

Title: Kotaku: Overworked GameStop Employees Walk Out, Tell Gamers To Shop Elsewhere
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Created 2022-06-07 20:25:19 UTC
Permalink: /r/GME/comments/v76mrs/kotaku_overworked_gamestop_employees_walk_out/
Url:
https://www.reddit.com/r/GME/comments/v76mrs/kotaku_overworked_gamestop_employees_walk_out/

A recent Kotaku Article, despite not being the most reputable source, shows one of there areas in which GameStop desperately need to improve in, imo. I know MSM bad, but if you ignore the bias of blaming the investors and claiming there is widespread resentment towards us, the rest of the article show a problem that needs addressed.

The GameStop in the Gateway Mall in Lincoln, Nebraska is one of the busiest around, at least according to the person who used to run it. But over the weekend it was closed after four employees decided to walk out and never return over what he says are bad working conditions and a verbally abusive district manager. It's the second time this year a GameStop in the area saw its entire staff resign in protest.

It's not uncommon anymore to walk up to a GameStop and see a sign that says the store is temporarily closed while employees are on a lunch or bathroom break. Overworked and understaffed, sometimes there's only one person working the entire store, leaving them with no other option. On Sunday, the makeshift sign outside the Gateway Mall GameStop said something different.

"We regret to inform you that we all quit," the piece of paper [taped to the front door](https://www.reddit.com/r/lincoln/comments/v5ggkm/gateway_mall_gamestop_is_closed_til_further_notice/) read, a photo of which was shared on the Lincoln subreddit later that day. It went on:

>Our District Manager has no respect for us as employees or as human beings. We have been told by our district manager that we were supposed to have had this store achieving sales quotas and running perfectly 6 months ago. Which was 3 months before alot of us even got hired. Unfortunately, despite the staff's best efforts, we are not god.

The paper then listed nearby competitors, including a place called EntertainMart located elsewhere in the mall, and told would-be customers to shop there instead. "Spend your money at an establishment that respects it's employees \[*sic*\]."

When *Kotaku* called the store on Monday, someone answered saying that it would be open again soon and directed us to contact the communications firm Longacre Square Partners, which specializes in topics like investor relations, shareholder activism, and crisis management. A representative of the firm refused to offer on-the-record comment on the situation over the phone. They declined to comment in writing either, and demanded we not mention the name of Longacre in the story.

"For my health I had to leave," Frank Maurer, the store's recently promoted manager, told *Kotaku* in a phone interview. The stress and anxiety were so bad he had trouble sleeping and wasn't even enjoying games anymore. He said he only started working there in late 2021, and while at first it was fun, it quickly turned into a nightmare between the lack of resources and management's strict quotas. To put up with it Maurer said he was paid \$17 an hour, just \$2 over the entry level rate at the nearby Target, while those under him made only \$9, Nebraska's minimum wage.

He also claimed he was never properly trained by the company on any of the new responsibilities he was given as manager, nor given the resources and time to train others at the store. At one point he said he had to work over two weeks straight with no days off just to keep the store functioning.

"When I asked for support I was met with silence," Maurer said.

Then there was the district manager, whom he accused of routinely threatening and dressing down staff over their "failure" to meet impossible goals. "He was abusive verbally," Maurer said. "He would constantly

threaten people's jobs." The staff would be told they could be easily replaced by other college kids, part of a ceaseless "churn and burn" mentality that Maurer said was part of why the store was struggling to meet its unrealistic quotas. "All he sees are numbers on a computer."

A similar walkout sign taped to Lincoln, Nebraska's other GameStop earlier this year also blamed the district manager for the mass resignation. "There have actually been four walkouts since August 2021 because of him," wrote one former employee on Facebook. "Two at each location. The first ones were kept pretty quiet though."

When asked about the prospect of unionizing amid huge labor pushes at Starbucks, Amazon, and Apple, as well as recent efforts in the larger gaming industry, Maurer said he can't see it ever happening. Like every other current and former GameStop employee I've spoken with in the past year, he feels turnover is too high and management too ruthless for anything like that to ever get off the ground.

While it's always been a tough retail gig built on exploiting employees' passion for gaming, there's a growing sense that turnover and burnout are worse than ever at GameStop, even as its new corporate overlords [tout a pivot to crypto](<https://kotaku.com/gamestop-nft-crypto-blockchain-bitcoin-marketplace-meme-1848952829>). Last November, employees told **Kotaku** that they were being [pushed to the breaking point](<https://kotaku.com/gamestop-pushes-employees-to-the-breaking-point-during-1848144495>) during the holiday rush, and every day posts about [cratering morale](https://www.reddit.com/r/GameStop/comments/v4pbuy/tired_of_being_told_to_nickel_and_dime_every_guest/) and [people quitting](https://www.reddit.com/r/GameStop/comments/qxhyi5/everyone_at_my_store_quit/) flood the GameStop subreddit.

"I left because they pushed my old boss out and the new one was brought in by the district manager from South Dakota he was from just really bad," another employee who recently left the company, told **Kotaku** on Facebook. "He was a jerk to customers and employees, when he got hired the entire staff quickly left except for me, I stuck around until it was clear he wanted rid of me too. I'm honestly surprised more GameStops aren't down on workers."

Many are tired of having to hassle customers about memberships and warranties like used-car salespeople, and of always being told it's never enough, all while random strangers gloat online about the [meme stock's market-defying success](<https://kotaku.com/gamestop-meme-stock-crypto-ryan-cohen-market-capitalism-1848737669>).

"It's become disheartening," Maurer said. "[Employees] hate the investors. They're furious with people putting money into this company with no care for how it treats its people."

So he decided to quit. And when the three other employees at the store heard he was done, they all decided to leave too, Maurer said. He would have left earlier but was afraid of walking away. "I didn't want all of my passion and effort to be wasted," he said. But despite the time sink he ultimately still felt "tossed aside like a wet paper towel."

"This company inspires managers to be horrid to their workers."