

# 45% of SME employees have quit because of their boss, while four in ten do not feel valued or trusted

Submitted by: Rise PR

Wednesday, 24 April 2019

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New Process Bliss research reveals the potential impact of poor leadership in SMEs on productivity and staff retention

24 April 2019 – The extent of poor SME leadership in the UK has been revealed in new research out today, with 45% of SME employees having quit a job because of a boss, while four in ten do not feel trusted or valued by their current boss.

The research from process management firm Process Bliss (<https://processbliss.com/>) also revealed that 60% of UK SME employees believe the business would work better if they were left to get on with their job, while 40% of respondents believe the boss interfering in their role adversely affects company productivity. 42% of SME employees surveyed felt they could do a better job than their current boss.

“Being a strong and effective SME leader is one of the toughest challenges someone can face,” said Alister Esam, CEO, Process Bliss. “People always assume that because someone is ‘the boss’ they know exactly what they are doing, but the truth is that many bosses are simply making it up as they go along. A good leader will support the business and make sure it has what it needs to be successful, ensuring that employees are empowered to make their own decisions and are motivated and happy in their role.”

Some of the main criticisms of SME leaders involve bosses unable to delegate properly or avoid overly interfering in people’s work. The principal faults as identified by survey respondents were: demonstrating obvious favouritism towards certain colleagues in the workplace (27.5%); taking credit for your work (27%); micromanaging you and your work (27%); not being clear when asking for a job to be done (25%); not acknowledging or giving thanks when you do a good job (23%).

There were also some marked differences between male and female bosses. Male bosses were rated worse for micromanaging, delegating too much, taking credit for others’ work and not being clear when asking for a job to be done, while female bosses were worse for demonstrating obvious favouritism towards certain colleagues and for trying too hard to be a friend.

“I would encourage any SME leader to take the role of ‘boss’ as seriously as possible – speak to peers, network and take professional advice wherever possible,” said Alister Esam, CEO, Process Bliss. “There are many leadership styles and each boss must find what works best for them, but clearly issues such as micromanaging and being unclear when instructing about a task are causing employees at UK SMEs to leave their role and impacting on company productivity. Working with functioning processes can be a great asset here – people know what they are doing and accordingly, bosses shouldn’t feel the need to interfere.”

There was some positive news for SME bosses that emerged from the research. Half of respondents said that they found their boss inspiring, while 58% said that their boss is open to being challenged. When asked to give their boss an overall rating out of ten, the average figure for UK SME bosses emerged as 6.7.

“A rating of almost seven isn’t too bad and shows that many UK SME bosses are broadly on the right track,” concluded Alister Esam. “But that’s not to say there aren’t things to work on. The research demonstrates some key areas to start on and also that leadership as an overall concept needs to be given the training and focus such an important position requires.”

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About the research

An online survey of 1,000 employees within UK small businesses was undertaken by TLF (<http://www.tlfresearch.co.uk/>) Research in March 2019.

For further information visit [www.processbliss.com](http://www.processbliss.com)

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