

# My Employee Went Directly From a Company Zoom Call to a Zoom Interview Call

Dear Stephen,

*I am a regional manager for a manufacturer on the West coast. One of my favorite salespeople just resigned to go to work for a competitor. This woman is well liked by everyone — our customers, her office colleagues, upper management and our HQ executives. I was authorized to counter offer her, but I got nowhere. She told me quitting was not personal but that our competitor, along with their recruiter (a scoundrel like you), made a compelling story as to why it was time for her to change companies.*

*When the dust settled, she was convinced the other company was the right career move. I was caught off guard. Flabbergasted really. The idea anyone would even consider changing jobs in these uncertain times, let alone interview in the middle of a pandemic, never occurred to me. I*

*feel dumb because I just assumed other companies were not even hiring. My thinking was my employees were happy to even have a job. Losing anyone was the last thing on my mind.*

*I am so friendly with this employee that to make me feel better she told me she would get off a Zoom call with our own sales team and immediately get on a Zoom interview. Finally the light bulb went on in my head. I realize employees have more freedom than ever to interview. Now I am on high alert with the rest of the people who work in this office, even while many of them still work from home.*

*I have been so emotionally overwhelmed and saddened by the large number of designer clients, many of whom are also my friends, who have lost their jobs that I needed this reality check to understand the world of design is distinctly different from my sales world.*

*My competitors are hiring, and I am now keenly aware of that. How can I prevent them from pirating my people?*

Signed,

Foiled Once!



You can send your workplace questions to Stephen at: [StephenSays@bellow.press](mailto:StephenSays@bellow.press)

Questions selected to be answered, will appear in this column. Please use the Subject: Stephen Says for all emails. Stephen Viscusi is a bestselling author, television personality, and CEO of The Viscusi Group, global executive recruiters located in New York. Follow Stephen on Twitter [@stephenviscusi](https://twitter.com/stephenviscusi), Like [Stephen on Facebook](#), and follow him on [LinkedIn](#).

## Because employees are working from home, it is easier than ever to work and interview at the same time.

Dear Fooled Once,

What you are describing is something I hear from clients every day. And no, you cannot prevent it from happening, if someone has really thought it through and decides to leave, they are going to leave, but you can take steps to reduce the chance of future surprises like this.

Now that you are painfully aware your competitors are hiring in sales roles, make sure you stay engaged with your workers, even when they work from home. And, as you mentioned, there is a clear difference between what is happening to our friends in the A&D community and how furniture manufacturers and dealers are handling the pandemic crisis. The worlds intersect, but they are different.

It seems like our industry has concluded you're going to need talented salespeople to pull out of this and eventually return to normal. Many furniture sales do not have an A&D component. Look at the success of Staples and Office Depot, carving out sales from the traditional furniture dealers. So, to get back to your problem, smart managers realize this. Because employees are working from home, it is easier than ever to work and interview at the same time. Exactly like you said (you only just realized this now?), they can get off a work Zoom and go directly to an interview Zoom.

Most corporate HR departments are well aware of this phenomenon and share the information with field managers so they stay connected to employees, even when working remotely. Remote working for employees is a headhunter's dream: We can contact candidates more efficiently and faster because they are always home. We Zoom or Facetime interview them on the spot.

You may not be able to prevent someone who wants to leave a job from leaving but you can stifle it by

staying emotionally engaged with your employees. By emotionally engaged I mean ask about the kids, the pets, the house and their life. Show you care and you understand it's stressful working from home.

Here is a tip, avoid just "scheduled" team calls at a certain time every day. It's OK to have that, but a spontaneous one-on-one call is just as important. Just call out of the blue as if you were walking down the hall to speak with them in the office. Avoid routines and free style your interactions throughout the day. Quit texting and start calling! People can hide in a text, so start using the telephone. This is not your teenage son, it is your employee. "Hear" how they sound; read their voice; hear what is going on in the background. Make sense?

The other lesson you learned is that in the sales world, good salespeople are not losing their jobs — they are always the last to go. It's easy to understand why you may not have thought anyone else was hiring because we all have personal friends who work in the A&D community who have lost their jobs. We hear their stories every day. Plus, I fear there may be a second bloodbath coming in the A&D community this fall once all these legacy projects are completed. We feel the pain of our designer friends, but their world is not our world. Research shows these A&D jobs will return as clients decide how to handle the new environment and what those new offices will look like.

Let's face it, do you like working from home? I doubt it. It will take time, but many of us will be back in the office. So the answer here is to stay engaged on the phone with your employees, because professional recruiters and your competitor's HR staff and sales managers are finding it much easier to poach today. Take my advice, the next time you are about to text them to say hello or ask a question, call them instead!

Stephen