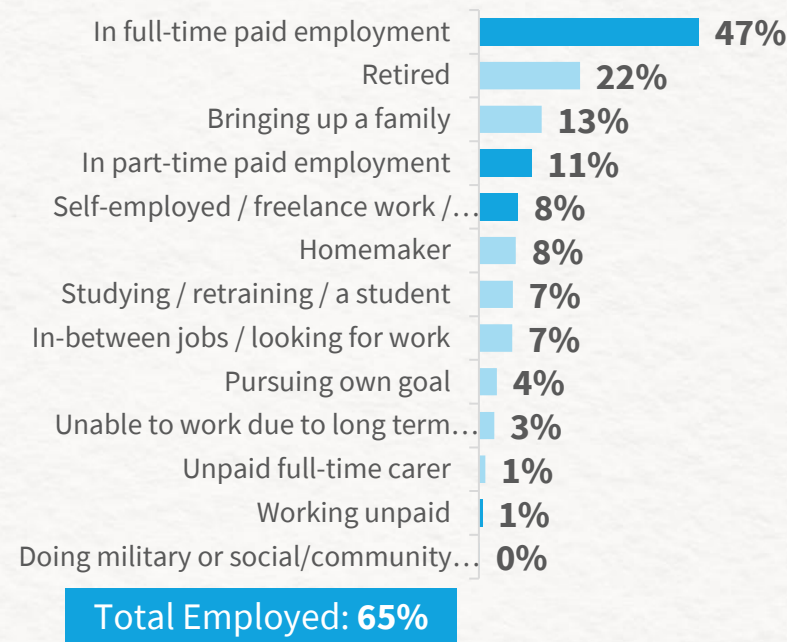
Reputation Leaders conducted a **5-minute** online survey in June 2025 among **a total of 1000 American adults** over the age of 18. This sample included **650 workers** and **74 students**.

The data was **weighted to match the demographics of the US by gender, age, and region**.

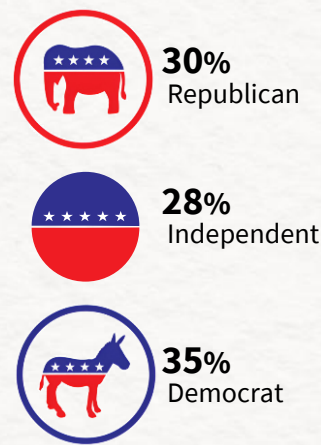
The margin of error for the total sample of 1000 is +/- 3.1% at the 95% level of confidence.



Which of the following describe you?



In politics, as of today, do you consider yourself a Republican, a Democrat, or an independent?



7% I don't align with any of these

Who are Reputation Leaders?



Laurence Evans
CEO & Founder
Reputation Leaders

In 2013 Laurence Evans founded Reputation Leaders.

Since then, Reputation Leaders have helped others build and maintain their corporate reputation by providing high quality, high touch insights at speed.

We've worked all over the globe, with some of the biggest brands in the world. Our team have more than 20 years experience doing market research in 80 countries.



Interested to hear more?
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Or visit our website at
www.reputationleaders.com