

# Britain at Work




# A report by Lansons and Opinium, July 2015

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# ‘Britain at Work’ study reveals untapped engagement and untold value



## Scott McKenzie

Director, Change and Employee Engagement, Lansons

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#BritainAtWork

I am delighted that, in conjunction with our partners Opinium, Lansons is launching our study of the contemporary UK workplace, entitled ‘Britain at Work’. This study of more than 2,000 UK employees explores elements such as pride in the organisation, job satisfaction, line management effectiveness, working environment and career development.

We believe this report is timely. The UK has now emerged from the financial crisis and the economy is returning to growth. Up until the spring of 2015, things had been looking positive as unemployment had also been steadily falling for the last few years.

And yet we have been hearing ongoing commentary about the UK’s productivity gap. Through the recession we have seen a significant increase in workplace stress, with workers feeling exhausted and under pressure. We are also hearing concerns about the lack of investment in skills and training, while, at the same time, we are seeing greater focus on employee engagement programmes.

This of course gives a contrasting picture of what might be happening in the UK workplace. At Lansons, we felt we needed to gather more insight into how UK workers felt about these and many other issues.

I think at this point it’s important to say that we believe many of the topics we have asked UK workers about are relevant to other markets too. We are an international business and we are keen to contrast what we have learned with other countries. Possibly a focus for future research?

Our ‘Britain at Work’ study is split into a number of topic areas, including:

- Ethos and pride
- Loyalty and satisfaction
- Recognition and reward
- Job security
- Leadership and management
- Career development
- Communication
- Working environment
- Health and wellbeing

We do not claim that the study covers every aspect of the UK workplace, but we hope it covers some of the main areas that concern employees and their employers.

And what about the findings themselves? When you look at the 'Britain at Work' study, a picture begins to emerge of a hard-working UK workforce, but one that is suffering from fatigue and possibly apathy.

Generally speaking, we get on well with our colleagues and think our working environment is a good place to be. Two-thirds of us feel our jobs are as secure as they can be. Could this, perhaps, be perceived as complacency?

UK workers feel they are getting paid fairly (44%) and that pay is moving in the right direction, with 55% seeing a pay rise in the last year. This is in keeping with other data, which suggest levels of pay are finally beginning to rise.

Interestingly, UK workers also believe that their CEOs are paid unfairly, which could imply they are overpaid. That's when they actually know who their CEO is; a proportion of them don't, and it gets slightly worse the longer they stay in the organisation.

A proportion of workers also sometimes feel pressurised or overworked, regularly working over their contracted hours, sacrificing social and family arrangements in the process. Sometimes coming home from work exhausted. In the longer term this doesn't seem sustainable and could cause problems with productivity, and work-related stress.

And while workers' relationships with line managers are broadly positive, some don't feel their managers help them progress. Opportunities for career progression and training are seen as an area that needs improvement. This leads to a bigger question: is the UK investing enough in building workplace skills and capabilities?

Overall, pride in the organisation is patchy. Indeed, around a third are completely disengaged. There is a shortage of people actively recommending that people should come and work for their organisation. A proportion of workers feel dissatisfied and undervalued, providing what we believe to be a huge, untapped opportunity.

In summary, the British workplace is doing all right. But, that is simply not ambitious enough. A prouder, more engaged UK workforce would surely be more productive and profitable, adding significantly to the UK economy.

Our hope is that the insights contained within this study will spark a wider debate about how we improve the UK workplace for the benefit of everyone.

Thank you for your interest in the study. I hope you will participate in the debate either at the launch event or on Twitter ([#BritainAtWork](#)).

Best regards

Scott McKenzie

# Executive summary

The 'Britain at Work' study reveals a hard-working British workforce that is willing to go the extra mile. Workers recognise their company's ethos, where their company is going and what it wants to achieve. They have good relationships with their managers and, currently, they feel relatively secure in their jobs.

However, workers also sometimes feel overworked and exhausted. They are sometimes under pressure and regularly work beyond their contracted hours, sacrificing valuable work-life balance in the process. Additionally, workers are not entirely sure about their long-term future, or indeed about their progression within their company.

Our study suggests that British workers are broadly happy with their pay, backed up by recent reports indicating that British workers have seen a pay increase of 2.7% in the last year<sup>1</sup>. However, productivity has been flat-lining across the UK since 2010<sup>2</sup>. Latest international comparisons show that UK workers produced, on average, between 27% and 31% less per hour than workers in France and Germany in 2013<sup>3</sup>.

Opportunities for career development and training are seen as an area that needs improvement. Levies on training already exist in the construction sector<sup>4</sup>, where two-thirds of employers are reporting skills shortages. In the recent Budget, the government announced a levy on large employers funding new apprenticeships. This is hardly reassuring news for employers and workers, and perhaps an explanation for the increasing sense of apathy, dispassion and consequently lack of engagement among Britain's workforce.

If workers see no hope for a better future, where is their incentive to work harder?

Productivity and, ultimately growth in individuals, companies and the UK economy are bound to be limited. This, we believe, needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

Our study also highlights that there are real challenges around employees feeling proud, recognised and valued for the work they do. Surprisingly, our study found that 40% don't feel their achievements at work are being recognised and one quarter (25%) of workers do not feel valued at work. If employers want their workforce to be engaged and productive, they must recognise the importance of helping workers feel valued and of recognising them for their achievements.

There is a definite correlation between employee engagement and high organisational productivity and performance. Indeed, engagement precedes performance. Research from Kenexa<sup>5</sup> shows that a disengaged workforce is costly. Kenexa suggests that moving the UK's engagement scores to the top quartile (bringing the UK on a par with countries like the Netherlands) could increase productivity substantially and, in turn, deliver an additional £25bn in GDP/year. Our study shows that improved engagement, especially through strong leadership and line manager communication, can help support the British workforce and improve the British workplace.

Traditional thinking on employee engagement assumes that the employer is solely responsible for how highly engaged their workforce is. However, we strongly believe that engagement is a shared responsibility. While employers do what they can to create a 'fertile' working environment, employees must bring their very best to work, every day.

<sup>1</sup> The Independent, 25 June 2015

<sup>2</sup> Labour Productivity Bulletin Q1 2015

<sup>3</sup> Office of National Statistics

<sup>4</sup> CBI/Pearson Education and Skills Survey

<sup>5</sup> Engage for Success paper

'Employee Engagement Task Force Nailing the Evidence'

# Study findings

## Methodology

Two online surveys were conducted amongst UK employees working for an organisation from 7 to 15 January 2015. The results of both surveys have been weighted to nationally representative criteria (gender, age and region):

### Survey 1

A sample of 2,003 UK employees working for an organisation (aged 18+), with an additional sample boost of 259 who work in the Finance & Banking industry.

### Survey 2

A sample of 2,008 UK employees working for an organisation (aged 18+), with an additional sample boost of 250 who work in the Finance & Banking industry.

## Demographic highlights

- 53%** of workers surveyed are **male**
- 47%** are **female**
- 46%** are aged **35-54**
- 14%** come from the **south east** and **London**
- 12%** from the **north west**
- 75%** are **ABC1**
- 77%** work **full time**
- 53%** work in the **private sector**
- 42%** work in the **public sector**
- 52%** work for **large organisations** (250+ workforce)
- 91%** have **no connection with a trade union**
- 25%** have been in the same job for **+10 years**
- 13%** work in **Education**
- 11%** work in **Healthcare**
- 10%** work in **Retail / Wholesale**
- 26%** earn between **£15K and £25K/year**

## Survey criteria

- **Gender**
- **Age**  
18-34, 35-54 & 55+
- **Region**  
North East, North West, Yorkshire & Humberside, East Midlands, West Midlands, East of England, London, South East, South West, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland)
- **Working status**  
Working full time 30+ hours/week, working part time 8-29 hours/week, working part time < 8 hours/week, 0 hours contract
- **Sector**  
Public sector, private sector, non-profit/third sector
- **Industry**  
Aerospace/Defence, Civil service/Government, Charity, Chemicals/Heavy industries (including Mining)/Energy (including Oil & Gas), Construction, Education, Entertainment & Leisure, Financial Services & Banking, Healthcare, Manufacturing/Food and Beverages, Professional Services, Retail/Wholesale, Technology/Telecoms, Transport & Logistics
- **Social grade**  
ABC1, C2DE
- **Organisation size**  
Covering both SMEs and larger organisations: 1-9 workers, 10-49, 50-99, 100-249, 250-499, 500-999, 1,000-4,999, 5,000-9,999, 10,000+
- **Member of a trade union**  
A trade union official, a union representative within their employer's organisation
- **Duration in current role**  
< 1 year, 1-2 years, 3-5 years, 6-10 years, 10+ years
- **Annual employment income**  
up to £10,000/year, £10,001-£15,000/year, £15,001-£20,000/year, £20,001-£25,000/year, £25,001-£30,000/year, £30,001-£35,000/year, £35,001-£40,000/year, £40,001-£45,000/year, £45,001-£50,000/year, £50,001-£65,000/year, £65,000+/year

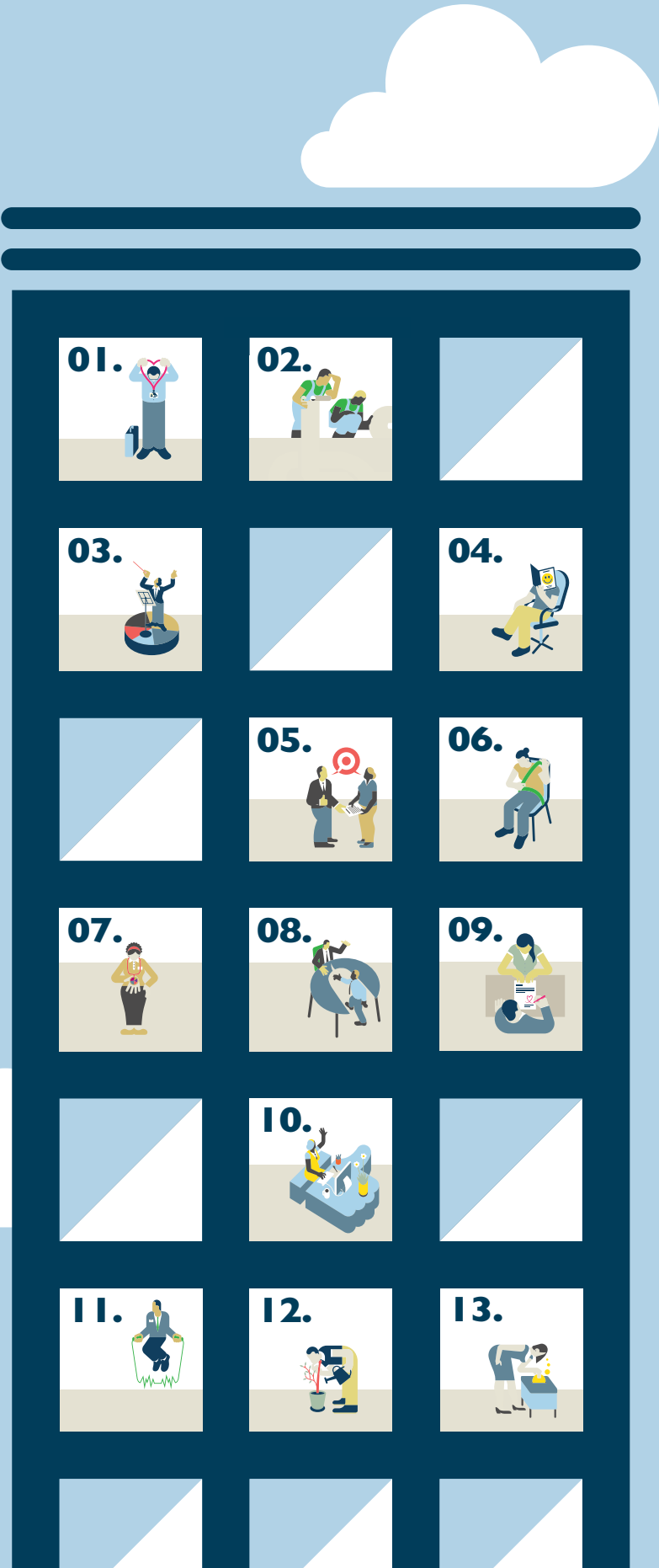
The study covers a total of 13 themes:

- 01. Pride in the Organisation**
- 02. Organisational Ethos**
- 03. Leadership**
- 04. Job Satisfaction**
- 05. Line Manager Effectiveness**
- 06. Job Security**
- 07. Recognition and Reward**
- 08. Communication from CEO/MD**
- 09. Loyalty**
- 10. Working Environment**
- 11. Health and Wellbeing**
- 12. Personal Growth and Career Development**
- 13. Views on the Organisation**

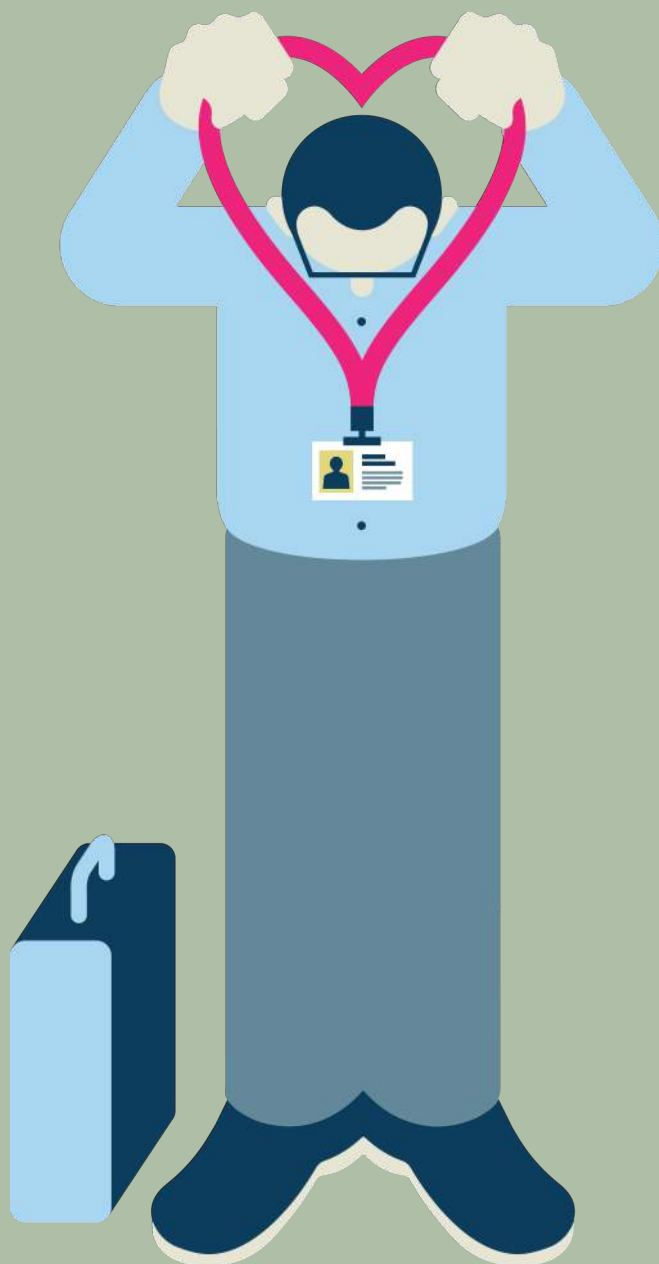
We have deliberately chosen these themes as they strongly represent the different ways in which the British workforce perceives the workplace as it stands today. These themes enable us to view the situation most objectively.

As specialists in Change and Employee Engagement, Lansons' goal is to help companies improve their workplaces and the different ways in which they operate. Our study, therefore, concludes with a number of recommendations, based on both our research and our expertise, which highlight how, why and where we believe improvements can be made.





# 01. Pride in the Organisation

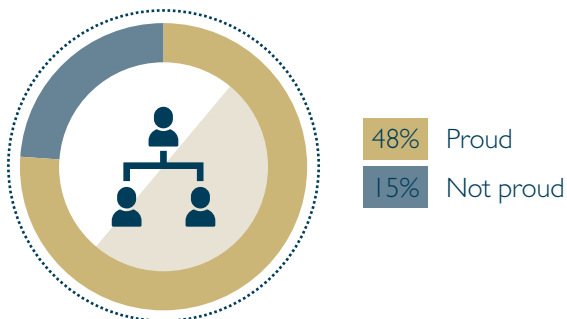


Reputation matters. In fact, according to very recent research, a company's reputation is one of the top three most important factors for British workers when it comes to seeking new employment and deciding upon an organisation to work for<sup>6</sup>.

Workers, it seems, are so sensitive to the repercussions of a negative company or industry reputation that they consider pride in a potential employer to rank far above flexibility of work, benefits offered, culture and the organisation's location when considering a role.

Pride breeds loyalty and engagement within the workplace, and our study shows that almost half (48%) of employees working for an organisation are proud of where they work, compared with almost one fifth (15%), who say they are not. This paints a patchy figure that industry should take note of.

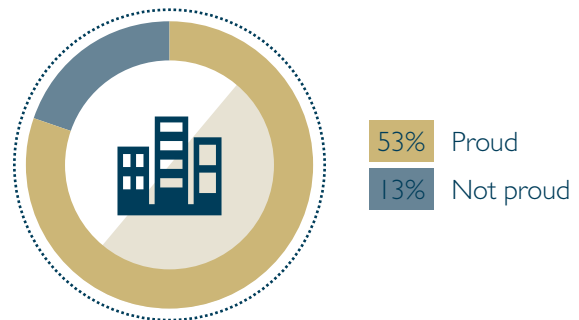
Pride in the organisation



The figures are similar for pride in the industry in which they work, with 53% of workers saying they are proud of their industry. By contrast, just over one in 10 (13%) are not. However, 39% of workers surveyed say that they would leave their current job tomorrow if they had another job and 51%<sup>7</sup> would not

recommend their workplace to others, indicating a very real lack of both pride and loyalty.

Pride in the industry



Parallels can also be drawn between pride and job satisfaction. One in five workers (20%) say they are dissatisfied with their current job, and a quarter (25%) say they do not feel valued. There seems to be a distinct lack of leadership visibility, as nearly one quarter (22%) of employees do not know who the head of their organisation is, even though they have been with their employer for more than 10 years. Additionally, employees in the private sector feel that they come behind customers and shareholders (22% employees vs 46% customers, 32% shareholders) when board members are making decisions about the organisation.

These figures all point to a strong need to instil greater pride in the British workforce. With approximately one-third of British workers, that's 10 million people<sup>8</sup>, feeling disengaged or passive about their work, there is much that can be done to increase productivity, simply by working with leaders to develop integrated approaches to engage stakeholders in the process of reputation recovery.

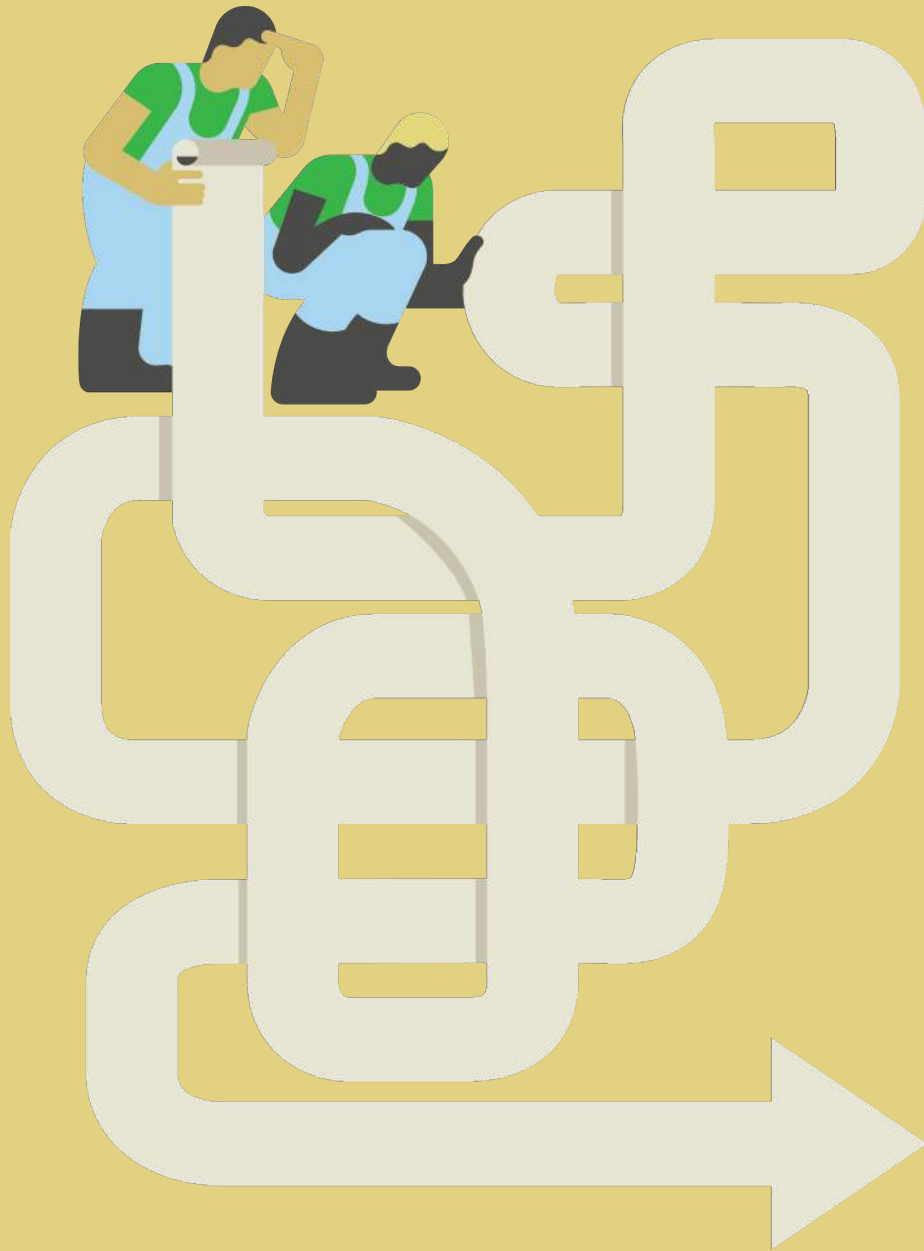
<sup>6</sup> PRCA/Opinium

<sup>7</sup> Respondents were asked the following question 'How likely are you to recommend working for your current organisation to others? Please provide an answer on a scale of 0-10 where 0 is not at all likely and 10 is very likely'. For the 10 point scale, those selecting 0-6 were classed as 'detractors', 7-8 'passive' and 9-10 'promoters'. Therefore, 51% is based off those selecting options 0-6.

<sup>8</sup> Office of National Statistics



## 02. Organisational Ethos

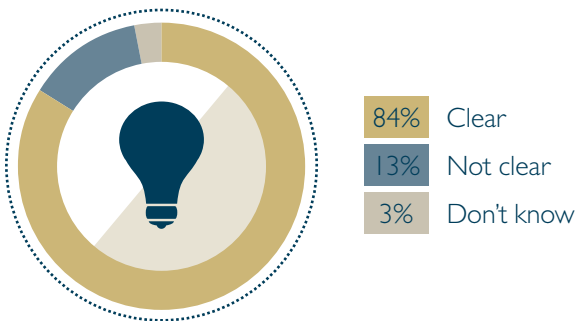


It is important for business success that employees clearly understand why their organisation exists and what it is aiming to achieve. Not only do they need to understand this; they need to believe in it as well.

We recognise that the most successful organisations are those that foster trust and cooperation. Their leaders build a culture of safety that leads to stable, adaptive, confident teams, where everyone feels they belong and where trust and loyalty are the rule, not the exception. Workers know precisely what their organisation's purpose is, they believe in it, they feel inspired to come to work, and they want to inspire others.

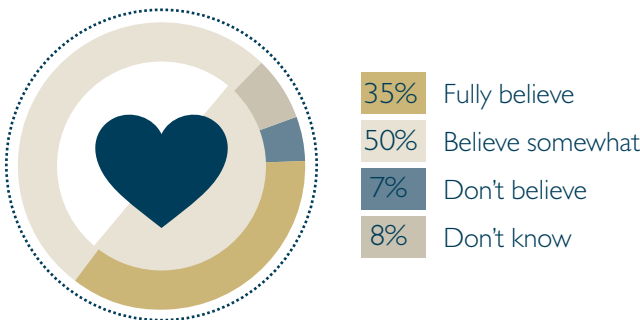
Our study shows that a high proportion of workers (84%) are completely clear on what their current organisation is looking to achieve. However, only 50% believe somewhat in what their current organisation is looking to achieve.

Clarity - in what the business is trying to achieve



These results bring into question the value that organisations and, specifically, leaders place on clear, effective communication. Good communication means being clear on what is expected of workers, both in terms of delivery and in terms of behaviour.

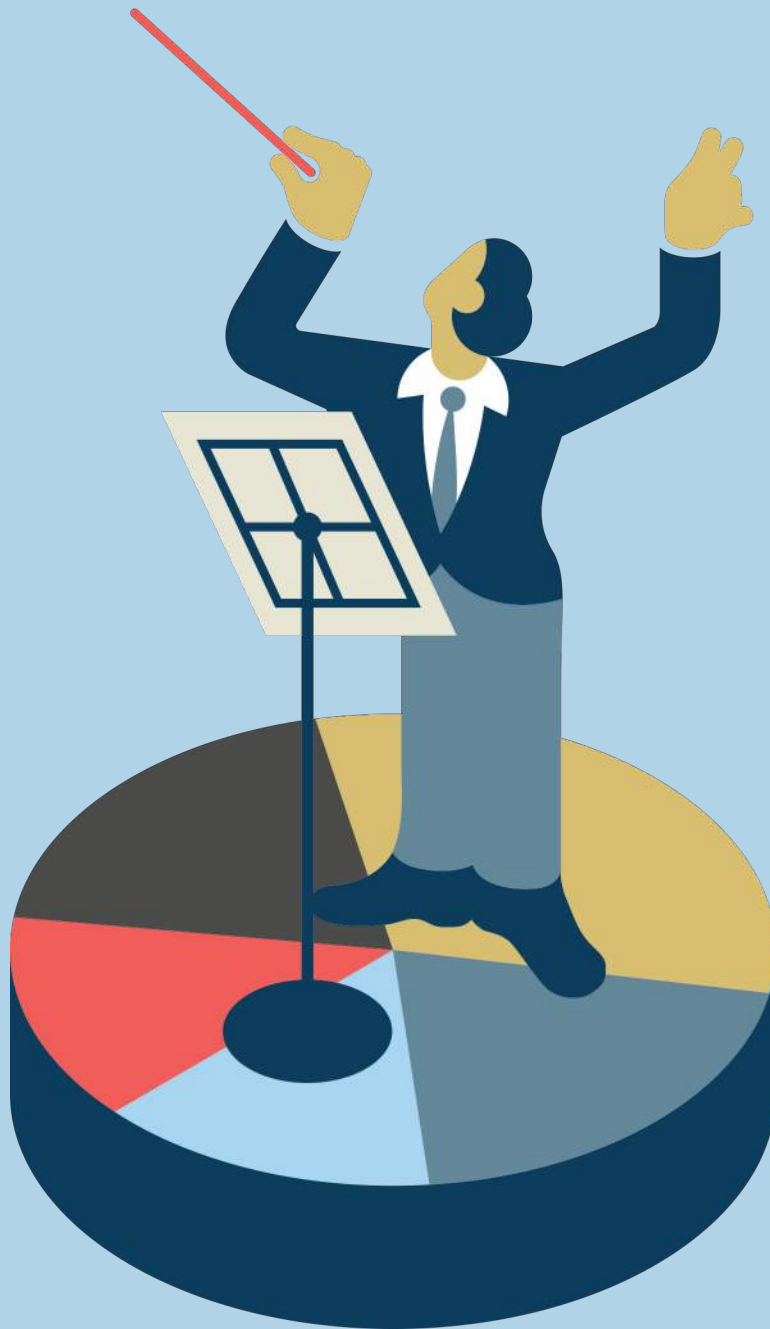
Belief - in what the organisation is trying to achieve



Good communication means knowing workers' views are important, and reassuring them that their views will be heard. Good communication also means workers feel that everything they do has meaning, resulting in them being wholly prepared to give discretionary effort. Just as employers need to communicate their views, so too do they need to listen to their workers' views. We recognise the importance of the employee voice and believe that employers must use it to engage their workers, to instil organisational values and pride.

The way in which organisations communicate is equally important to their effectiveness. Our study shows that more than one-third (36%) of workers say that the main method of communication from their CEO is email, followed by face-to-face/meetings (29%). However, 2% of CEOs communicate via social networks. When workers do receive an email from their CEO, one-fifth (20%) of them say they feel intrigued and 15% say they actually cringe. We believe that this shows the real importance of addressing communication head-on to engage employees.

# 03. Leadership



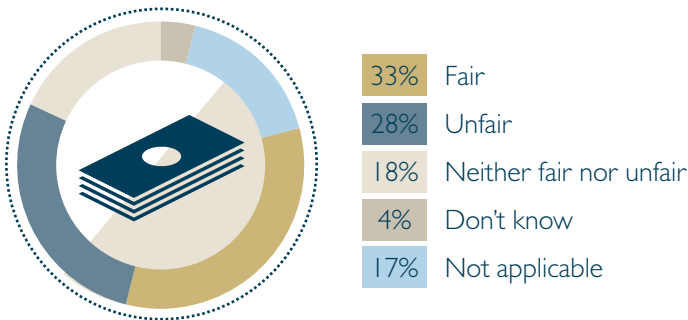
Much has been said and written about how good leadership positively impacts organisational success. Strong leadership plays a key role in ensuring that employees are fully engaged. However, going back as far as the start of the recession in 2008, we have seen a gradual erosion of trust in leadership from employees as well as other organisational stakeholders. What, therefore, does our study tell us about the status of leaders?

A shocking one in five (22%) workers do not know who leads their business, which highlights a real lack of visibility in some organisations. This gets worse the longer employees have been at their organisation - almost one-quarter (23%) who have been in their current role for more than 10 years do not know who their CEO is.

Knowing who heads your organisation



Fairness in pay at senior levels

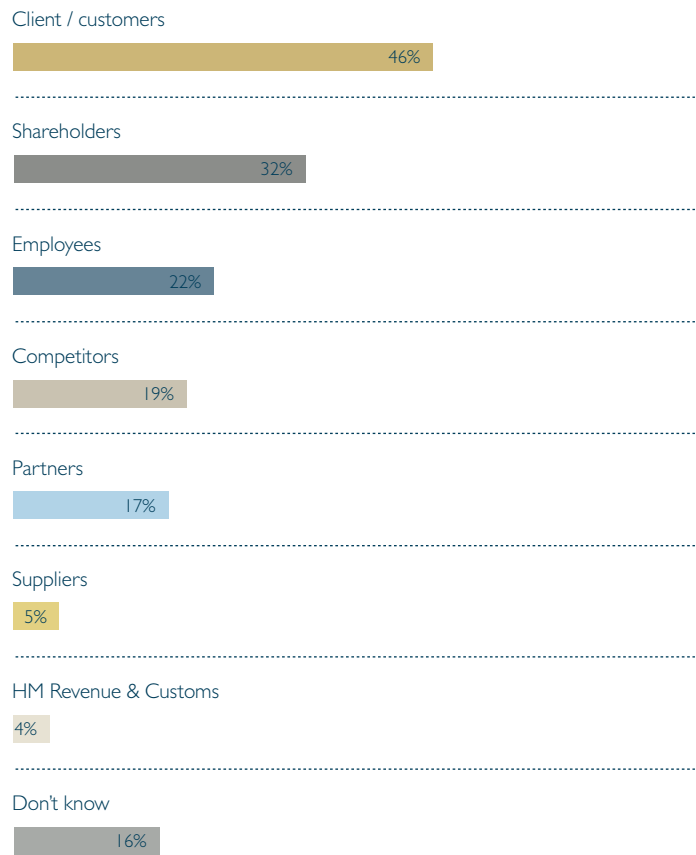


More than one-quarter (28%) also feel that senior leaders' salaries need addressing, saying that their leaders are paid unfairly in relation to the work they do. This figure rises significantly in the public sector, specifically in Civil Service/Government (40%) and in Healthcare (46%).

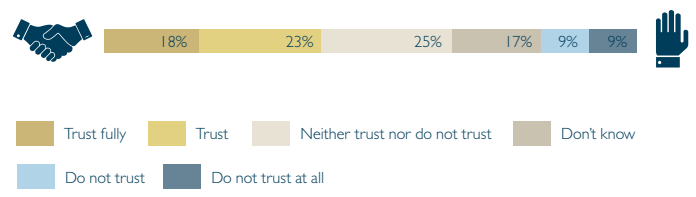
<sup>9</sup> Opinium Research carried out an online survey of 2,002 UK adults aged 18+, of which 1,197 were either full time or part time workers, from 14th to 17th of July 2015. Results have been weighted to nationally representative criteria.

Within the private sector, workers feel that they come behind other stakeholders (46% customers and 32% shareholders vs 22% employees) when board members are making decisions about the organisation. Nearly a fifth (18%) don't trust their CEO<sup>9</sup>.

Groups taken into consideration when board makes decisions



Do you trust your CEO?



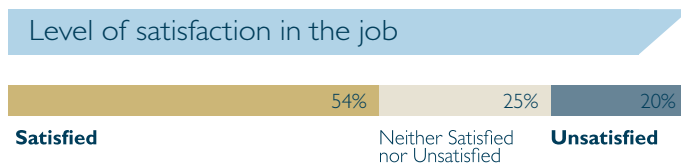
# 04. Job Satisfaction





There is far more to job satisfaction than meets the eye. Anyone who is remotely dissatisfied with their job will find reason to look elsewhere - and why not? People are generally working longer hours, pay has only just started to rise in the last year and up until spring 2015 unemployment levels had finally been starting to fall. So, what does this mean for levels of job satisfaction across the sectors?

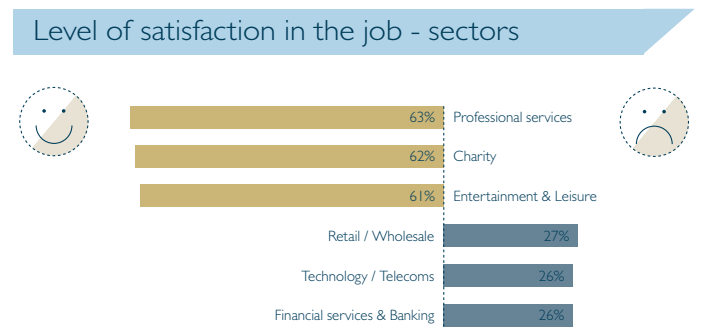
Over half (54%) of workers are satisfied with their job. Professional services (63%) has some of the highest levels of job satisfaction, followed by the Charity sector (62%) and the Leisure & Entertainment sector (61%),



However, 20% of workers are not satisfied with their job and, most disturbingly, 25% are apathetic. These employees don't seem to care about their workplace. This high rate of apathy is something that organisations need to note and act on. Where does this apathy come from? Would workers be more engaged if they had a better understanding of what their organisations stood for and they believed in what it was trying to achieve? Leaders must recognise that workers who are interested, who care and who, at the very least, have no sense of apathy will be more engaged and, as a result, more productive.

In terms of industry sector, those with the most dissatisfied workers are Retail/Wholesale (27%), Technology/Telecoms (26%) and Financial Services/Banking (also 26%)<sup>10</sup>. These sectors, together with these two groups of dissatisfied and apathetic workers, should be a real focus for improved engagement for management. This study suggests a complacency in the UK workplace that needs to be shaken off.

Businesses need to listen to those workers, identify the underlying issues causing their apathy and act on them.



So, why such dissatisfaction? Could it be that workers feel pressured? Is work-life balance taking a back seat? This study certainly indicates that balancing the professional and personal continues to be challenging. Fifty-one percent of workers say they sometimes feel exhausted or under pressure. Almost a third (30%) feel they do not have enough time to do their jobs effectively and a third (31%) are rarely able to take their full lunch break. Additionally, just over two-thirds (67%) of those who work beyond their contracted hours say that they work these additional hours in the late evening during the week.

Traditional thinking on employee engagement assume that the employer is solely responsible for how engaged their workforce is, but engagement is a shared responsibility. Whilst employers do what they can to create a 'fertile' working environment, the employee must bring their very best to work, every day. However, employees may well find this challenging if 34% of them feel that their manager talks more than listens and 32% feel the need for more managerial support. Based on our expertise, we know that engagement is a shared responsibility based on a mutual respect and trust.

<sup>10</sup> The Financial and Banking boost has been excluded from this percentage

# 05. Line Manager Effectiveness



Organisations that are led by effective line managers are more likely to have higher levels of retention, achieve maximum productivity, secure great talent and deliver increased bottom-line results.

As specialists in employee engagement, we cannot emphasise enough the value and importance of line managers. Good line managers are key to setting direction, to giving people structure and to pinpointing tasks that bring out the best in workers' capabilities. Most importantly, good line managers will ensure high levels of engagement, which will, in turn, increase productivity and business success.

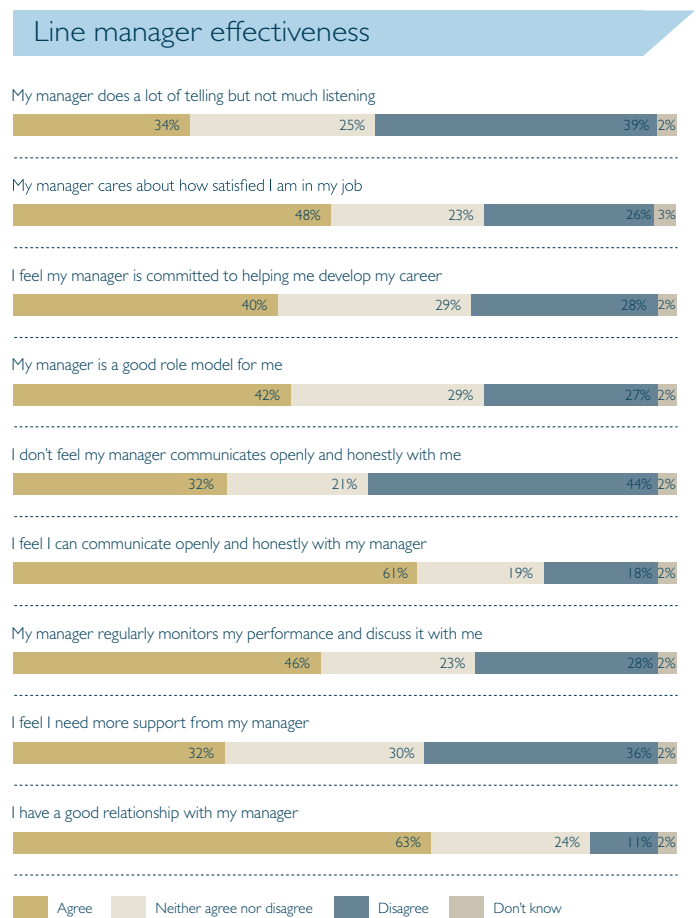
While workers' relationships with line managers are broadly positive, our study shows a number of areas where improvement is needed.

The majority of line managers are doing a great job to engage workers. Our study shows that 63% of workers say they have a good relationship with their manager, and 61% feel they can communicate openly and honestly with them.

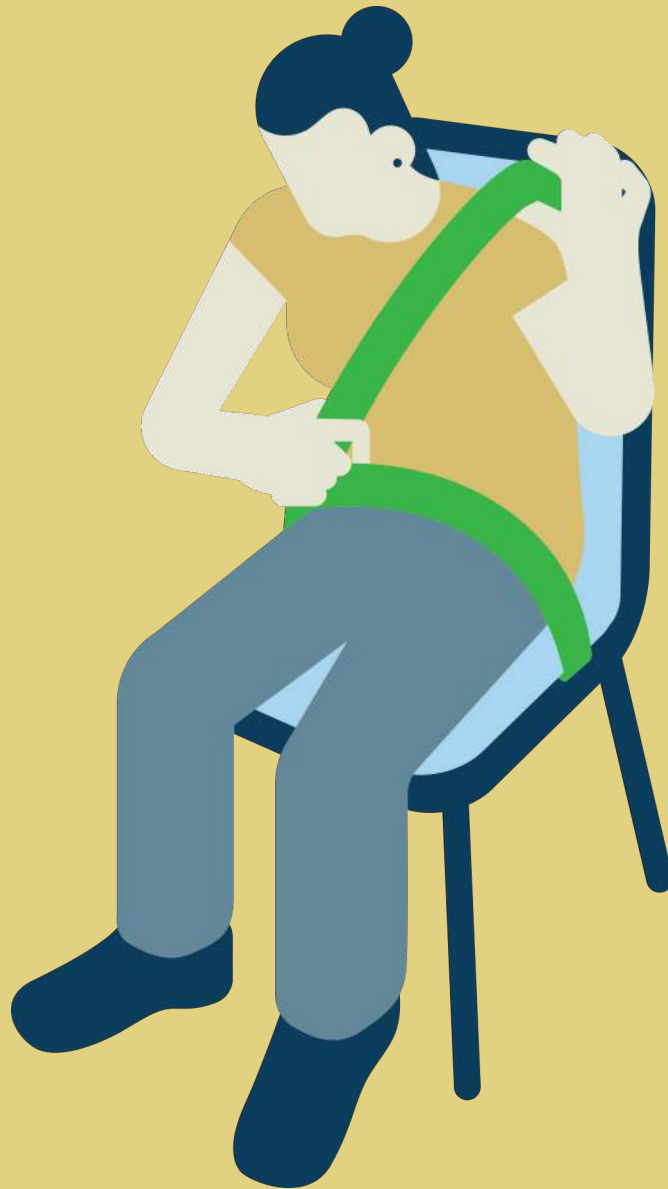
However, almost a third (32%) say they need more support from their manager. Four in 10 of workers feel that their achievements are not recognised and 48% feel there is little opportunity to progress their career in their current organisation. By contrast, 49% say their training opportunities are good. So where is the gap?

It is likely that effective communication, or rather a lack of it plays a key role in line managers being able to engage workers successfully. Our study reveals that nearly a third (32%) of workers feel that their manager does not actively communicate openly and honestly with them. In fact, 34% feel their manager talks more than they listen.

We believe that this emphasises the need for organisations to recognise the importance of the employee voice in relation to employee engagement. If workers do not feel that their views are listened to and acted upon, they are far more likely to be disengaged and, therefore, unproductive.



# 06. Job Security



There is increasing evidence to suggest that Britain is now emerging from the recession. Britain had expanded 2.8% in 2014<sup>11</sup>; the fastest of any advanced economy. Wages were also up 2.7% in money terms, rising at above 2% in real terms<sup>12</sup>.

It stands to reason then that workers feel confident in the British economy, with nearly two-thirds (65%) saying they feel their job is 'as secure as it can be' and that they are not at risk of being sacked or made redundant. Our study shows that, despite austerity cuts, workers in both the public and private sector feel just as secure (66%, 65%).

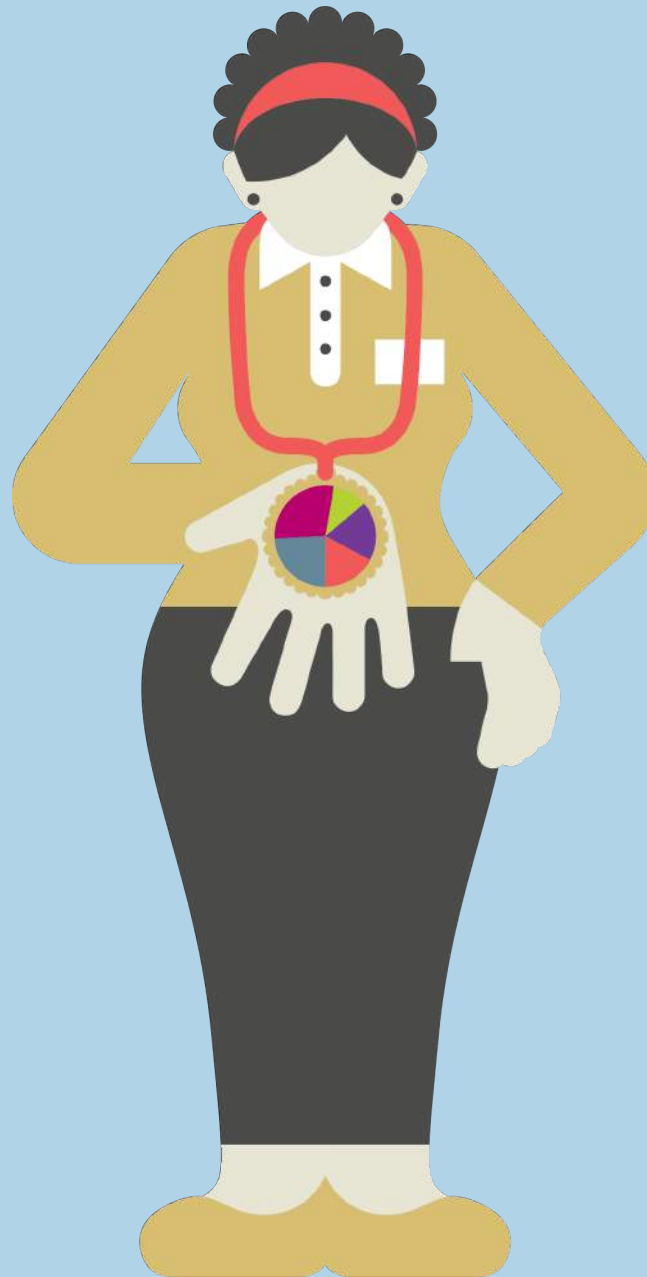
However, our study also reveals that workers in smaller (1-249) organisations (72%) feel more secure than those in large (250+) organisations (61%). Does this reiterate the need for clear communication, greater CEO/MD visibility and effective line management in order to improve engagement? If workers are more engaged, they will undoubtedly feel more secure and, consequently, productivity will rise.

Is your job as secure as it can be?



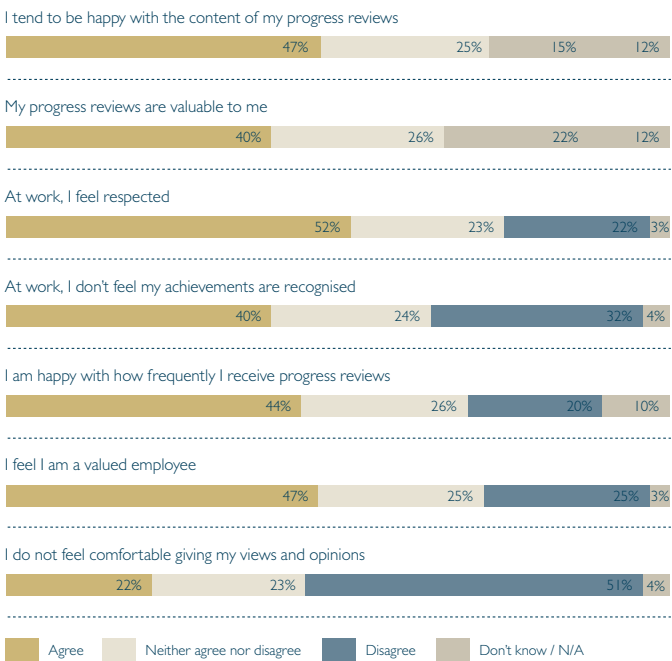
<sup>11</sup> Financial Times, 20 April 2015  
<sup>12</sup> The Independent, 25 June 2015

# 07. Recognition and Reward



Recognition and reward are key factors in making people feel valued, loyal and engaged. This study reveals a mixed picture in British business. Whilst nearly half (47%) of workers feel valued and more than half (52%) feel they are respected, a quarter (25%) of workers feel they are not valued at all and 40% feel their achievements are not recognised.

### Employee recognition



Many employees are indeed happy, with 55% of workers saying they have received a pay rise in the last 12 months and just over a third (34%) receiving a bonus in the last 12 months. However, a significant proportion

feel that there is still a lack of fairness. In terms of pay, only four out of 10 (44%) workers feel they are paid fairly, 30% feel they are not paid fairly and 28% of workers feel that senior leaders are paid unfairly in relation to the work that they do (in the public sector, 40% in the Civil Service/ Government).

Our study also reveals that 40% of workers value having progress reviews, but that only half (47%) tend to be happy with the content of their reviews. More than one-fifth (22%) of workers do not feel comfortable giving their views and opinions. This gives a very clear message; setting up the right communication channels is vital to giving employees a voice, especially if, as shown in the study, 34% feel their manager talks more than listens.

### Feelings on level of pay received



Nearly half (48%) of workers think there is little or no opportunity to progress their career in their current organisation. Indeed, only 15% of workers secured a promotion in the last year and exactly half (50%) say they have not been promoted in their current job.

Employers must create an environment in which employees can thrive. Getting recognition and reward right is a key foundation to securing engagement and, in turn, productivity.

Last occurrence of promotion, pay raise and bonus

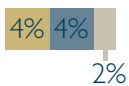
Not happened yet



Over 3 years ago



In the last 3 years



In the last 2 years



In the last 12 months



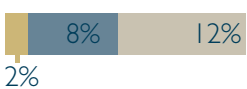
In the last 6 months



In the last 3 months



In the last month



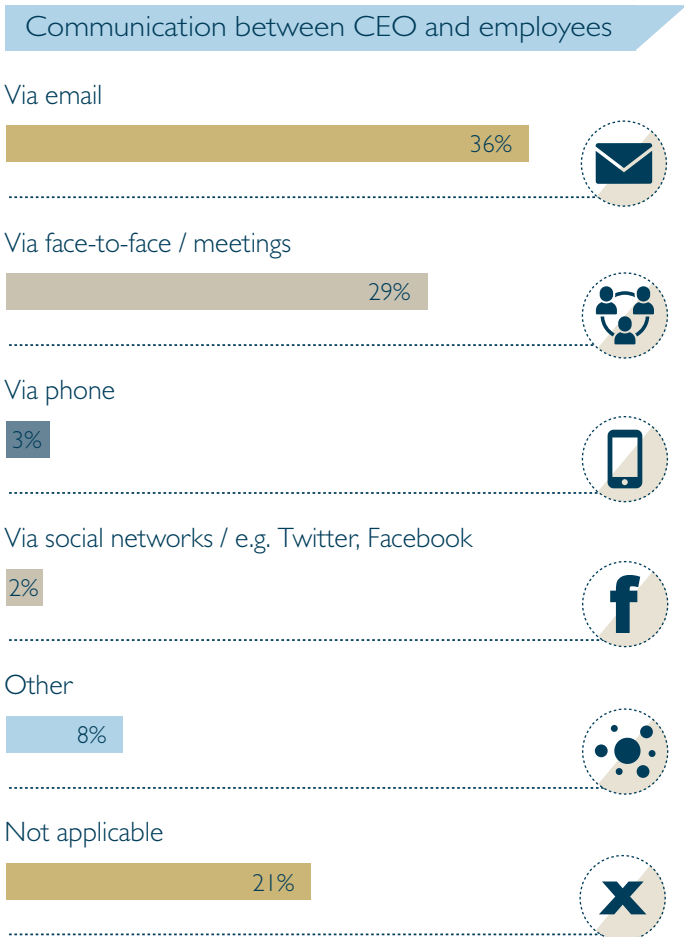
I was promoted
  I received a pay rise
  I received a bonus



# 08. Communications from CEO



When it comes to leading an organisation, to giving direction, to explaining the purpose and to instilling pride, the buck always stops with the CEO or MD. It is the CEO or MD that all key stakeholders (workers, management, investors and the public) will look to, positively and negatively. It is, therefore, crucial that the CEO or MD is clearly visible; that they not only communicate the right messages effectively and in the right way, but that those messages reach and are understood by each and every stakeholder.



Our study has revealed that digital communication is definitely the main way for CEOs to talk to workers. More than a third (36%) of workers reveal

that their CEO likes to communicate with them via email. Although it can be argued that face-to-face meetings are far more effective for securing employee engagement, our study reveals that this method actually comes second (29%), followed by the phone (3%).

Either way, good communication provides a strong opportunity to improve relations with the workforce. To work successfully, communication should always be clear, consistent and regular, especially if leaders wish to garner the right reaction. However, CEOs, as well as those responsible for internal communications and employee engagement, should note that, when receiving an email from their CEO, one in five (20%) workers feel intrigued, 15% actually cringe and 10% feel concerned. Considering that nearly one-quarter (23%) of employees are not aware of who their CEO is despite having been with their organisation for more than 10 years, these figures should not be entirely surprising. But they should still be alarmed.

We believe that these findings confirm the need for clear communications channels to be established and for leaders and communications teams to use those channels most effectively. This is also an opportunity to use new digital tools and channels to improve leadership communications. At Lansons, we specialise in improving clarity and effectiveness of organisational communications by using qualitative and quantitative methods to assess effectiveness.

If 22% of workers do not know who is leading their business, face-to-face meetings will go a long way to improving the lack of leadership visibility. If CEOs proactively listen to and communicate with workers more regularly, many more workers will feel valued, will have greater pride in both their work and their organisation and, therefore, be more productive.

How do you feel when receiving an email from your CEO?

Intrigued



Surprised



I cringe



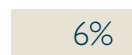
Sad



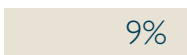
Concerned



Other



Happy



None of the above



Amused



Don't know / unsure



Fearful

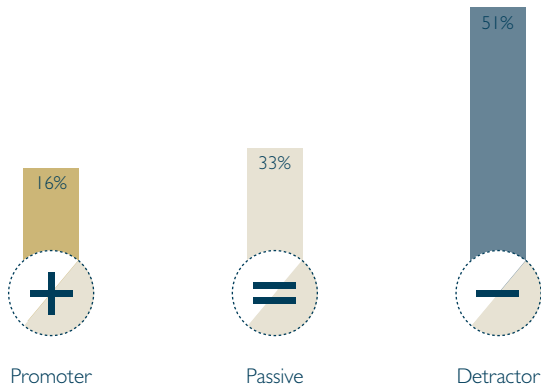


# 09. Loyalty



From February to April 2015, the number of people in employment reached 31.05 million; an increase of 114,000 compared with the three months to January 2015<sup>13</sup>. This increase is not just down to the number of people finding new jobs, but also the number of people remaining in their jobs and staying with their organisations.

Endorsing your workplace - likely to recommend?



NET PROMOTER SCORE - 35%

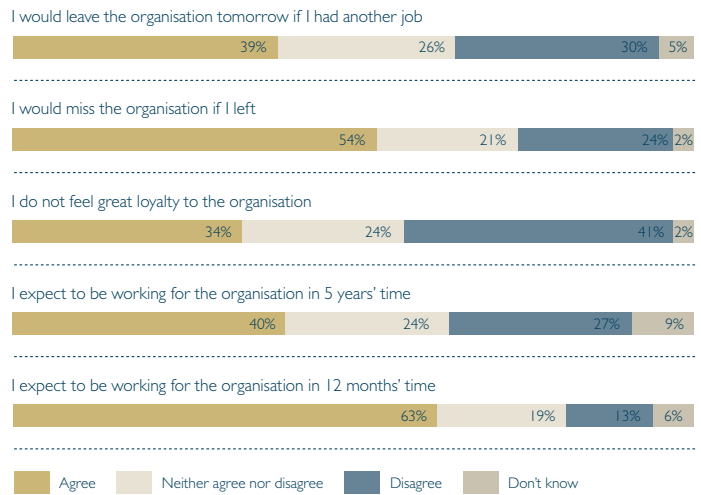
Loyalty works two ways. Organisations that are loyal to workers will go out of their way to invest in them with training, coaching and mentoring, so that those workers develop and generate success from within. That loyalty will go a long way to increasing employee retention and reducing recruitment expenditure. Replacing workers who leave can cost up to 150% of the departing worker's salary and highly engaged organisations have the potential to reduce staff turnover by 87%<sup>14</sup>.

Naturally, loyalty also comes from the workers themselves. Those who are engaged, who know

what their organisation's purpose is, who know who their CEO is, who feel secure in their job, who are rewarded and who take pride in both their work and their organisation, will remain loyal to their employer. In contrast, disengaged workers, however, are four times more likely to leave their organisation than the average employee<sup>15</sup>.

A worrying picture is emerging of a high proportion of workers with little or no sense of loyalty towards their organisation. More than one-third (34%) of workers surveyed do not feel great loyalty to their organisation. Indeed, 39% say they would leave their organisation tomorrow if they were offered another job. We need to listen to the underlying reasons for this as a matter of priority.

Loyalty and future plans

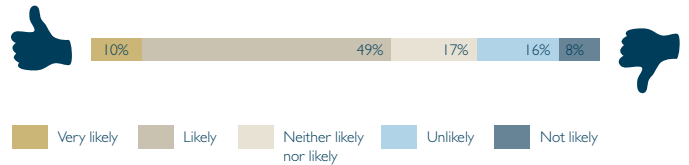


<sup>13</sup> ONS 17 June 2015  
<sup>14</sup> Engage for Success  
<sup>15</sup> CLC 2008

Our study also reveals that while 10% of workers say they are very likely to recommend their organisation to others, more than half (51%)<sup>16</sup> say they would not recommend their workplace. This should be a wake-up call for management. Workers, particularly in a social world, can be an employer’s biggest advocates; if half of the workforce fails to endorse their organisation, the business will undoubtedly lose out.

Long-term loyalty is equally important. Although 63% of workers expect to be in the same organisation in the next 12 months, management should take note that more than a quarter (27%) of workers do not expect to be working for the same organisation in five years’ time. This should be a serious concern, especially for HR Directors who seek to attract and retain the best talent.

Would you recommend working at your current organisation?



From an organisational point of view, lost loyalty means huge, untapped opportunities and definite requirements for improved engagement.

<sup>16</sup> Respondents were asked the following question 'How likely are you to recommend working for your current organisation to others? Please provide an answer on a scale of 0-10 where 0 is not at all likely and 10 is very likely'. For the 10 point scale, those selecting 0-6 were classed as 'detractors', 7-8 'passive' and 9-10 'promoters'. Therefore, 51% is based off those selecting options 0-6.

# 10. Working Environment



Maslow's 'Theory of Human Motivation' brings to light our hierarchy of needs, many of which we all take into account, even if sub-consciously, when we consider our 'perfect working environment'. We tend to put the need to be safe above the physical need to survive; we think love and belonging is more important than safety and the need to feel respected and to have self-esteem above the need to belong.

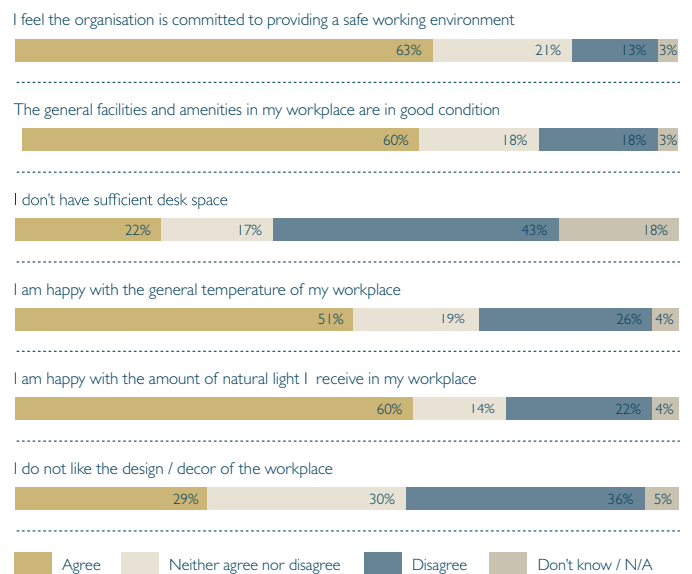
Such 'needs' are not dissimilar to the working environment. Do workers feel safe? Do they feel valued? Is there a good working atmosphere? Are workers happy with the layout and ambience of where they work? How well do they know their colleagues? Do they get on with them? Do they have enough time to do their work properly?

Getting the working environment right for workers is imperative if organisations want them to feel engaged and to focus on high-value, more productive tasks and activities. Generally speaking, British workers get on with their colleagues and 60% say there is a good atmosphere. Our study reveals that 74% of workers like the majority of people that they work with and nearly two-thirds (59%) feel they know their work colleagues well.

However, socialising, an important part of building relationships within the workplace, gets a mixed response. Whilst 44% of workers are happy with the amount of social events made available to them, only 30% value them and more than a quarter (29%) don't actually look forward to attending them. Why? Put simply, the pressures of work. As the study reveals, 34% of workers feel they are too tired from work to enjoy their life outside of work and more than one quarter (27%) do not feel they are always able to leave work on time. Of those who do work additional hours, 67% work late in the evening during the week.

Is it time for an office makeover? The office atmosphere divides people. Whilst 60% of workers think their facilities and amenities are in good condition, over a quarter (29%) do not like the design/decor of their workplace. Although 60% are happy with the amount of natural light they have in their workplace and 51% are happy with the general temperature, 22% think they have insufficient desk space.

The physical work environment - temperature, light and facilities



Admittedly, it is hard to please everyone, but positive feelings about the working environment go a long way towards making workers feel valued and happy to work to the best of their ability.



The work environment - atmosphere, socialising and people

People in my team don't care much for each other



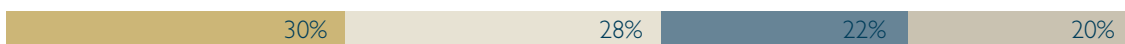
There is a good atmosphere in the workplace



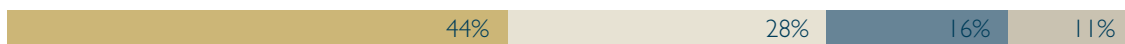
I frequently socialise after working hours with my colleagues



I value the social activities organised by the company



I am happy with the amount of work social events available to me



I don't look forward to attending work social events



I don't feel I can have a laugh with work colleagues



I like the majority of people I work with



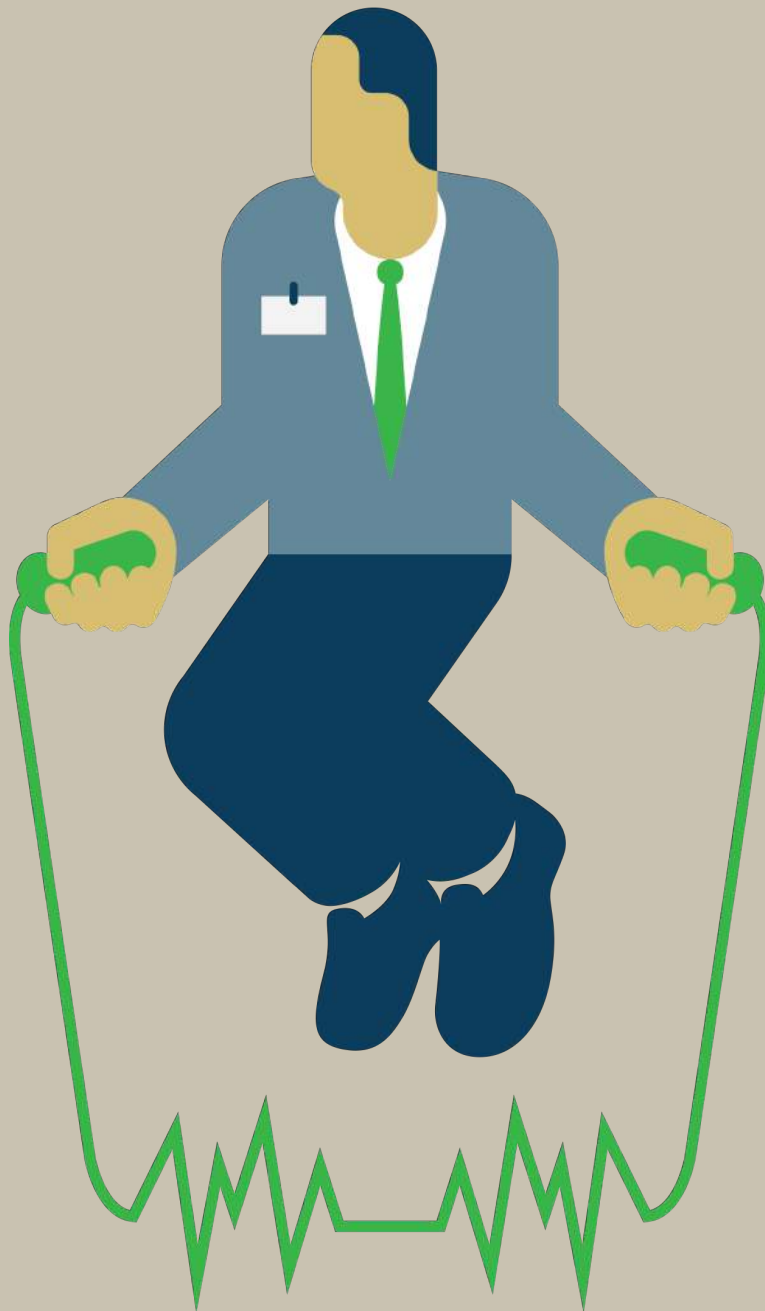
I feel I know my work colleagues well



Agree
  Neither agree nor disagree
  Disagree
  Don't know / N/A

# II.

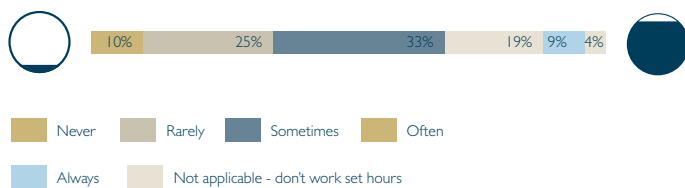
## Health and Wellbeing



We know that Britain is currently the fastest growing of any advanced economy, having expanded by 2.8% last year<sup>17</sup>. We know that this is due to increased investment and the number of hours worked and it is a clear indication of Britain's emergence from the economic downturn. This expansion is not due to improvements in efficiency, indeed our productivity continues to lack behind countries like France and Germany.

Working long hours can lead to changes in behaviour, reduced performance, lack of self-confidence, lack of engagement and ultimately, increased sickness absence. In fact, in 2013 42% of organisations experienced a rise in stress-induced days off<sup>18</sup>.

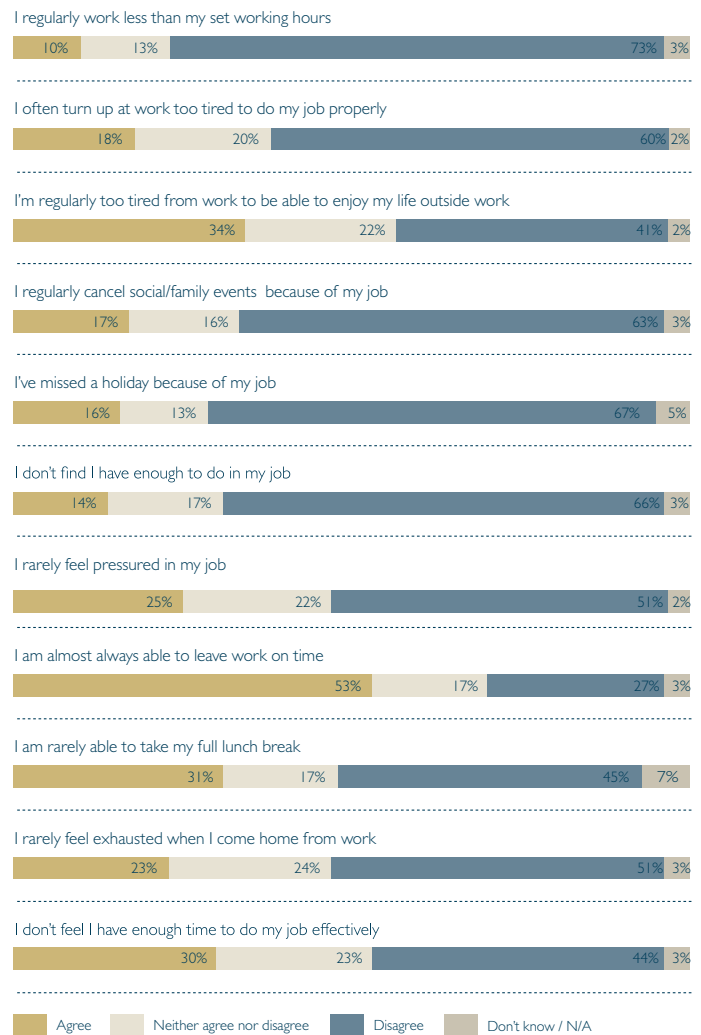
### Frequency of working past set hours



The mental health of workers is also an area of increasing concern. Depression is now known to be a major cause of absenteeism and productivity loss among workers. Research undertaken in 2013 revealed that mental illness costs European workplaces an estimated £77bn a year with the greatest loss coming from absenteeism and lost productivity<sup>19</sup>.

If there is one thing that is clear from our own study, it is that British workers feel sometimes over-worked and under pressure. The findings speak for themselves.

### Work-life balance and pressure within the workplace



<sup>17</sup> Financial Times, April 2015

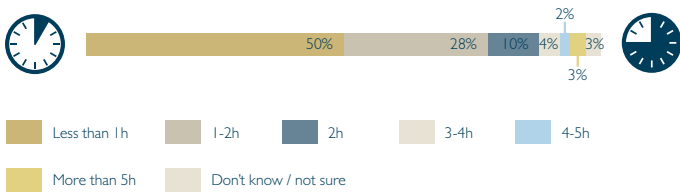
<sup>18</sup> CIPD

<sup>19</sup> King's College London and the London School of Economics and Political Science

More than a half (51%) of workers report that they sometimes feel exhausted or under pressure from their work, almost a third (30%) of workers feel they do not have enough time to do their jobs effectively, and 31% say sometimes they do not have time to take a full lunch break. More than a third (34%) are regularly too tired from work to be able to enjoy their life outside of work.

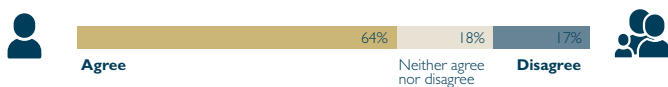
The situation gets worse. More than a quarter (28%) of workers who work past their set hours, say they work up to approximately two hours past their set daily working hours. The figure was highest in the Education sector, where 19% of workers say they always work past their set hours.

Average overtime put in



Of all those working beyond set hours and have children living at home, 64% feel it interferes with family time. An astonishing one in six (16%) workers say they have had to cancel a holiday because of work and four in 10 (40%) workers have so much work when they return from holiday, they wish they had never left the office<sup>20</sup>.

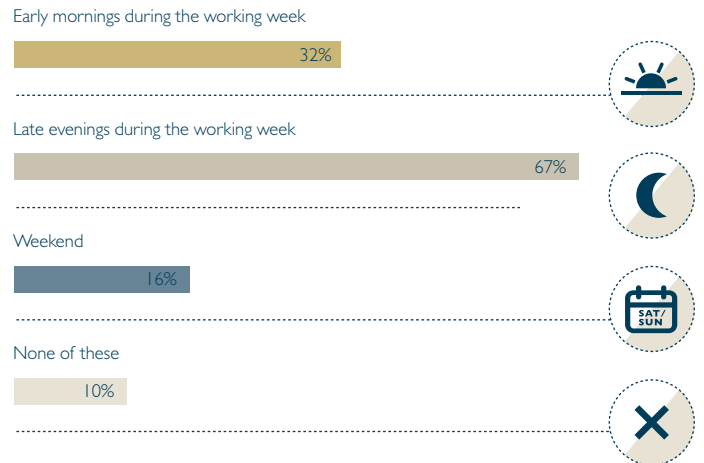
Do extra hours worked interfere with family time?



Of those who work additional hours, 67% work late in the evening during the week, 32% work early in the morning and one in six (16%) say they typically work their extra hours at weekends. Workers on high

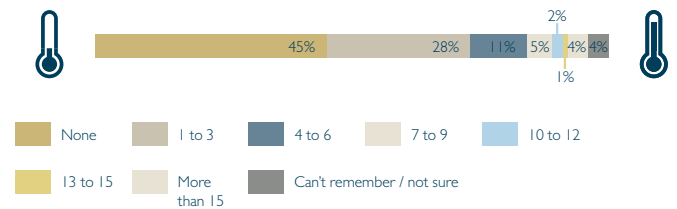
salaries of more than £50,000/year appear to work the most overtime, averaging two hours/day.

When during the day/week extra hours are worked



Putting stress and overtime aside, the British workforce is still relatively healthy. Over the last 12 months, 45% of workers surveyed took no sick days at all and 28% took fewer than three days. This contrasts positively with the fact that the annual cost of sickness absence to the UK economy is more than £17bn, with engaged workers taking an average of 2.69 sick days a year and disengaged workers taking an average of 6.19 sick days a year<sup>21</sup>.

Number of sick days in the last 12 months



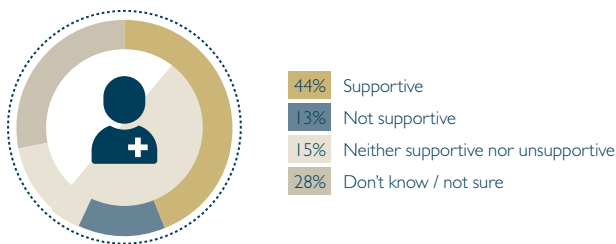
However, our study also reveals that organisations must still do more to balance the way mental and physical illnesses are treated. When asked how well their organisations deal with people with mental illness, only 44% of workers say their organisations

<sup>20</sup> The Financial and Banking boost has been excluded from this percentage

<sup>21</sup> CBI/Pfizer

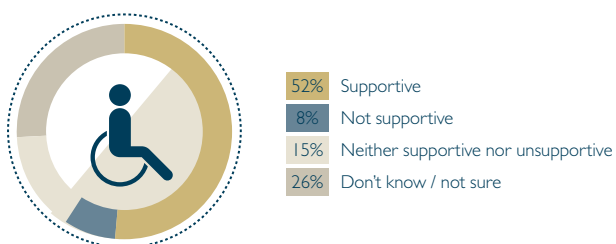
are supportive. This figure increases slightly to 52% of workers who say their organisations are supportive of those with physical disabilities.

How supportive is organisation of mental health issues?



Small to medium businesses have a greater challenge. Just 38% of workers from small to medium businesses (1-249) say their firm are supportive towards workers with mental illness compared with 51% of those working in big companies (250+). The figures are slightly improved for those with physical disabilities: 43% of small to medium companies are seen as supportive of those with physical disabilities compared with 60% of those working in large organisations. At Lansons, we work to help leaders and managers build up the key skills to handle pressure and stress, mitigating the risks to mental health and wellbeing.

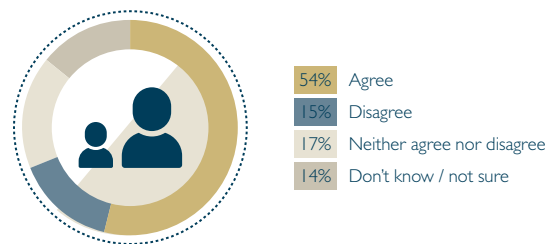
How supportive is organisation of physical disability?



One other aspect for possible discrimination is age. Whilst more than half (54%) of workers feel that age is not considered when hiring, 15% still feel it is a

factor. This is an even bigger issue in the Finance and Banking sectors and Education and Chemicals/Heavy Industry sectors, where 23%<sup>22</sup> and 21% of workers feel that age has an effect on who is hired.

Is age considered when hiring new employees?



In the long term, these figures show that engagement and, therefore, productivity, are not sustainable. Management must recognise that such pressures placed on the most loyal of workers will damage what could be a solid and thriving working environment. If workers need to work longer hours to the detriment of their health and wellbeing, they will undoubtedly become disengaged, dissatisfied and ultimately they may feel the need to look elsewhere. This is surely underlined by the fact that 39% of workers say they would leave their current job tomorrow if they had another job and 51%<sup>23</sup> would not recommend their workplace to others.

Working longer hours without rest clearly results in increased workplace-related mental and health related issues. For workers, these issues drive them to take more sickness leave. They have far lower levels of engagement, they are apathetic about their work and they have little or no pride in their organisation. This combination of factors means workers are far less productive than they could and should be and, consequently, their organisation's profitability and place in the market is seriously challenged. This is not a situation that leaders and organisations can afford to ignore.

<sup>22</sup> The Financial and Banking boost has been excluded from this percentage

<sup>23</sup> Respondents were asked the following question 'How likely are you to recommend working for your current organisation to others? Please provide an answer on a scale of 0-10 where 0 is not at all likely and 10 is very likely'. For the 10 point scale, those selecting 0-6 were classed as 'detractors', 7-8 'passive' and 9-10 'promoters'. Therefore, 51% is based off those selecting options 0-6.

# 12.

## Personal Growth and Career Development



The recent debate on the lack of skills within the UK workforce highlights a real need for investment in personal growth and development. The 2013 report published by CBI/Pearson Education and Skills stated that 39% of organisations struggled to recruit workers with the advanced, technical STEM skills they needed, with 41% of organisations saying these shortages would persist for the next few years.

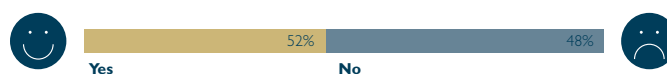
Recent reports indicate that a lack of high-quality apprenticeships is contributing to that unskilled workforce. Moreover, a new apprenticeship levy for larger companies is to be introduced to reach an official target of three million a by 2020 apprenticeship<sup>24</sup>. Companies are already reporting challenges in recruiting workers with relevant skills, highlighting a real and urgent need for relevant training and development.

There is also discussion on a greater need for the UK to innovate<sup>25</sup>. If the UK is to continue its emergence from recession, innovation is key and investment in innovation is paramount. Investing in people requires giving workers the skills they need, not just to innovate, but to grow and develop so that organisations can build a sustainable pipeline of talent. Organisations need to ensure they have the resources required to attract, develop and retain workers to enable them to become the next generation of innovators.

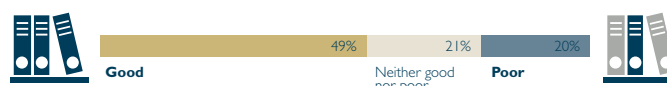
For workers to thrive, they need to see opportunities for progression and a future for them within their organisation. Our study reveals that just over half (52%) of workers see opportunities for them to progress. However, the fact that 48% see no or little opportunity for career progression should be a concern for management and businesses.

One in five (20%) workers feel that their training opportunities are poor, which raises the question: is the UK investing enough in building skills and capabilities and in developing the workforce for the future?

Opportunity for career progression in organisation



Training opportunities available in organisation



Those who are doing training seem to be getting it right. Our study shows that eight out of 10 (80%) workers say they are equipped with the right skills and knowledge to do their job effectively. That said, personal growth and career development are not just down to training. In order to grow and develop, workers need to be given more licence to be themselves, to work to the best of their ability.

Feelings on being equipped with the right skills and knowledge



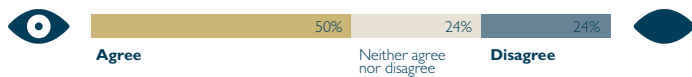
<sup>24</sup> CBI 13 July 2015

<sup>25</sup> The Daily Telegraph, August 2013

Listening to and acting on workers' views is a key factor in keeping them engaged and happy. It is, however, obviously challenging if nearly a third (32%) of workers feel that their manager does not actively communicate openly and honestly with them and 34% feel their manager talks more than they listen.

These issues need to be addressed. As the UK emerges from the recession and for businesses to be more competitive in the process, workers must feel that every effort is being made to help them grow and develop, both personally and professionally. Just as engagement is linked to productivity, so is personal growth linked to business growth.

Feelings on whether views are heard and acted upon





# 13.

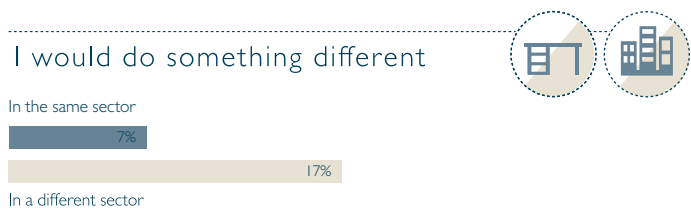
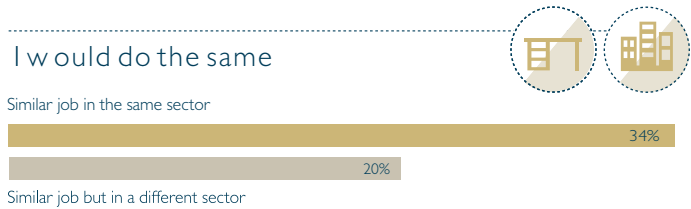
## Views on Organisation



More than a third (34%) of workers say that if they changed jobs, they would go for the same or a similar role in the same sector. Some may view this as high, with workers wanting to remain within their comfort zone. However, this could also be regarded as an inclination in many workers to look elsewhere.

The evidence of increased pressure on workers in their current roles, the limited opportunities for career development and training, together with a distinct lack of pride in and loyalty towards organisations, indicates that workers may well be willing to see how green the grass is on the other side of the fence. If, as evidence suggests, we are starting to see the re-emergence of pay rises and increased levels of satisfaction in current pay rates, workers will feel just cause to do so. It is, therefore, essential that management recognises the urgent need to improve engagement among workers, in order to increase productivity, growth and also retention in individuals and business, and to re-establish Britain's workforce as the Pride of Britain.

Would you move to a similar job?



# Recommendations on how and why improvements can be made

We believe that improving engagement to increase productivity and profitability is a shared responsibility. We recognise that, with a shift currently taking place in the market, where employment is increasingly based on time-limited contracts/zero hours/self-employment, the nature of the relationship between employee and employer will change significantly.

Our study shows there is an apathetic portion of the workforce that needs to be listened to, encouraged and made to feel that there is a future for workers within business. However, the shift in the nature of the employment market also means that workers have an important role to play as well. The onus, therefore, is on both businesses and workers to engage from both sides.

## From an employer perspective

We recognise some employers are excelling in their provision for employees. However, most are simply doing adequately. It is clear that, if UK business leaders are going to convert apathy into engagement and, as a result, reap the business benefits, they must start taking employee motivation and engagement more seriously. Business leaders need to win back the hearts of workers and they must make this a priority.

Primarily, we recommend that business leaders meet the following, minimum obligations:

- Create and increase training and development opportunities
- Provide a safe and pleasant working environment
- Implement people-friendly policies
- Implement appropriate recognition and reward schemes
- Provide fair pay across the spectrum
- Ensure there are clear and consistent two-way communications

## From an employee perspective

Whilst the results of our study clearly demonstrate that engagement levels need to be increased, we believe there is only so much line managers, leaders and organisations can do. The rest is about all of us taking increased, individual responsibility.

The nature of 'self-employment' brings a different dynamic to the employer-employee relationship which, over time, may well impact the internal culture of many organisations. So, is it time for workers to up their game? Are they bringing themselves and their best ideas to work each day? Can workers do more to shape their own working environment?

Overall, British workplaces could do better and if they did, the rewards would be transformational, not just for workers and businesses, but for the economy as a whole. One thing is clear. It is down to all of us to shake off our apathy and bring the very best of ourselves to work.

# How Lansons can help

## Rebuilding the reputation of the CEO

An intensive advisory and coaching offer aimed at helping CEOs to understand what will enhance their personal reputation in order to build trust with internal/external stakeholders

## Creating employee advocacy

Develop campaigns from the inside out by giving a voice to employees in the early planning and creative development phase

## Communications effectiveness audit

Improve clarity and effectiveness of organisational communications by using qualitative and quantitative methods to assess effectiveness. This would include evaluating communications functions and capability

## Brand and reputation recovery

Work with brand and business leaders to evaluate issues and to develop integrated approaches to engage stakeholders in the process of reputation recovery

## Building resilience for the modern workplace

Help leaders and managers build up the key skills to handle pressure and stress, mitigating the risks to mental health and wellbeing

To discuss any of the above with us, or to explore how Lansons can assist you in addressing any of the issues identified in the report, please contact **Scott Mckenzie** at [scottm@lansons.com](mailto:scottm@lansons.com)



## About Lansons

Lansons is a top ten independent communications consultancy, 100% owned by a third of its people. It has been voted agency of the year eight times since it was established in 1989 by its Chairman, Clare Parsons and Chief Executive, Tony Langham. Lansons has over 100 colleagues (34 of which own the Limited Liability Partnership), and has won over 70 major awards and works for more than 120 national and international clients. Through its membership of the international networks PROI Worldwide and GFC it delivers global expertise and advice. At the same time Lansons has featured in the Great Places to Work 'Best Workplace' rankings for each of the past ten years.

Our consultants are experts in media, investor, change, political, regulatory, employee, digital and international communications.

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[linkedin.com/company/lansons-communications](https://www.linkedin.com/company/lansons-communications)



## About Opinium

Opinium is an award winning strategic insight agency built on the belief that in a world of uncertainty and complexity, success depends on the ability to stay on the pulse of what people think, feel and do. Creative and inquisitive, we are passionate about empowering our clients to make the decisions that matter.

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LANSON'S

