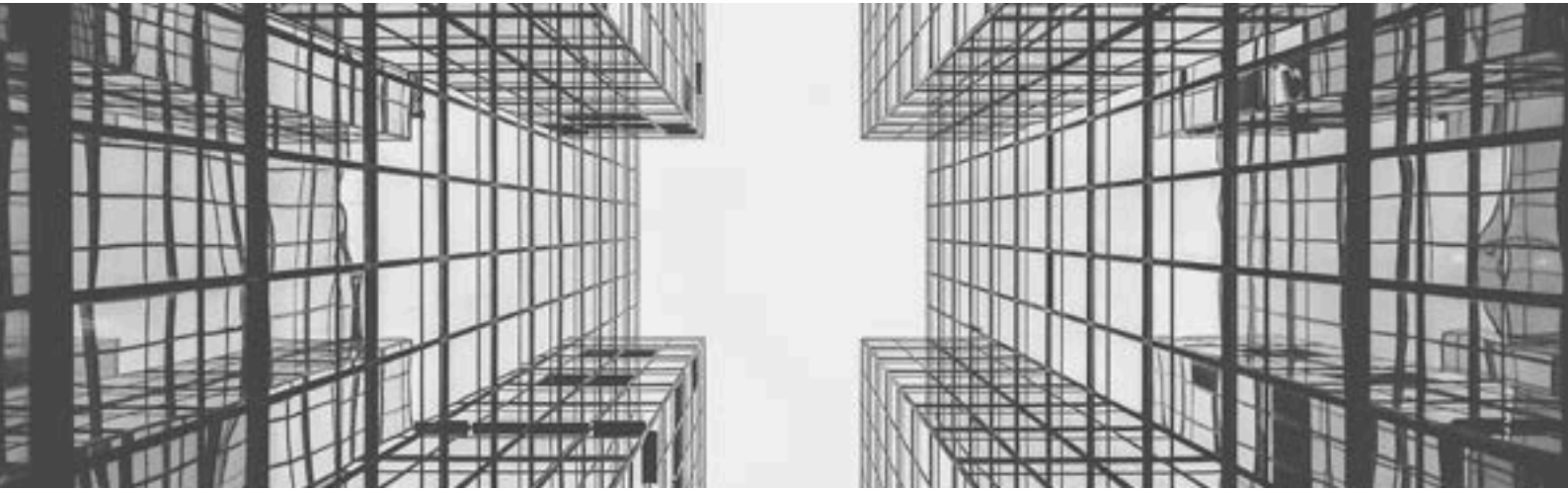


WHY
CONSTRUCTION
DELIVERY
PROFESSIONALS
MOVE



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MY TAKE

Before I dive into my thoughts, I want to clarify that I'm focusing on the delivery side of the construction sector, including commercial construction, multi-residential, and high-end residential. This is just my perspective on why someone might leave a construction company, and I'll keep it straightforward for easy reading.

For the sake of this report, I'm mainly looking at Site Managers, Contract Administrators/Project Coordinators and Project Managers - though many of the reasons I mention will apply across the board in construction. It's not always just one reason that leads someone to leave; it could be a combination of factors.



SITE MANAGERS

- Better work-life balance - A lot of Site Managers leave to find a better roster, no weekends, or simply more time for family and life.
- Higher pay elsewhere - Salary is always a factor, and new employers often offer a more competitive package.
- Larger or more exciting projects - Moving to projects that align with passions or are larger in scale can be a big draw.
- Quality trades and payments - Some Site Managers move because they're frustrated with managing poor-quality trades or a company's financial instability, which affects how trades are paid.
- Lack of training and development (T&D) - If Site Managers feel they're not learning or growing in their roles, they'll look for opportunities that offer T&D.
- Uncertainty of upcoming projects - If a Site Manager isn't being kept in the loop about future projects, it can create doubt, and they might start looking elsewhere.
- Commute - A new project closer to home or less travel can make all the difference.
- Safety concerns - If processes and systems are not up to scratch, or safety is a concern, it can be a significant motivator for moving on.
- Role change or company shift - If hired for one type of work (e.g. fit-out) and the company shifts focus to high-end construction, it may no longer align with their interests.
- Lack of senior management involvement - When upper management isn't around or isn't engaging with the site, it can be demotivating.
- Personality clashes - Sometimes, it's just down to the people they work with, and a clash of personalities can make them want to leave.



CONTRACT ADMINISTRATORS / PROJECT COORDINATORS

- There is no clear pathway to Project Management - Many leave because there is no clear way to step up into a Project Manager role.
- Higher pay elsewhere - As with Site Managers, better salary packages elsewhere can tempt employees to leave.
- Lack of mentorship or T&D - A lack of structured mentorship or T&D opportunities can push employees to find companies that offer these resources.
- Processes, systems, and technology - If the company's systems aren't up to scratch or aren't using the latest technology, it can be frustrating to work with outdated processes.
- Company culture - A poor company culture, a lack of team events, or no regular catch-ups can make employees feel disconnected.
- Unstructured reviews - If there's no formal feedback loop or system for professional growth, employees may feel like they're not progressing.
- Overwork and being spread too thin - Being spread across multiple projects with poor-quality work can lead to burnout and dissatisfaction.
- Larger or more aligned projects - Moving into a Tier 1 company or a larger, more exciting project could be a big motivator.
- Lack of diversity - Employees may feel alienated if the workplace feels homogenous or doesn't offer diversity.



PROJECT MANAGERS

- Poor or non-existent company culture - When the company's culture is weak or doesn't match personal values, it becomes a significant reason to leave.
- Higher salaries and better benefits elsewhere - Competitive pay packages and benefits are always an incentive.
- Lack of visible development - If there's no visible progression or development opportunities in their Senior Project Manager or Construction Manager role, it's easy to get frustrated and move on.
- Lack of T&D - As with other roles, employees look elsewhere if there's no ongoing learning or growth.
- Outdated processes or systems – Inefficient and outdated systems can slow a PM's ability to do their job effectively.
- Irregular reviews - If performance reviews are few and far between, it can be demotivating for someone looking to progress financially and professionally.
- Lack of communication and support from senior leadership - A disconnect from senior leadership can make Project Managers feel unsupported and undervalued.
- Overworked and stretched across too many projects - Trying to juggle too many projects or being overworked can lead to burnout.
- Switching to the client side or consultancy - Some Project Managers move to work directly with clients or in consultancy roles where they may feel they can make a bigger impact and have better balance.
- Closer proximity to home - Relocation to a role closer to home is often a factor in PMs' decisions to leave.
- Work-from-home or flexibility - Some Project Managers look for roles that offer better work flexibility, like the option to work from home.

KEY REASONS PEOPLE MOVE

Many of these reasons can be grouped into a few main categories.

Remuneration and
Benefits

Lack of T&D
Progression and
Mentoring

Company
Culture

The Type and Size
of Projects

THE ROLE OF COMPANY CULTURE

I recently ran a poll on LinkedIn asking why people left their last construction job and what might make them consider moving in the future. Here's what I found:

- 44% of respondents said culture was the main reason. But what exactly does "culture" mean? It's not about perks like KFC for the Super Bowl or a ping-pong table in the break room (though those things help!). Culture is about how your employees feel about the workplace.

Training and development, remuneration, benefits, and the types of projects you work on all feed into culture. Your culture is essentially your brand, and when it's strong, it becomes a key tool for attracting and retaining talent. If you've got engaged employees who feel valued, they'll recommend your company to others and help you build a strong reputation.



WHAT CAN YOU DO TO IMPROVE RETENTION?

1. Regular internal reviews: Establish a structured review system where employees can track progress and provide feedback. Follow-up is key.
2. Pairing up mentors: Pair junior staff with more senior team members to offer guidance and mentorship.
3. Create a leadership team: Develop an internal team that helps guide and support the workforce.
4. Company events: Regular events like Christmas parties or charity days can build a sense of community.
5. Join industry bodies: Consider joining or reviewing current construction bodies, like NAWIC, to foster better industry connections.
6. Annual company updates: Directors should regularly update employees through a slide deck or town hall to share where the company is heading.
7. Relevant workshops: Host workshops on topics like conflict management for Site Managers, negotiation for CAs, and time management for Project Managers.

EXIT INTERVIEWS & RECORD-KEEPING

Understanding why people leave is as important as knowing what keeps them engaged. Exit interviews offer valuable insights into what might be going wrong: culture, leadership, or something else.

Every time an employee moves on, conducting an exit interview gives you the opportunity to gather candid feedback on their reasons for leaving. Make sure the process is structured and confidential, allowing employees to speak freely about their experience within the company. The insights you gather can help you spot patterns and address recurring issues before they lead to more resignations.

Equally important is keeping a record of these interviews. By tracking the reasons people leave over time, you'll get a clear picture of where improvements can be made and whether any trends emerge. It's also a valuable tool for identifying if specific teams, managers, or departments are facing more challenges than others.

You could store these insights in an anonymous, secure way and review them regularly, ensuring that actionable items are taken from the feedback. This information can then be shared with leadership to take appropriate steps toward addressing systemic issues and improving retention in the future.



CONCLUSION

It isn't easy running a business and keeping everyone happy. It's a constant challenge to ensure people remain fulfilled and motivated in an ever-changing industry like construction. People change, their lives evolve, and their goals shift over time.

Technology is speeding up people's thoughts and perceptions of what "good" looks like, making expectations higher and changing how employees view their roles, growth, and work-life balance. As these shifts happen faster, it's more important than ever to provide a clear sense of purpose, a strong company culture, and defined goals. These elements will help you minimise turnover and create an environment where employees feel supported, valued, and aligned with the company vision.

If you'd like to discuss any of the points mentioned here in more detail, I'm happy to dive deeper and help with specific strategies for your business.



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