

30% of HR Professionals Who Quit in 2025 Felt Undervalued by Their Leaders

HR Recruit's own candidate data finds leadership undervaluation, not pay, drove 30% of HR departures in 2025, rising to 45% at manager level and above.

MIAMI, FL, UNITED STATES, August 3, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- HR professionals are not leaving over pay. Around 30% of HR professionals who registered with [HR Recruit](#) in 2025 said they left because leadership undervalued the HR function. Only 19% left [because of pay](#), nearly half as many. HR Recruit found this pattern in an analysis of its own candidate debriefs.



The pattern was sharpest at the top.

Among HR Managers and above, 45% pointed to being undervalued as their reason for leaving, well above the 30% seen across the group as a whole, and they lasted an average of just 1 to 3 years in the role before walking away. The analysis covers HR professionals from HR Generalists through to Chief Human Resources Officers, registered with HR Recruit at organizations across the US and Canada ranging from privately owned businesses to large enterprises.

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Jo Thompson, Regional Director at HR Recruit, said the numbers show that many leaders still misunderstand the role of HR, and not that the industry lacks skilled professionals. “The professionals we speak to rarely leave because of pay. They leave because they cannot influence the people making decisions and eventually they stop trying,” said Jo Thompson. “Many chief executives have not

held roles that exposed them to HR's commercial impact, so they treat HR as a cost to manage rather than a function that reduces risk and supports growth."



HR professionals who translate their work into financial terms are the ones employers keep. "The ones who get retained present an absence policy as a measurable dollar saving, not just a policy," Thompson said.

Those who cannot make that case are working under conditions that make it harder to try. The pressure on HR teams makes the problem worse. SHRM's 2026 State of the Workplace research found that 58% of HR professionals regularly worked beyond their limits. HR Recruit's analysis identified the same group as the most likely to leave. The firm found the greatest pressure at manager level and above, where HR professionals stay for the shortest time and are most likely to feel undervalued.

Thompson said the pattern holds across every company size. "When an employer loses an experienced HR professional, it loses the person who helps keep everyone else on board."

About HR Recruit

HR Recruit is a division of Exec Recruit Group and focuses exclusively on HR recruitment across North America. Its recruiters place HR professionals at every level, from HR Generalists through to Chief Human Resources Officers, including specialists in talent acquisition, DEI and compensation. It works with organizations across the US and Canada, from privately owned businesses to large enterprises, in fields from energy and technology to not-for-profit. For more details, visit <https://hr-recruit.com/about-us/>.

Christianne Kania

HR Recruit

c.kania@hr-recruit.com

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