



**Jamil Janjua,**  
ceo, Octara & Chief Editor  
janjua05@gmail.com

*Dear Reader,*

We open this edition with **Rebekah Brandes** addressing the often underrated issue of disgruntled employees who can have a significant negative impact on the workplace's culture. There are several steps one can take to address this issue, she says, and recommends communicating with employees and addressing their issues promptly rather than turning a blind eye and letting them fester at the expense of productivity.

**Eddy Quan** is next and offers some priceless personal brand building advice. Don't aim to tell the best story, he says. "You're not directing a Hollywood blockbuster here. Instead, aim to tell the right story. This is the story which is congruent and consistent with who you are and aligns with your unique ideas, philosophies and solutions." That's how you build a brand.

In our third piece **Henry Coutinho-Mason** wonders what if blue collar jobs could be done remotely. "We are witnessing a convergence and mainstreaming of multiple overlapping technologies that will make blue-collar remote work increasingly practical. 5G will reduce latency, the lag between input and response that can make video calling and gaming frustrating, to levels below human perception." Artificial intelligence is allowing robots to recognize their surroundings and become increasingly capable. Virtual and mixed realities are getting closer to enabling people to practically manipulate digital versions of reality. Scary stuff, some would say.

JJ's Lifelong Learning tips offer a plethora of very relevant advice for our corporate warriors, two of which stood out in particular – Build rapport with key people with the two R's: Reveal useful knowledge and refer them to others; and, try to guess what a speaker's next point will be. That will help you become a better listener because it will keep your mind from drifting.

It's Battle Stations for Greta Thunberg in our Nature Calling column, as she radically expands her ambit, and draws a link between global warming and the weapons industry. "The fight for climate justice is a fight against the fossil fuel industry, just as much as it is a fight against the weapon industries, militarization and the over-extraction of natural resources." Stay safe and stay productive. 😊

Explore JJ's curated articles for expert insights on managing people, business, and personal growth. Gain valuable knowledge and prepare for future challenges with confidence.

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# How to Identify & Handle a Disgruntled Employee

HRDQ Blog

Published on August 4, 2021



**Rebekah Brandes** | 10 min read

One of the keys to growing your business and maintaining high productivity is ensuring that your employees feel engaged, appreciated, and are motivated. Engaged employees are much more likely to perform their jobs to their highest potential and help your company achieve its long-term goals.

But despite all you do to try to motivate employees and maintain a positive work culture, you may still find yourself having to deal with a disgruntled employee. As a manager, it's important for you to be able to identify and handle disgruntled employees to avoid them having a negative impact on your organization.

Here's how to identify and handle a disgruntled employee in order to get them back on board before their dissatisfaction negatively affects your company.

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## What is a Disgruntled Employee?

A disgruntled employee is one who is dissatisfied with their job or position in your

company. These employees are less likely to perform their best, and if left unaddressed, they can influence the way other employees feel about their work and your organization.

These employees are not only unengaged and dissatisfied, but they are also often very vocal about their dissatisfaction. As a result, they often have a negative impact on workplace morale and culture.

While you may already make an effort to maintain positive morale, disgruntled employees are often unavoidable. Workers often become disengaged for a variety of reasons — many of which have nothing to do with your management style or practices. They may have problems with a specific coworker, are unhappy with their role, or have personal issues that are impacting their work.

The good news is that, while disgruntled employees are often unavoidable, they are often able to be effectively dealt with by managers or HR. By talking to them, listening to their concerns, and addressing any issues they may be having, you may be able to get them back on board before they begin to impact your company culture.

## Identifying a Disgruntled Employee

To help disgruntled employees resolve their issues, you first need to be able to identify a

disgruntled employee.

There are several signs you can watch out for to accomplish this, including:

- Poor performance
- Lack of motivation
- Excessive absences
- Tardiness
- Negative comments from other employees
- Poor attitude

In general, it's fairly easy to spot a disgruntled employee as they often make their dissatisfaction known either vocally or through their actions. If an employee isn't performing well and isn't getting along with their coworkers, there's a strong chance they are dissatisfied, and it's important to address this issue as quickly as possible.

## How to Handle a Disgruntled Employee

If you've identified a disgruntled employee in your organization, it's important to act quickly to resolve this issue and address their problems.

Here are several steps you can take to properly handle a disgruntled employee:

**Act quickly.** The longer the issue goes on, the more likely the employee will have a negative impact on your company's culture. As soon as you identify a disgruntled employee, you need to take action to resolve the situation.

**Listen attentively.** The first step to resolving an unhappy worker's issues is to carefully listen to them. When approached in an honest and professional manner, disgruntled employees are often more than willing to communicate their issues with the hope that you will help

them find a solution.

**Provide counseling.** Employee dissatisfaction is often a result of stress, harassment, work-induced anxiety, and other issues that require professional counseling to resolve. Providing access to professional counseling is often an effective way to deal with a disgruntled employee.

**Career pathing.** Career pathing is the process of helping an employee plan out their career path at your organization. This helps employees whose dissatisfaction is a result of feeling stuck in their current position.

**Deal with it privately.** Don't confront unhappy employees in front of your workforce. Doing so demonstrates a lack of respect and trust, which can ultimately worsen the situation.

**Offer training.** Employee dissatisfaction may be a result of them not being able to adequately perform their jobs. In this case, you can offer training to help them improve their competency and feel more qualified to perform their daily job duties.

**Maintain an ongoing dialogue.** This type of issue can't always be resolved with a quick meeting. When dealing with a disgruntled employee, it's important to maintain an ongoing dialogue to ensure they aren't having ongoing issues that impact their attitude and performance.

Disgruntled employees can have a significant negative impact on your workplace's culture, but there are several steps you can take to address these issues. By communicating with your employees and addressing their issues promptly, you can often successfully resolve their dissatisfaction ■

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#### Source:

<https://hrdqstore.com/blogs/hrdq-blog/identify-handle-disgruntled-employee>

# The Case Against Tattoos



By Eddy Quan | 5 min read

The other day Elon wrote about why more politicians should post on Twitter instead of speaking through legacy media.

So instead of sitting down to do an interview with a print journalist who can change the entire framing of what your original conversation was about..

You can speak directly to your audience by writing a tweet.

Or instead of using a ghostwriter.. You fire off that spicy thought you had.

He then went on to say that the reason why Twitter is such a powerful tool is because there's nothing more Authentic in communication than sharing your unfiltered thoughts.

Which led me to think about one of the most important if not THE most important storytelling tip I can give you and that's;

## Congruency.

So here's a simple example of when a lack of congruency can damage your story. Even if you are a great storyteller (on paper at least).

Imagine you're at a family pool party.

At this party, you meet two men who are in their 40s. Both men are covered in tattoos. Let's go on to say they have pretty much the same tattoos.

One has the body of a bodybuilder. You learn that he spent some time in prison in his 20s when he was a gang member but is now a fully reformed member of society, runs a successful

business and is happily married with 3 kids.

The other man doesn't lift weights. Has never been in prison. Grew up in an upper middle class family, has an MBA and is a partner at an accounting firm. His favourite drink is a soy latte with a half shot of hazelnut.

I could go on here but I think you get the picture but if you don't let me make it crystal clear:

The most persuasive element of any story lies in the authenticity of it.

The reason why tattoos look "off" on men who don't have that "bad boy" look is the same reason why politicians who tweet through a ghostwriter come off as authentic..

It doesn't pass the reader's BS detector (yes we all have a BS detector).

And the first thing the BS detector looks out for is whether or not your story is authentic.

Which brings me to the lesson of today.

Don't aim to tell the best story. You're not directing a Hollywood blockbuster here.

Instead, aim to tell the right story. This is the story which is congruent with who you are and aligns with your unique ideas, philosophies and solutions ■

That's how you build a brand.

Your man

Eddy "authenticity" Quan

Eddy Quan <[eddy@eddyquan.com](mailto:eddy@eddyquan.com)>

THE FUTURE NORMAL

## What if...

Blue-collar jobs could be done remotely?



**What if it wasn't just creative professionals and managers who could work remotely, but tattoo artists, baristas and truck drivers?**

**Henry Coutinho-Mason** | 8 min read

Stijn Fransen had every reason to be nervous. She was speaking with Wes, a renowned Dutch tattoo artist, about her upcoming ink session. They had agreed on the design, but that wasn't what was making Stijn apprehensive. Her nerves were down to the fact that Wes wouldn't physically be holding the tattoo needle. He would be in his studio, and a robotic arm hovering above Stijn's arm would mimic his movements. 'The Impossible Tattoo' was a **creative marketing stunt** from T-Mobile Netherlands to promote the launch of its 5G network.



Over at the Circolo Hospital in Lombardy, Northern Italy, robots were being deployed

in a very different context. The hospital was at the center of Europe's first major coronavirus outbreak in early 2020 and, with a shortage of personal protective equipment and frontline healthcare workers falling ill, the region's healthcare system was on the verge of collapse. Facing such challenges the Circolo Hospital was using **Tommy, a robot that was able to monitor patients' blood pressure and oxygen saturation**, as well as enable patients to speak with human doctors remotely. Dr. Francesco Dentali, director of the hospital's intensive care unit commented, "you have to explain to the patient the aim and

function of the robot. The first reaction is not positive, especially for old patients. But if you explain your aim, the patient is happy because he or she can speak with the doctor."

### ***Dull, dirty and dangerous***

Technologists have long spoken about the promise of robots taking over blue-collar jobs that are "dull, dirty or dangerous". Indeed, the military was one of the earliest and most aggressive adopters of remote technologies. For over a decade, **US soldiers have operated drones** (or 'remotely piloted unmanned aerial vehicles') from bases in New Mexico, killing thousands of suspected militant fighters in conflict zones thousands of miles away.

**Now, we are witnessing a convergence and mainstreaming of multiple overlapping technologies that will make blue-collar remote work increasingly practical.** 5G will reduce latency (the lag between input and response that can make video calling and gaming frustrating) to levels below human perception. Artificial intelligence is allowing robots to recognise their surroundings and become increasingly capable. Virtual and mixed realities are getting closer to enabling people to practically manipulate digital versions of reality.

### ***Truck driving, a WFH job of the future?***

Almost every article about the threat to jobs from autonomous technology references truck



drivers. They have become the modern day loom weavers, facing an inevitable

extinction. Which is why Einride's job ad, for a **remote truck** operator, is so intriguing. Einride is a Swedish startup hoping to electrify and automate the haulage industry. However, its approach to autonomous vehicles is markedly different from the totally human-free visions of many of its competitors. Indeed, Robert Falck, the company's founder, believes that maintaining some level of human operation is the secret to commercial success, despite Einride being the first company in the world to operate a regular autonomous, electric freight vehicle route on public roads.

In the summer of 2020, the company demonstrated its plan for a single driver to remotely control up to ten semi-autonomous Pod vehicles. Essentially, the concept is that the trucks will be operate autonomously most of the time, but when they encounter obstacles, they will call for a human to intervene and take over remotely. Einride forecasts that remotely operated trucks could **reduce trucking industry fuel costs** from 60 cents per mile to 18 cents per mile, and reduce US transportation costs by 30% if one operator were able to remotely control 10 trucks. And those jobs at risk? It notes that the US has already been experiencing a shortage of truck drivers. Pär Degerman, Einride's CTO has commented:

**“Remote support is here to stay... not just here for deploying quickly, it will be here for the remainder of our lifetimes. We'll always have human beings in the loop.”**

Einride isn't the only company experimenting with teleoperation. At the Sandaozhuang Mine in China's Henan Province, miners from **China Molybdenum use 5G to remotely control vehicles and machinery** at the mine from inside an office. Japan's advanced robot industry and

tight labour market make it a natural home for these initiatives. The FamilyMart convenience chain has run tests with **telexistence robots stacking shelves**; MOS Burger installed OriHime robot servers at its outlets; similarly the non-profit Nippon Foundation deployed robot waiters in its office café that were **operated remotely by people with disabilities**.

**These experiments hint at a future that's quite different from the traditional 'robots are coming for our jobs' narrative.** The idea of blue-collar remote work is superficially extremely attractive: who wouldn't want people to be further removed from jobs that are dirty, dull and dangerous? But you shouldn't view a Future Normal where blue-collar work is done remotely as any less transformative. In fact, this is a trend that should trigger some profound and massive questions about the future of work and society. For starters:

#### **What if...**

- *Wages for dangerous or dirty blue-collar jobs are depressed, if the risk premium is removed?*
- *Whole new groups – from the elderly to those with disabilities – could enter the workforce, if their physical barriers were removed?*
- *We see specialist local blue-collar hubs serving specific global markets, as we saw with Chinese manufacturing hubs?*
- *Cities become even more unequal, if there was no need to physically accommodate or cater to lower-wage workers?*
- *It becomes economically and politically more feasible for ageing, rich countries to resist the physical immigration of younger workers that often take blue-collar jobs?*
- *The same winner-take-all dynamics are applied to physical creative jobs -- such as tattoo artists or baristas -- that to date have been largely limited to serving those located nearby?*

#### **Source:**

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/what-wasnt-just-creative-professionals-managers-who-coutinho-mason/>

# Lifelong Learning Tips

Selection by JJ

## ▪ **Make training more successful**

by asking trainees to write down their goals for the session ahead of time. Example: “I want to learn three new strategies for dealing with angry customers.”

## ▪ **To sharpen your memo-writing skills,**

complete this sentence before you launch into your first draft: “The main purpose of this memo is .” That will help you eliminate extraneous details.

## ▪ **Appease disappointed customers**

by adding a solution to your apology. Saying “I’m sorry” is important, but customers want to hear how you’re planning to help them.

## ▪ **Hold an “expectations exchange”**

with new employees. Clearly define what you expect from them and ask what they expect from you and from the organization. Tips of the month

## ▪ **When proofreading,**

be sure to check for the second in a pair of quotation marks, parentheses or dashes. Those marks are often left out.

## ▪ **Try to guess**

what a speaker’s next point will be. That will help you become a better listener because it will keep your mind from drifting.

## ▪ **If you’re having trouble**

finishing a portion of a memo, letter or report, get it out of your sight. Save it as a separate file as you work to polish the rest of the document. That way, you won’t get bogged down by the troublesome section.

## ▪ **Build rapport**

with key people with the two R’s: Reveal useful knowledge and refer them to others.

## ▪ **Stay productive**

despite being interrupted by jotting down what you’ll need to do when you return to the task. Example: If your boss asks you to drop everything and help with an emergency, write “Finish calling vendors and complete two file reviews” before you rush out.

## ▪ **Avoid putting too many numbers**

or statistics into a sentence or paragraph. Example: “During 2003, we visited 75 businesses in 59 cities and conducted 188 customer satisfaction surveys.” Instead, use a box, graph or chart to display complex statistics.

## ▪ **Introduce short-term assignments**

for staff members on Friday afternoons. Knowing that the job has to get done in that time period will help overcome the Friday blahs that lead to inefficiency.

*Extracted from Communication Briefings*

## Nature Calling for Action Stations (NCfAS#34)

# Thundering Thunberg in the crosshairs



### Gung ho Greta on the warpath

Swedish activist Greta Thunberg attended a climate change and pro-Palestinian rally in Milan days after her criticism of Israel sparked a row over protests in Germany (Dawn/AFP, October 12, 2024).

More than 1,000 people, many of them teenagers, joined a peaceful march in the northern Italian city organized by Fridays-for-Future, the climate change movement Thunberg helped found.

Wearing a keffiyeh, a traditional scarf symbolizing the Palestinian struggle against Israel, Thunberg walked near the front of the procession as other protesters waved flags, held banners and danced to music.

“Palestinians have been living under suffocating oppression for decades by an apartheid regime, and during the last year with Israel’s genocide, the world has once again abandoned

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**“The fight for climate justice is a fight against the fossil fuel industry, just as much as it is a fight against the weapon industries, militarization and the over-extraction of natural resources”**

– Greta Thunberg

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Palestine,” the 21-year-old said in a speech.

### Fight against militarization

Thunberg drew a link between global warming and the weapons industry. “The fight for climate justice is a fight against the fossil fuel industry, just as much as it is a fight against the weapon industries, militarization and the over-extraction of natural resources,” she said.

### Phasing out oil and gas not happening

The fossil fuel chaps were unabashedly on the front foot, with Opec’s Secretary General Haitham Al Ghais saying that the fantasy of phasing out oil and gas bears no relation to fact (*Dawn, September 25th, 2024*). The annual World Oil Outlook says that oil and gas make up well over half of the energy mix today “and are expected to do the same in 2050. A realistic view of demand growth expectations necessitate adequate investments in oil and gas, today, tomorrow, and for many decades into the future”.

The oil cartel’s prediction runs counter to the [assessment](#) of the Paris-based International Energy Agency, which sees demand for fossil fuels peaking this decade. A goal to triple global renewable energy capacity by 2030 and cut fossil fuel use is within reach, the International Energy Agency said in a report on Tuesday, but will require a huge push to unlock bottlenecks such as permitting and grid connections.

The Milan march was part of a “national strike for the climate”, a series of protests organized by Fridays-for-Future across Italy. “Demonstrating is the only weapon we have against the injustice that we suffer,” said 17 year-old protester Sofia Parisi.

### Stealing Thunberg’s Thunder Impossible!

On October 5th Greta Thunberg was among several of protesters detained for blocking a road in the Belgian capital of Brussels at a demonstration against fossil fuel subsidies. The rally, organized by the United for Climate Justice movement that began outside the European Parliament, was calling for the European Union, headquartered in Brussels, to end subsidies for fossil fuels in order to achieve its ambitious goal of making the continent carbon neutral by 2050.

“This will not happen without an immediate phase out of fossil fuel subsidies,” climate activists, scientists and





economists wrote in an open letter to EU leaders. “Until these necessary changes occur, people will continue to take to the streets to make our voices heard and hold you accountable.”

The protest is co-organized by the movement “Stop Fossil Subsidies” and Extinction Rebellion Europe.

Climate protest held mostly in European states are increasing at a rapid scale. Greta Thunberg has previously been [detained](#) for civil disobedience at [protests](#) in various [countries](#), and been carried away by police after refusing to leave sit-ins.

The champions of the status quo are striking back with a new security law that makes blocking a road to protest inaction against climate change punishable with prison in Italy, as Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni’s hard-right government cracks down on demonstrations, even peaceful ones (*Dawn, October 6th, 2024*).

## Weather manipulation conspiracy theories

Across the Pond the sinister face of human nature is adding to the confusion and chaos as monster hurricanes

slamming the United States in recent weeks have triggered a torrent of misinformation, with politicians and social media users reviving conspiracy theories about weather manipulation ahead of the Nov 5 presidential election (*Dawn, October 12th, 2024*).

False accusations of the government waging “weather warfare” spread online with social media posts claiming the storms were “deliberately deployed against red states” likely to vote for Republican Donald Trump. “We are in a geoengineering ‘meltdown’ perpetrated by Globalists who want to ‘control’ the whole of humanity,” said one post on X.

Rumours also focused on the Alaska-based High-frequency Active Auroral Research Programme (HAARP), which was formerly run by the US military, and cloud seeding, despite a lack of evidence linking the technologies to the formation of large storms.

## Misinformation /Disinformation

The wave of falsehoods emerged after Helene became the deadliest hurricane to hit the US mainland since 2005’s Katrina, and Milton quickly followed, making

## “The focus is less on the details, but rather the underlying message — that neither science nor government should be trusted, and that climate change isn’t real”

– Ethan Porter, professor & researcher at The George Washington University Misinformation/Disinformation Lab

landfall in Florida on Oct 9. Both storms ravaged entire neighborhoods, forcing widespread evacuations and causing massive power outages.

Ethan Porter, a professor and researcher at The George Washington University Misinformation /Disinformation Lab, said some people are using misinformation “as a convenient way to express their political beliefs.” He said the focus is less on the details, but rather the underlying message — “that neither science nor government should be trusted, that climate change isn’t real, and that somehow, Democrats are responsible for the unfolding catastrophe.”

## Countering Digital Hate

“The social media landscape is a friendlier place for hate and disinformation than it has been in a long time, particularly on X,” said Callum Hood, head of research at the Centre for Countering Digital Hate. University of Miami professor Joseph Uscinski, who researches why people believe in conspiracy theories, agreed: “We have members of Congress who are pushing ideas that this is real, when, in fact, it’s not. This is coming at a time of real political tension.” Experts said it is concerning that politicians are engaging with such narratives.

## Every minute an entire garbage truck worth of plastic enters our oceans

– Samantha Power, USAID Administrator

The situation highlighted the sharp divide over climate change, as scientists warned that supercharged storms were the result of warmer ocean temperatures. Storms, also amplified by warmer air, show a potential to impact inland areas as well as coastal regions that have historically been in the path of destruction.

## False sense of security and comfort

“Hurricane Helene showed us that it is not only the coast

we have to worry about. A hurricane with a lot of moisture passing through a mountainous area — such as Asheville — is a bad combination,” Jayantha Obeysekera, director of the Sea Level Solutions Centre at Florida International University, said.

## “The social media landscape is a friendlier place for hate and disinformation than it has been in a long time, particularly on X”

–Callum Hood, head of research at the Centre for Countering Digital Hate

Nature Conservancy chief scientist Katharine Hayhoe said weather control narratives help defer the responsibility of curbing emissions. She worries such logic brings a false sense of security and comfort for people trying “to make sense of what is rapidly becoming a very scary world.”

These conditions create a ‘perfect storm’ for disinformation, and highlights how disbelief can further delay action on the ground or prevent proper resilience and mitigation plans against a warming climate. “It moves us in exactly the opposite direction from where we need to be going,” she said.

## Living Indus Initiative in limbo

Meanwhile, back home Pakistan’s flagship ecological project is in limbo (ET, October 13, 2024). It requires a staggering USD17 billion to revive the mighty Indus which is the backbone of the country’s agriculture and food security. It is in jeopardy because international climate finance has not been forthcoming at the scale required, as also the financial troubles at home that have exacerbated the nation’s struggles with water shortages and food security risks.

Launched in 2021 under the ministry of climate change, the Living Indus Initiative was envisioned as 10 to 15 years umbrella program focused on restoring the ecological health of the Indus Basin within Pakistan. Key initiatives included ecological restoration through reforestation, water management, biodiversity conservation, sustainable agriculture and water governance to address soil degradation and water scarcity, flood control and groundwater recharge through green infrastructure, as well as initiatives like zero plastic waste cities and urban forests ■

Column by Adil Ahmad, Correspondent, TCS Octara.Com