

Survey: Britain's young workers are unsettled, unheard and 78% likely to move on

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*37% of surveyed workers aged 16-24 don't feel trusted to work remotely (compared to 21% overall) causing 65% to work longer hours and 55% to work during or skip holidays

*One third of workers surveyed aged 16-24 feel undervalued (compared to 29% overall) and 32% (the top response) say that their feedback is not listened to nor acted upon

*78% in this group are applying, or intending to apply for new jobs as we emerge from the pandemic

Britain's youngest workers (aged 16-24) don't feel trusted or heard, and 78% of them are job hunting according to a new study out today by Achievers (<http://www.achievers.com>) and Censuswide (<https://censuswide.com/>). The findings should serve as a wake up call for British companies that have invested heavily in and wish to retain graduates, apprentices, and other young 'rising stars.' These findings should be especially concerning to those in industries which typically employ a high percentage of younger workers, from hospitality to tech, which are threatened by staff and skills shortages as the nation emerges from lockdown. The full report is available for download here (<https://www.achievers.com/gb/resources/white-papers-gb/employee-strategies-for-a-new-world-of-work/>)

The study of 1,000 British workers found that while (58%) of workers describe themselves as very or somewhat engaged in their current job, while a significant proportion (29%) feel undervalued and this climbs to a third in the 16-24 age group. Employees in this group said the top ways to make them feel more valued were customer recognition (21%), senior leader recognition (19%); recognition in front of the company and financial reward were tied at 15%. This not only illustrates the importance of recognition itself to this age group, but the public visibility of that recognition.

Feedback frustration

Nearly half (49%) of respondents had been prompted for feedback by employers on how to improve the overall work experience. The most popular questions employers asked about were on how to improve culture during the Covid crisis (45%) and post-pandemic hybrid work preferences (42%). Slightly lower percentages were solicited for feedback on issues important to younger workers like racial/social justice (37%) and diversity and inclusion (41%). Crucially however, 20% of respondents overall stated that their employers were not good at acting on feedback. So, while many respondents feel they are at least being asked how to improve the employee experience, there is still a long way to go to ensure feedback is being turned in to actionable improvements.

Jon Maddison, EMEA Managing Director, Achievers commented: "Although the results of our survey may seem alarming, there's still time for most companies to communicate with their people, then take steps to boost engagement and prevent churn. The sooner companies act to instil beneficial practices like listening, recognition, and reward into their cultures, the more likely they are to turn this situation around."

Top tips for improving engagement

The report offers five tips for improving employee engagement, which are summarised below:

Focus on feedback: make surveys quick and easy for employees to complete using pulse surveys and online listening tools. This was shown to be especially critical during a rapidly changing situation like the Covid crisis, where employee attitudes shifted considerably in response to new developments and public policy decisions.

Say 'thank you' often: the goal should be to create a culture of recognition that is pervasive at every level and even extends outward to customers. Technology can help to democratise a recognition culture and ensure that it persists as we move to hybrid setups.

Value everyone's views: the report data highlighted generational divides in employee sentiment. Young employees felt the most unsettled and unheard. Workplaces must find ways to ensure every employee feels welcomed, included, supported and connected, using technology to build employee-first cultures.

Deliver on diversity: More than a third of respondents (35%) do not feel a strong sense of belonging at work, which can cause innovation and growth to suffer. This insight should instigate a review of how employees are engaged, recognised, and made to feel connected to the company.

Pacify your presentees: presenteeism is a clear problem among a sizeable proportion of employees. This indicates a trust issue that companies need to address in order for workers to achieve work/life balance. This involves listening to employees' concerns through pulse surveys and one-to-one meetings.

Methodology

The Achievers survey was conducted by independent research company Censuswide, polling 2,005 employees in the UK and Germany between 23.04.2021 and 27.04.2021. Censuswide abides by and employs members of the Market Research Society, which is based on the ESOMAR principles.

About Achievers

Achievers' employee voice and recognition solutions bring your organisation's values and strategy to life by activating employee participation and accelerating a culture of performance. Achievers leverages the science behind behaviour change, so your people and your organisation can experience sustainable, data-driven business results. Visit us at www.achievers.com.

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