


# Why would anyone *leave?*

> *Build careers worth having, businesses worth owning, and lives worth living. — KW mission*

Joe Williams, co-founder of Keller Williams Realty, set out to build a company where people woke up every day excited to go to work and felt like owners. It is an ambition many leaders share and few define. The question is how, and the answer was culture.

**Build a culture so strong no one wants to leave.**

Keller Williams began in Austin, Texas in 1983 with a handful of agents and some folding tables and chairs. Today it describes itself as the world's largest real estate franchise by agent count. Its stated mission is to build careers worth having, businesses worth owning, and lives worth living.

Notice the word "owning." The company's premise is that when it invests in its agents' businesses, those agents in turn build the company. People who feel like owners care about outcomes, look out for one another, and treat the work as theirs.

The evidence for culture is not merely sentimental. Gallup's Q12 meta-analysis found that highly engaged business units had 18 percent less turnover in high-turnover organizations and 43 percent less in low-turnover organizations, compared with the least engaged units.

Yet only 32 percent of the U.S. workforce was engaged in 2022, and 23 percent globally. Most leaders, in other words, are not getting this right, which means the leader who does has a genuine advantage in attracting and keeping talent.

Three questions are worth asking your team this month. Do people look forward to coming in? Do they have a real stake in the outcome? And if a better offer arrived tomorrow, what in your culture would make them say no?

**Build the place no one wants to leave.**



Sources: Keller Williams; Gallup (Q12 meta-analysis; 2022 engagement data)