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## The Three A's of Rebuilding Your Workforce

Many theories are being shared in the media about why employees are leaving the workforce in such high numbers, particularly women. And there are more questions than answers. Don't people need money? Was the government aid so good people decided they don't need to work? Are women realizing they're not able to pursue a career and raise a family at the same time? However, these questions may not help in revealing what's really going on.

The questions we could be asking are: Did companies offer enough flexibility? Did employers demonstrate how much they truly value their workforce? And did they offer growth opportunities? Did managers lead with trust and compassion so that their employees had some autonomy and felt cared for? And perhaps one of the most crucial questions - was the company responsible for employee burnout, where overselling and over delivering led to a culture of overwork that was never going to be sustainable?

The truth is, we will have to wait to see what the data show once we're able to collectively process and analyze the nightmare that has been the global pandemic. In the absence of an actual explanation, this mass exodus is being called the Great Resignation. But labeling it as such blames the employee and fails to consider the culture of work and the systems in place that led to such high numbers of employees leaving the workforce.

Instead, let's think of it as a time for Great Recognition. There is the recognition that a good job or career must not come at the expense of our own health, mental health and well-being, or that of our loved ones, particularly those family members we're caring for at home. There is the recognition that working hard for an income below the poverty level is not just. There is the recognition that being treated poorly at work by employers and customers is not what

we're meant to be doing with our lives. There is the recognition that earning a high salary isn't compensation enough for long hours that make it impossible to sustain our relationships.

In order to navigate this Great Recognition, businesses must be able to respond to the questions above. The future of work is being shaped by employees, many of whom are women and people of color with caregiving responsibilities, and savvy employers can be leaders of the future workforce by offering good jobs that the most qualified and high quality talent will want. Leaders and managers will need to be well versed in three practices, which are the three A's of rebuilding your workforce:

1. **Autonomy** - this includes building trust and creating a flexible workplace, offering hybrid work arrangements and flipping the traditional top down approach to management.
2. **Accountability** - put systems in place that will support employees to succeed while leaders let go of some "control". This can include good onboarding and project planning on the front end, checklists, check-ins and time allocated to collaboration.
3. **Accolades** - praise and honor employees' hard work and dedication. Celebrate wins with employees, even the small ones. And connect successes to the mission and vision of the company.

The three A's above can serve as a guide post for leaders and managers who want to build a reputation of an organization that job searchers want to work with. For more information about implementing workplace policies that will help you rebuild your workforce by attracting and retaining the most qualified talent, visit [nmfamilyfriendlybusiness.org](http://nmfamilyfriendlybusiness.org).



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Giovanna Rossi is a results strategist and the President/CEO of Collective Action Strategies, LLC, a consulting firm dedicated to improving the health and lives of women and families through personal, policy and leadership development. Giovanna holds a Master of Science degree in Public Policy from the London School of Economics, and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Spanish and Latin American Studies from the University of New Mexico. Giovanna was the first ever women's health policy advisor for the state of New Mexico and was a women's studies adjunct professor at the University of New Mexico. She is passionate about improving the health and lives of women and families through work-life policy, economic self-sufficiency and health for women, making sure all children are supported and thriving, and addressing gender inequities in programs, policies, and services. She is the founder of Well Woman Life™, which supports women to achieve their highest level of fulfillment and well-being and founder of the Family Friendly Business Award®. Giovanna is host of The Well Woman show on NPR One, a regular panelist on New Mexico PBS In Focus, contributor on Forbes.com and a 2018 Women of Influence honoree.