

Life in a Dumpster Fire: Why We Need Big Hugs, Listening Ears and the Power of Choice To Survive

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“Happiness can be found, even in the darkest of times, if one only remembers to turn on the light.” - Albus Dumbledore

The weekend I met Andy was the weekend my life changed course. Don't worry. This isn't a story or a lecture about Andy. He was an incidental catalyst at the time (he gets credit MUCH later in the story) December 2016 - CVC San Diego. But I did meet Andy that weekend. I had tea with my dear friend Eric Garcia and then actively detoxed in his unplugged class. I also had truffle fries and champagne with a handful of founding Uncharted members. These three things are completely unrelated, except for having happened in the same place and time. Each of these things were fingers on the hand (one that I didn't think I had in me), that reached up to flick on that light that Dumbledore so simply reminds us is always there. Waiting. Holding hope. We are going to talk about how hugs matter, why listening makes all the difference in the world and how mentorship and connection can make or break your experience at work. And what all of that has to do with your role as an employee in veterinary medicine.

51% of US workers say they get a sense of identity from their job. (Pew Research Center)

Americans are divided on whether their job is merely a source of income or a more meaningful aspect of their lives that gives them a sense of identity. The same job satisfaction in the US study indicates a little over half of working Americans find purpose in their work.

79% of American workers say company culture is an important job satisfaction factor. (Speakap)

When asked whether company culture is important to them, almost 80% of US professionals responded in the affirmative. Not only that: 57% said they would take a job with a competitor if they felt that company's corporate culture was better than their current company's. According to Speakap's company culture statistics, respect and fairness, trust and integrity, and teamwork are the most important attributes of a strong culture.

Women (44%) are more likely than men (39%) to leave their current job for a new one with a flexible work environment. (Globe Newswire)

Women, who often need to juggle various responsibilities both at home and in the office, are more interested in a flexible work environment than men. Almost half of female respondents said they would quit their job to go work for a company that permits them to work from home occasionally, with flexible working hours.

96% of employees believe showing empathy is an important way of improving employee retention. (Forbes)

Employers who care openly about their staff have an excellent shot at earning their workers' loyalty, according to Forbes' employee retention statistics. Human capital is a company's most valuable asset, so why not show some human interest in your workers? Celebrating important life moments, encouraging employees to use vacation time, providing company gym passes - these are all ways of showing the people who work for you that you care about them.