

# Why TECHS QUIT?

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**HELP  
DESK  
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# Introduction

**I'm acutely aware of the problems MSP's have when hiring techs - especially Level 1 frontliners.**

**That's because I am an MSP owner, and now, I'm CEO of a white label help desk offering for MSP's.**

## **Are you experiencing some of the same frustrations we all have faced about Level 1 techs?**

- They're not remotely as competent as they think they are.
- They want to be promoted to "Net Admin" (whatever they think that title means) within 6 months.
- Things even a junior level Googler should be able to look up seem elusive.
- You end up having to go back and do the tech's work over again.
- They quit within 6 to 18 months, in this pattern:
  - Months 1 to 6 – You'll recognize their obvious genius and promote them.
  - Months 6 to 12 – They realize you're too stupid to recognize their obvious genius.
  - Months 12 to 18 – They figure out where they're going to jump off to.

Maybe you're lucky if they even stay for 6 months. Or maybe you're one of the rare ones that has been lucky to keep a tech or two for a while, and you aren't pushing your luck trying to hire another one. Maybe you're a solo owner/operator and you fear hiring but can't grow unless you do.

Whatever your situation, hiring techs is a PITA for the average MSP. And while you might think you know why they quit (reference the situations above), I want to tell you that it doesn't matter what your opinion is of why they quit. What matters is knowing the real reasons why they quit, and what you should do to mitigate that.

You lose time, sanity, and money (lots and lots of it) when techs quit.

**So read this booklet to find out the 5 main reasons why they do quit, and what you might do about it.**



# Reason 1

**YOU PICKED THE WRONG PERSON**

# If you picked a sucky tech, guess what?

## That's your fault.

I mean, let's say you pick a mealy watermelon at the grocery store. Is that the watermelon's fault, or yours? It's yours! You need to get better at picking watermelons.

Why does it matter? Many people get into I.T. because they think it will be lucrative. Once they do, they realize it's nothing but problems every single day. The ones who aren't cut out for it figure that out in the pressure cooker of an MSP because they don't even get the opportunity to learn on one network or user-base. They have many different networks and user-bases to navigate. They end up hating it, so they quit.



*That's one mealy watermelon right there.  
Stop picking that type of person.*

### **Pick a person who can demonstrate (not just tell you) that they:**

- Like problem solving
- Are gritty and stick to things
- Don't mind learning from the ground up
- Know how to find answers to previously unknown questions

It takes time to learn how to identify this type of person, but with practice you can. In the process of learning, try not to become as frustrated with yourself as you are with techs who can't seem to solve obvious problems.



# Reason 2

**YOU ABANDON THEM AFTER LITTLE  
TO NO TRAINING**

# **“Well if they know what they’re doing, I shouldn’t have to watch them 24/7.”**

That’s what you tell yourself.

I get it – you have important things to do. If you wanted to do the work yourself, you wouldn’t have hired someone to help you. But this isn’t pushing a broom – it’s tech work for an MSP. There’s not only the problem-solving, but the tools required, your documentation expectations, the expectations you have from their interactions with end users, and a whole bunch of other stuff they have to know BESIDES logging into a computer and fixing something (which is hard enough).

If you abdicate the work to someone instead of delegating the work (*two totally different mentalities*) you’re leaving your valuable new hire to go it alone.

So pardon them if they feel abandoned.

Do you like feeling abandoned? How do you feel when a tech quits on you? Abandoned?

## **Don’t do that.**

Set out a training schedule and stick to it. That is to say, don’t let the distractions of running your business create very many crises to have to run off to and leave your new tech unattended. Give your tech a mentor to shadow. If you don’t have anyone like that, then you must be that person.





# **Reason 3**

**YOU DON'T PAY THEM ENOUGH**

## Everyone wants more money, right?

This is true, and I won't insult your intelligence by suggesting a person's expenses don't just expand to the amount of money they're given (and then some, hence most of our country's individual financial problems).

But if you want people to stick with you, you have to pay people enough money to live decent lives. More importantly, you have to pay your people according to the value they bring to your company.

Your front-line people are very important to your company. They're the first impression, and often they run interference for you so you can do whatever finagling in the background is necessary to keep your plates spinning. **They're IMPORTANT!** So act like it! Pay them like it! For goodness sake, dig deep.

If your people know you're digging as deep as you can for them, they're going to dig deeper for you. Remember, this is an investment in your time, your talent, and your treasure!

And if you're saying, "Well, I don't want to invest so much money in someone who isn't going to stick around," I say you've found yourself in a chicken-and-egg scenario and you need to break the cycle.

Pick someone in whom its worth investing in the first place (see reason 1) and invest.

### Also, dare I say it...

You're not giving them enough time off either. That may be another discussion, but it falls under this reason because maybe you see time off as "paying people to do nothing" and you should be seeing it as "incentivizing people to get their minds clear and rejuvenate them." It is a huge investment. It's expensive, yes. But it's worth it when you get it right.





# Reason 4

**YOUR EXPECTATIONS ARE  
TOO HIGH**

To be clear, I'm not saying "lower your expectations," although I can understand the confusion.

Also, I don't want to equate your techs to 3-year-olds (or watermelons, for that matter, see Reason 1), but really...

### **Do you expect a 3-year-old to be able to tie their own shoes?**

It's a rhetorical question. Of course you don't. Anyone who has raised a child knows that's ridiculous. If you just handed a 3-year-old a pair of shoes and said "tie your shoes" and then get madder by the minute when they can't do it, they might be apt to just sit there and cry because a.) you've just confused the heck out of them and b.) they know they're disappointing you and they want you to love them.

Remember that as an MSP owner and/or senior tech, you likely have the benefit of years of experience and exposure to a wide variety of problems that new techs just don't have a reference for.

You have to be patient and teach your techs a thing or two. That's what they're hoping for, not to just be left alone to figure out how to tie their shoes when they don't even know what laces are.

Don't take this as an invitation to treat your techs like 3-year-olds either. What I'm saying is meet them where they are and **lift them up** just like a good parent, mentor, or leader of any kind does.

Pretty soon your techs will be tying their own shoes "all by themselves."





# Reason 5

**YOU DON'T GIVE THEM A CLEAR  
PATH FOR GROWTH**

Part of picking a good tech in the first place means picking a professional, not just someone looking for a J.O.B.

**Professionals are looking for growth opportunities, advancement, and promotion.**

If you haven't provided a clear path for that growth, you're likely going to find yourself losing techs – even (maybe especially) ones that stick around awhile.

Show your techs how they can become “Net Admin” (really, Sys Admin, or Senior Tech, Project Manager or some other sort of realistic designation) with associated responsibilities. Get them on that path, and make sure you're always helping them to get there, as long as that's what they want to do.

Some people love the help desk (I know my people do!), but whether they like that work or see themselves moving into other positions, it's important to provide a clear opportunity to grow.

I get it – when you're a small MSP, it's hard to have an “org chart” or something like Dell or HP would have, and it's completely unrealistic. So maybe you have to become comfortable with the idea that you'll have to bring them to a level where they will leave you so they can make something more of themselves. Or maybe you'll have to make them a partner down the line.

In any case, if you want to keep these people, you have to figure out how to make them better and see themselves as continually improving professionally.





# Conclusion

**YOU'LL NOTICE EVERY SINGLE  
REASON IN THIS BOOKLET  
STARTS WITH "YOU."**

That's because good leadership also starts with "you" and it is "you" that makes these kinds of decisions anyway. You are the one responsible for getting things right.



Fortunately, when you know the common pitfalls, you can avoid them. Not to say you won't step in others, but no sense in walking straight into an open pit if you know it's there.

Obviously, the list I gave is not a comprehensive list, but I can guarantee you these are the main reasons why techs quit (at least the kind of quitting that drives us all nuts), because I've made these mistakes in my own MSP business and I've paid the price.

It has cost all of us in the industry countless millions in lost time, lost productivity, and lost money. It behooves us to get it right. It drives my mission to provide great help desk techs to our industry – we can all get better together.

**My hope is that you'll stop making the same mistakes we've all been making for too long.**

If you invest the time and (admittedly large amounts of) cash to correct these mistakes, you're going to see the longevity of your techs increase tremendously.

Plus, you'll enjoy running your business more. You'll feel more valuable to your team. You'll actually be more valuable to your own workforce because you'll be the kind of resource to them that they are to you, and hopefully more so.

I mean, that's why you get paid the big Bitcoin, right?

To those who have chosen me and my company to help them build a great front-line, I am eternally grateful for the trust you have placed in me and my valuable help desk techs.

To your prosperity,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. Colin Peterson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

# ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Like so many of us in the I.T. services world, J. Petersen started as a weekend warrior, working out of his garage (sound familiar?), evenings, by referral, as a side business to his regular gig as a bilingual tutor for Fresno Unified School District in Central California.

After spending the next 25 years building a successful MSP, he formed HelpDesk.tech from his knowledge of what a Managed Service provider really needs in an outsourced, white

label help desk. He has been successful recruiting, training, and retaining top talent that enjoys front line support, and now he is making that available to MSPs worldwide.

He enjoys his own craft-roasted coffee in the morning, whiskey in the evening, the jazz greats, a good fairy tale, Christmas, convincing his wife to travel with him, and watching his sons turn into productive citizens.

