



# The War on **Talent** and Why the **Event Industry** is in a **Good Spot**

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The Big Resignation in the US continues in 2022 – it is expected that 23% of the workforce will seek a new job this year, according to research done by ResumeBuilder. The same is happening in Western Europe, with especially young Europeans re-examining their jobs according to research by YPulse. The research showed that salary was the key driver in only 20% of the cases. Other drivers are: no passion for the current job, no sense of purpose, negative impact on mental health or the lack of opportunities. And while the figures in Asia are lower, employers recognise it is hard to attract and retain talent, as discussed during a roundtable organised by PRovokeAP. It is no longer just about the salary – employees are rethinking not just how they work but why they work.

When talking to CEO's of convention centres who have reopened for business, there is one common topic: the shortage of labour. It is not uncommon to hear statements like: "It is a good thing we can't work at full capacity yet, because we don't have the staff to make it happen". The two-year standstill resulted in qualified staff leaving the event industry. **Stageco**, one of the world's biggest stage builders, already sounded the alarm bell: nobody has enough qualified staff for the upcoming concerts and festivals. In addition, the quarantine rules still in place in many countries can have a considerable and unpredictable impact on staff availability. And thirdly: there is of course the impact of The Big Resignation, whereby people question their relationship to work.

Talking to the participants of the AIPC talent programme, **Future Shapers**, on why they like working in the event industry, the exact opposite can be heard – it is all about values like passion, purpose and personal growth. When you play a role in making COP26 happen, how challenging it might be, the sense of purpose is definitely there - you enable addressing global climate change in an unprecedented way. And there are many other examples where bringing communities together results in innovation, collaboration or breakthroughs which impact people across the globe.



The second big advantage of the event industry is the wide range of opportunities for personal growth. For personally, the human side of events has made me grow enormously as an individual. But there are also the various "classic" growth opportunities, both vertical and horizontal. Moving from catering to sales, to operations, to finance? Perfectly possible in a convention centre.

And the third key value is of course passion. Event professionals have a passion for people that is shared by all parties involved in creating those unique moments which are the hallmark of great events. When the magic of organised events happens, the emotions of the people involved can be best compared to a NASA control room when a rocket is successfully launched – joy, pride, and a sense of belonging.

We are about to witness the launch of a very different event industry, focusing on value and purpose. Now, more than ever, the event industry is the place to be for talents. They will be able to use all their creativity and imagination, to ensure these events are truly sustainable and to bond communities by creating unique moments of sharing experiences. We should consider the Big Resignation as a unique opportunity to attract new talent, and we should showcase all the opportunities we can offer.

The participants to the AIPC talent programme, Future Shapers, will be part of that effort, and as the global association of convention centres, AIPC will continue to lead the way in making sure their story is heard.