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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Roots of Worker Dissatisfaction Dramatically Different From Previous Generations

Labor conditions, overtime, safety, no longer the primary issues

DENVER – Throughout history, the working class has waged heroic struggles for better wages, human dignity, and a greater voice in the workplace. But for this generation, and much of today's workforce, the historic labor complaints of long hours, unsafe conditions and low pay, have given way to frustration with glass-ceilings, poor leadership, lack of tolerance for self-expression and generally feeling undervalued for their contributions. This trend of “self” over “company” is catching traditional employers unprepared and ill-equipped to manage an often restless and frustrated workforce.

“We have undergone wholesale changes in a generation,” says Steven Vannoy, CEO of Pathways to Leadership Inc. and co-author of the book *Stomp the Elephant in the Office* (2008, Wister & Willows). “While our parents and grandparents were the beneficiaries of the early-century labor struggles, many of them felt fortunate to have a good job and spent their careers working for the same employer. Today's workers don't have the same mentality and expect more from their chosen vocations.”

Vannoy notes that American workers have grown up in a culture offering tremendous personal freedoms and a voice in almost every aspect of their lives – except the workplace. “They won't hesitate to leave for greener pastures if they feel undervalued, disrespected or unfulfilled,” asserts Vannoy. “Or, worse yet,” he offers, “they won't leave at all, and instead will take out their frustration on customers.”

Surveys show that worker dissatisfaction in America is at record levels and increasing. So why are other countries not facing the same challenges of motivating and retaining both management and rank-and-file workers? “Just blame our culture,” says Craig Ross, Pathways President and co-author of *Stomp the Elephant in the Office*.

According to Ross, “Too many companies tout ‘their people’ as their greatest asset. But for the vast majority, their people are actually their greatest weakness. The problem,” Ross explains, “is that American workers bring phenomenal skills, experience, perspective and creativity to the workplace, but those qualities are rarely acknowledged or nurtured by managers. Employee frustration is bleeding over into their attitudes and actions in the workplace.”

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Vannoy points to the plethora of ways Americans have to express themselves including: YouTube, MySpace, blogging, reality shows, talent competitions and more. But he also points out that those freedoms typically end at the employer's front door. He notes the irony of the typical hiring process that looks for life experience, unique perspective and creativity in an applicant, but then expects those same traits to be tucked away once the worker is hired.

"The American workplace is toxic and business leaders simply don't get it," offers Ross. "The human potential and creativity being lost everyday in America is staggering. Imagine if 1% of the ideas, improvements and solutions that are swimming in the minds of our workers were just acknowledged, considered and implemented. Our world would change in remarkable ways and America would gain a huge economic advantage. But it's just not happening," Ross laments.

He insists that, contrary to the assertions of frustrated employers, there is no such thing as a 'bad worker' and that everyone wants to be great. He says that true leadership is not about motivating workers, but about helping them to be great by nurturing their talents and potential. He further purports that the companies that find creative ways to involve their employees, and make them a part of decisions and solutions, will reap tremendous rewards. Those that don't – simply won't be able to compete.

To interview Pathways President Craig Ross, or CEO Steven Vannoy, please contact Leah Volk at 800-569-1877, 303-550-3481, or leahv@pathwaystoleadership.com. For more information about Pathways to Leadership, visit www.pathwaystoleadership.com.

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