

## J. Michael Locke

### Musings

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#### #170: Musing March 18, 2022

An often overlooked step in talent acquisition is onboarding and “app to start.” Just because someone accepts an offer doesn’t mean you have him or her. It is really critical to keep in touch and keep the enthusiasm for joining your organization. You need to counsel them through their resignation (who are you going to talk to? What are you going to say? Call me after you resign.) to ensure you don’t lose to a counter-offer. Remind them why they have chosen to join your organization. Personally, I like giving the new employee some work assignments before they even start to get them ramped up (HR people don’t like that.) Finally, you need a thoughtful onboarding especially if remote. Good article on that step here (thanks Jennifer Walsh): [why-upping-your-employee-onboarding-game-is-more-important-than-ever](#).

An underutilized managerial technique is “playing consumer.” Pretend you are the buyer and go through your company’s process --- submit an interest form on the web and see how long before you get a call or maybe even invent an identity and listen to the sales pitch. I am a big fan of this “undercover boss” move as it relates to walking through the web experience. In today’s market, you also should “pretend” to be a potential employee. Google search, check out the career section on the website, submit a resume etc. and see the experience potential employees are having when engaging your business.

The best weapon right now in the labor battle is good leadership – not in the corner office but throughout the organization from every individual who has managerial responsibilities. One underappreciated bad leadership trait to watch for is the absentee leader. *“Absentee leaders are people in leadership roles who are psychologically absent from them. They were promoted into management, and enjoy the privileges and rewards of a leadership role, but avoid meaningful involvement with their teams. Absentee leadership resembles the concept of rent-seeking in economics — taking value out of an organization without putting value in.”* [the-most-common-type-of-incompetent-leader](#).

Interesting stat and quote from WSJ Editorial page: *“As finance scholar Emre Kuvvet wrote recently...among economists in the Federal Reserve System, Democrats outnumber Republicans by 10.4 to 1 in 2021.....This leads the Fed to overestimate the growth effect of federal spending but underestimate the growth benefits of regulatory and tax reform.”*

Another interesting stat from WSJ: *“The share of workers categorized as freelance...was 36% in 2021.”*

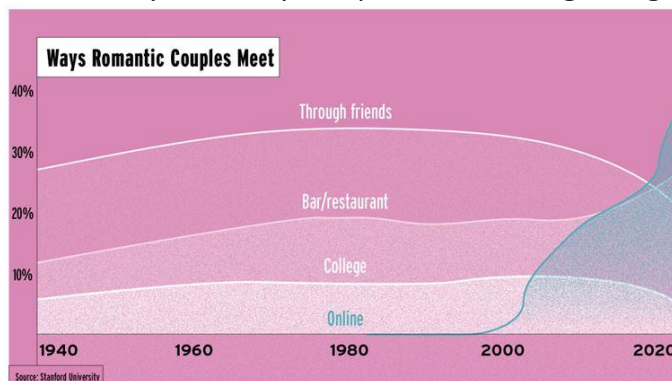
One more from William Blair: *“for the next decade, more than 10,000 people will turn 65 each day.”*

Many of those 65+ (and growingly younger) folks are playing pickleball. For those not familiar, it is a “miniature tennis” game with a whiffle ball. Why “pickleball”? Apparently the creator’s dog’s name. *“While the game originated in Bainbridge Island, Washington in the 1960s—and [Washington State is currently considering](#) making the game its official sport—the precise origins of its name are unclear; some say it’s because one of the founder’s dogs was named “Pickles.” Once people move past the matter of the name and try the sport for themselves, however, they generally get hooked very quickly.*” (thanks Keith Watson) [pickleball-trend-one-percent/](#).

We need some of the pickleball players to get back into the workforce. Great report from EMSI ([demographic-drought/](#)) -- here is the thrust. *“Fifty years of birth rates below replacement levels, combined with a recent precipitous drop in immigration has left us with fewer and fewer young, working-age people. This decline is happening as a record number of Americans are reaching retirement age, compounding the problem. What’s more, a steadily falling labor force participation rate means fewer people are looking for work or filling available jobs. It’s a one-two punch that has left the labor market reeling.”* One key to getting labor participation rates back up is solving the childcare dilemma. Too many talented women are not in the workforce because of cost and availability of quality childcare. The other big lever is immigration. We need to have a rational immigration system which increases the flow of immigrants into the US.

Have to be suspicious when Amazon executives have moved their internal chats onto Signal which provides encryption and destroys after consumption.

Where did you meet your spouse? Amazing change. Graph from Scott Galloway.



RIP globalization and international supply chains. The pandemic plus Russian invasion will drive companies to reduce dependency on volatile international markets. Need your chips built in US. Need more domestic energy production. Step backwards for movement to one global, interconnected market.

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