Reviewing Employee Turnover: Focusing on Proximal Psychological States and an Expanded Criterion

By

Prof. Peter Hom
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Date:      Tuesday, 11 January 2011
Time:      2:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Venue:     M802

All interested are welcome
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Abstract

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To improve turnover prediction, Hom, Mitchell, Lee, and Griffeth reconceptualize the turnover criterion and its immediate antecedent (quit intentions). Specifically, we suggest an expanded criterion that captures leavers’ perception of volitional control (and incorporates involuntary turnover) and their turnover destinations (e.g., another job, unpaid alternatives). Corresponding to an expanded criterion, we suggest various psychological states defined by two dimensions—employment status (staying vs leaving) and perceived voluntariness. By crossing these dimensions, we create a typology comprising the following mindsets: (1) voluntary stayers (those who want to and can stay with the organization), (2) voluntary leavers (those who want to and can leave with the organization), (3) involuntary stayers (those who want to leave the organization but cannot), and (4) involuntary leavers (those who want to stay with the organization but cannot). We describe how they arise and their various attitudinal and behavioral characteristics. Notably, we speculate about their departure times and turnover destinations. Our theoretical approach extends job embeddedness theory, commitment models, and turnover theory and research but also complements growing scholarship on motivational states.

Peter W. Hom is a Professor of Management at Arizona State University (Tempe, AZ). He received his Ph.D. from the University of Illinois (Champaign-Urbana) in Industrial/Organizational Psychology. Prof. Hom has investigated theories of employee turnover in various occupations (Chinese managers, Swiss bankers, industrial salesmen, retail sales personnel, National Guardsmen, Mexican factory workers), designed realistic job previews to reduce reality shock and early quits among new nurses and accountants, and estimated the economic costs of turnover for mental health agencies. Currently, he analyzes and interprets statistics for the Attrition and Retention Consortium where Fortune 500 corporations share quit statistics for benchmarking. He has authored scholarly articles in the Academy of Management Journal, the Journal of Applied Psychology, Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, and Personnel Psychology. He has authored two books entitled “Employee Turnover” (South-Western College Publishing Company, 1995) and “Retaining Valued Employees” (Sage Publications, 2001) with Rodger Griffeth. He and Drs. Griffeth, Greg Prussia, and Fanny Caranikas-Walker won the “1992 Scholarly Achievement Award” from the Human Resource Management Division of the Academy of Management for best academic article in Human Resources. He was recently admitted to the Society of Organizational Behavior. Prof. Hom serves on Editorial Boards for the Journal of Applied Psychology, Academy of Management Journal, and Journal of Management.