



Why your tech talent is quitting

You've already noticed that great tech talent is in high demand (you're not going to build your website or corporate app yourself are you?) and hard to find. As a result, whether it's bonafide tech companies or any other flavor of firm that needs developers, designers, coders and beyond, finding next-level technical professionals is likely a high priority on any hiring manager's to-do list.

But, you know what's even more frustrating for a firm than vetting IT candidates and finding someone who's a good fit for your organization? Losing that person because he or she hated working for the company.

So, before being forced to dive back into the hardships of the hiring process, your friends at Infusive Solutions sourced this list of reasons – compiled through more than three dozen interviews with technologists and recruiters - that techies would ditch your company for the next one.

1. Ignoring sweet, cutting-edge technologies

There are plenty of techies out there who are happy using a company's established toolkit to fight fires all day, get a paycheck and go home to watch SportsCenter. By the same token, there are also folks that want to be "gurus" in a particular technology, so they're happy to spend all their time working with a specific coding language or framework.



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But, on the opposite side of the coin, there are legions of tinkerers out there who want to address problems with the *best* technologies available (these could be modern or not) ... not the technology a company has been using for the last decade.

And this makes sense because no matter how skilled one is in a specific area, having a narrow focus for a tech professional bears the risk of irrelevancy (read: unemployment) down the road.

Consequently, these folks want to work for companies at which they can innovate with a wide technical toolkit and test traditional boundaries rather than being handed an assignment from leadership and being told “here’s the solution, fix it like this.”

Even more frustrating for tech pros is when leadership all of the sudden is hell bent on deploying a technology that might not be the most effective for reaching established goals, but that was sold to them while being courted on the golf course or in Vegas. So, if you’re company is slow to embrace the best tech solutions available, don’t be surprised when some of your talent migrates to their next opportunity.

2. A better opportunity somewhere else

In the tech world right now, it’s straight up guerilla warfare. Unemployment in the industry is roughly [half of the nationwide average](#), meaning that the pool of talented, available tech professionals is quite small. With that in mind, understand that if you have a top dog at your company, many others are probably very interested in him or her as well.

As such, you can see countless examples of companies going after each other’s best people and enticing them with crazy good offers through fly-by-night style raids.



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For example, American Express is not shy about [publicly announcing their intentions](#) to steal Googlers (well, pretty much everyone is trying to steal Googlers) while Microsoft is busy [swaying employees away from Apple](#).

The bottom line here is that LOTS of other folks are probably interested in your tech talent, and if you don't cater to their needs, someone else will likely be there to sweep them off their feet and away from your company.

Opportunity also comes into play when technical talent doesn't have a clear advancement path. And considering how fast the IT industry evolves, your tech team will want to be sure that they have the chance to grow with the market. Consequently, even if you're willing to shell out big bills, many tech pros tend to land on the ambitious side of things and a big payout may not be enough to keep them if they feel stuck in a stagnating position or doing boring tasks.

3. A crappy, non-technical manager

There are indeed technologists out there who don't mind aimlessly plugging and chugging at the will of their manager. But, many technical professionals on the market right now are hungry for a working environment that not only presents great opportunity, but great people.

As such, working with a manager silo'd in an ivory tower, removed from the day-to-day of the IT department could be a major turn off.

For example, a UK-based network consultant named "Francis" described frustration with project managers who do little in the way of managing projects.

[The manager] "expected the technical staff to sort out who did what, define what the short and medium term objectives were, book meeting rooms, chair the project meetings and avoid all content with technical topics," posing condescending questions like, "I'm non-technical, can you handle that ?"



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By the same token, a software engineer named “Joseph” described having a short-sighted manager whose style resulted in constant fire-fighting rather than developing long-term solutions. For example, when Joseph was posed with an issue, he sought to develop forward-thinking solutions that addressed not only a current problem, but a domino effect of other issues that could occur down the road.

However, his manager just wanted to push out results as quickly as possible, which led to a lot of monotonous stitching and gluing over the next few months. Consequently, Joseph left the company to start an entrepreneurial venture in mobile applications.

4. A lack of recognition, influence and support

Of course, this issue is applicable across professions, but is especially true for techies. For example, most notably when they’re playing a support role at non-technical organizations, IT pros are often responsible for hours and hours of painstaking work to get a project up-and-running or back on track, which management doesn’t seem to notice or care about.

Similarly, frustrations accrue when IT members are asked to put all their energy into a project, only to have it abandoned several months later, leaving them to wonder why they wasted their valuable time on something that never saw the light of day rather than working towards something that would add undeniable value.

Technical roles are often filled based on specialty skills, and therefore, those who occupy those roles are looking to have influence and the power to make things happen without a manager needing to peek over their shoulder every 20 minutes.

So to, when IT members don’t have the resources to put their best effort forward (multiple screens for more efficient work, a quiet workspace free from the distractions of the sales team)
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they may begin looking for a new environment that embraces their input and provides tools to yield the best results.

5. A lack of flexibility

Standing on the cutting-edge of cloud and mobile computing, technical professionals by-and-large have the tools to do their work from anywhere with an internet connection (otherwise known as telecommuting).

And the data indicates that this kind of flexibility is highly desirable.

According to an [April 2011 survey](#) undertaken by leading tech job board Dice, 35 percent of the polled respondents said that they would take a 10% pay decrease to telecommute full time. And while it might not be feasible to allow members of the tech team to work out of office every day, enabling them to telecommute at least part of the time could be a key factor in retaining their skills for your organization (as long as their hours are still being filled with interesting problems).

Conclusion:

You may notice that money and compensation packages were left off the list. Of course, if technical professionals aren't getting the salaries or benefits to sustain themselves, then they're at a risk for leaving as well.

But, through our research, many of the technical professionals we spoke with explained taking up to a 50% pay decrease to get out of working environments that were overly rigid, hindered forward-thinking innovation and withheld influence over core processes.

With that in mind, companies looking to retain their tech talent would be well-advised to not only properly compensate these staff members, but create a culture that avoids all the potential exit reasons described above.