



## Industry Trends & Insights

### Wizard of Lightbulb Moments

It has been said and written...we don't have a labor issue, we have a wage issue. Workers have said what they want loud and clear for months now. Workers want a living wage, protection from COVID-19, healthcare coverage, day care assistance, and protection from customer harassment, and skill training.

At the same time, consumers are unaware, and unsympathetic, to supply issues, staff shortages in the back of the house and on the production floors. They are tired of pared down menus and lack of new products. That turns to frustration. Educate and remind them that you are going through what they are going through.

How can you still move forward with the upcoming flavor trends consumers desire? The essential social distancing, caused by COVID-19, & resultant uptick in e-commerce, touchless tech, drive thru, & curbside pick-up use has caused an erosion of consumer loyalty. Brand loyalty will falter without emotional engagement & tactical alliance with consumers' needs. If you are not creating new items, in line with the upcoming food and beverage trends, they will find a company who is. Create emotional connections between company, products, and consumers - become part of their Clan to maintain current clients and win back previous clients. Encourage consumers' confidence by creating products that combine fringe, experimental, and comfort elements. Add something new to something known.

If you wait till your supply and labor issues are fully solved before moving forward with innovation, you risk consumers redirecting their loyalties to someone who figures it out before you do.

Workers don't need to return to the food industry when they can move to another industry altogether. While you are strategizing on how to maintain customer loyalty, what are you doing to maintain worker loyalty and attract new talent – besides pay them more?

1. Establish an onboarding program. Prepare them for the real happenings at your office.
2. Offer ongoing training for your young professionals.
3. Tell them how you will protect them from: customer harassment, COVID-19, etc.

#### Former Workers Wary of Returning to Restaurants, Study Says

According to a Q2 2021 US Jobs Market Report released in July by Joblist, 38% of former hospitality workers said they had no interest in returning to work at a bar or restaurant. With half the eligible population fully vaccinated, and 63% of eligible individuals with at least one vaccine dose, the US has seen hiring rates increase significantly of late. One of the issues identified by the report is a lack of workplace benefits. Healthcare, sick, and parental leave, and a flexible schedule were all benefits survey respondents cited as "very important" when asked what workplace benefits were most valued. The Joblist report states 74% of job seekers believe employers need to re-evaluate the benefits they do offer, with as many as 55% of job seekers saying they would take a lower-paying job if it meant they would receive better benefits and 43% stated that benefits are more important than financial compensation. While some respondents stated higher pay (39 percent) or a bonus (20 percent) could possibly change their minds about



returning to work in a restaurant or bar, over 50% of former hospitality workers who have moved on to other industries said that no pay increase or incentives of any type would convince them to return. Survey respondents (88 percent) said that healthcare is one of the most important benefits. Compared to free food and gyms, which only 10% of job-seekers noted as being important, health benefits are clearly a lead priority of potential employees.

Sources: Joblist

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### KEY INSIGHTS

Top 3 reasons workers are leaving jobs - low wages/ tips (76%), COVID-19 concerns (55%), customer harassment (39%)



38% of former hospitality workers have no interest in returning to work at a bar or restaurant



42% of retail associates are considering or planning to leave the industry



48% would switch to new job if offered skills training opportunities



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**Report: 76% Of Restaurant Workers Plan To Leave Jobs Over Low Wages, Tips**

The top three reasons restaurant workers are leaving their jobs are low wages and tips (76%), COVID-19 safety concerns (55%) and concerns over hospitality and harassment from customers (39%), according to a One Fair Wage report. The report revealed 78% of workers would stay in their job if they had full, stable living wages, and 49% said paid sick leave would make them stay. Even though foot traffic has increased exponentially in the last few months, 87% of workers report that their tips have decreased since COVID-19, with 69% saying tips have declined by at least 50% or more. Those employees that remain on the job are also seeing an increase in hostility from customers, with 80% saying they've seen or experienced hostile behavior in response to staff enforcing COVID-19 protocols. Twenty percent believe workers have sought a better quality of life in another industry, while 14% said workers are leaving for other industries with higher pay.



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**Why Restaurant Workers, Particularly Mothers, Are Leaving the Industry**

UC Berkeley Food Labor Research Center reported that 53% of all workers report that they are considering leaving their restaurant job due to the pandemic and 76% say they are leaving due to low wages and tips. Mothers were more likely to report that they are leaving restaurant jobs than other workers (55% v 52%). It's a wage shortage, not a worker shortage as 78% report having a full, stable, livable wage would make them consider staying at their job and 48% report they would stay for paid sick leave. The majority (74%) of survey respondents were women, indicating that the overall exodus and reasons for leaving of tipped service workers are gendered. Mothers report contracting COVID at higher rates than all other workers (26% v 19%). Mothers were more likely to report tips decreased with the pandemic (91% v 86%) and that their tips have decreased by half or more (73% v 67%). Mothers were more likely to report an increase in sexual harassment with the pandemic (51% v 44%). This report is based on a national pool of over 2,800 surveys of food service workers conducted online and over the telephone from October 20, 2020 to May 1, 2021. Unsurprisingly, 60% of workers report feeling reluctant to enforce COVID-19 protocols out of concern that customers would reciprocate with aggression, hostility, and lesser tips. This feeling is based on real experience; over 60% of workers (62%) report having received a lesser tip than normal after enforcing COVID-19 protocols on customers. Of those workers, 47% report that receiving a lesser tip for enforcing these protocols is a weekly experience. Nearly one in five workers reported having contracted COVID-19 themselves (21%) and 95% knew someone who had contracted the virus; nearly three-quarters (74%) reported that someone in their restaurant contracted the virus.



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**New Gallup & Amazon Upskilling Study**

A Gallup & Amazon Upskilling Study Finds That 48% of American workers would switch to a new job if offered skills training opportunities. Upskilling is associated with an additional 8.6% in annual income (about \$8,000 on average), higher job satisfaction overall and an increased standard of living. Fully 64% reported they didn't feel engaged at work. Gallup found they'd need to be offered a 20% pay increase to even consider leaving. Thirty percent of workers were able to move into new, higher-paying jobs after gaining new skills, and 39% advanced in their current job. Seventy-one percent of workers who upskilled said it led to greater job satisfaction. Sixty-five percent of workers say the opportunity to participate in an upskilling program was an "extremely" or "very" important factor in deciding to take a new job, and 61% cited it as important when weighing the decision to remain at their current job. Only 36% in food service workers have access to training.



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Sources: One Fair, UC Berkeley, Gallup & Amazon

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### ***Employees want healthier, more sustainable offices after COVID***

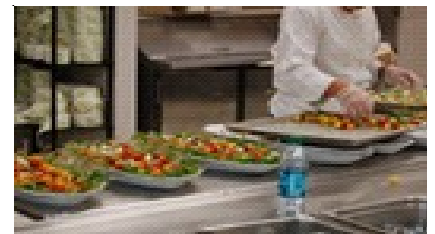
A new report by NEXT Energy Technologies titled “The Case for Office Space: How Buildings Need to Change to Suit a Climate-Conscious, COVID-Weary Workforce” suggests that 85% of managers and 79% of employees believe productivity has been unaffected or improved since their businesses switched to remote working. However, while only 15% of employees want to return to their offices full-time, 32% of managers will require them to do so, with another 33% requiring employees to return on a hybrid schedule. And 57% of employees said working in the office negatively impacted their health, with 37% specifically identifying a lack of natural light as impacting their health. Instead, employers have identified the need to improve sanitation (51%), increase space between workstations (46%), and improve HVAC systems (45%).



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### ***Calling It Quits: 2 in 5 Retail Workers Considering Leaving***

Zipline finds that 42% of retail associates are considering or planning to leave the industry and 24% think retailers are doing enough to retain talent and build the workforce they need. Additionally, 52% of associates are satisfied in the investment that stores are making in their professional development, but 43% of associates said they don't feel heard when making suggestions of in-store changes.



Sources: NEXT Energy Technologies, Zipline

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## **Free Webinar**

### **Culinary Tides, Inc. Capabilities: Forecasting The Future**

Knowing which trends best fit your brand, which will resonate most with customers, how long they will last, and where they are headed next can clear a path for meaningful strategy.

Culinary Tides, Inc. is a private forecasting think tank. We help food industry partners navigate trends by revealing patterns leading to products & strategy that connects with customers. We specialize in foretelling a trend's birth and forecasting its trajectory, personality, & longevity. Our forecasts are used to create:

- Entrance
- Navigation
- Exit strategies

We are offering 2 options! Join Culinary Tides, Inc. for our Capabilities presentation where we show you how you can take control of your future:

**Thursday October 21<sup>st</sup>: 11am - 11:30am EST OR 2pm - 2:30pm EST**

## **Register Here!**