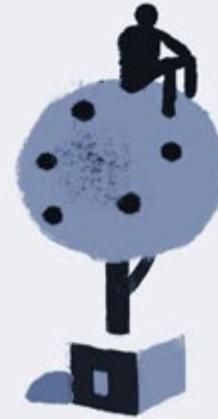
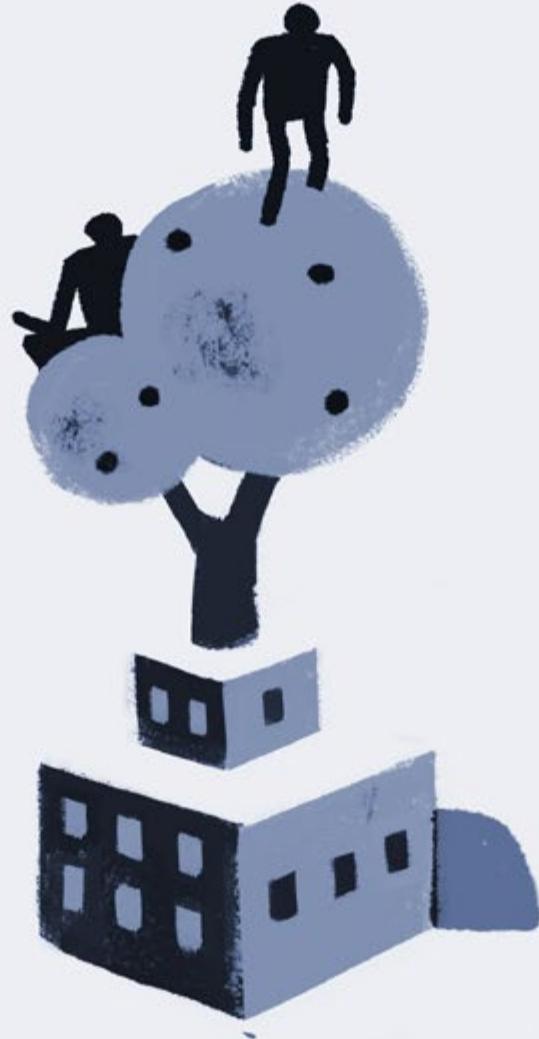


What talent wants

HOLLY ERLICHMAN



Every year, we conduct a large, global survey of workers to find out about their attitudes and feelings towards their work, the employment market and their employers. In this paper we discuss the overall trends in the 2013 survey with a spotlight on those findings from nearly 3000 workers in the Automotive sector.

But first, a brief look at what's changed over the past year.

When comparing the results of our *Kelly Workforce Index* results over the past two years (2012 and 2013), it seems that workers feel a declining sense of happiness with, and meaning in, the work they are doing. They also showed an increased focus on financial reward and there has been a small increase (two percentage points) in the proportion of people working in contract and temporary roles.

2013: more likely to jump ship

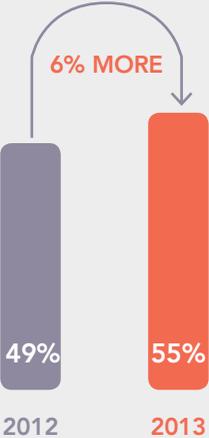
KEY DIFFERENCES IN WORKER ATTITUDES BETWEEN 2012 AND 2013



To what extent do you feel your employment provides you with a sense of meaning?



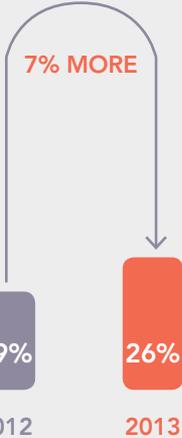
Do you actively look for better job opportunities/ evaluate the external job market even when you are happy in a job? (% Yes)



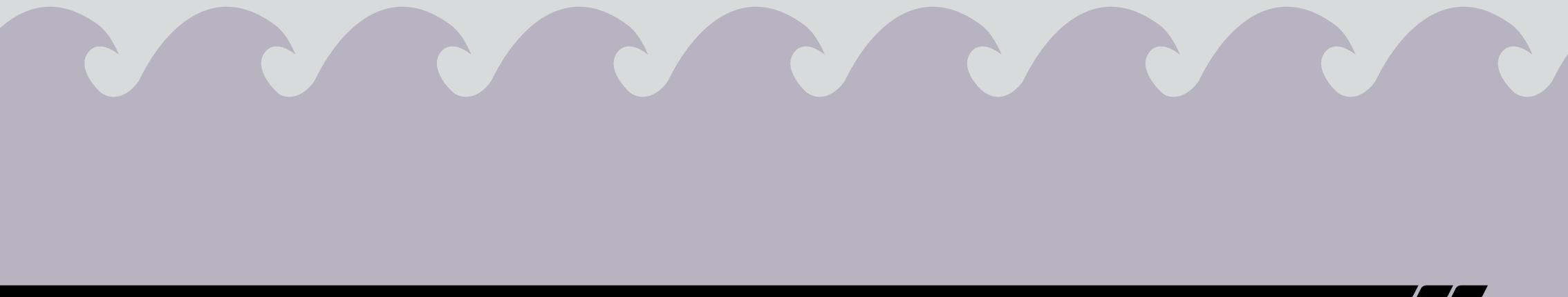
Do you frequently think about quitting your current job and leaving your employer? (% Yes)



Which of the following factors would drive your decision to accept one job/position over another? (Salary & benefits)



Most workers are on the move



People change jobs often and have an 'always looking' mentality, regardless of how they feel about their current role or organization. This is the reality employers need to pay attention to—an employee's loyalty is to their work, not the workplace.

Across all industries and professions, almost half of all workers (47%) are in a role that's less than 12 months old. Despite these recent changes that they've made, six in 10 (63%) say they intend to look for another job with a different employer this year. And, most workers (55%) admit that they still search for jobs even when they're 'happy' where they are.

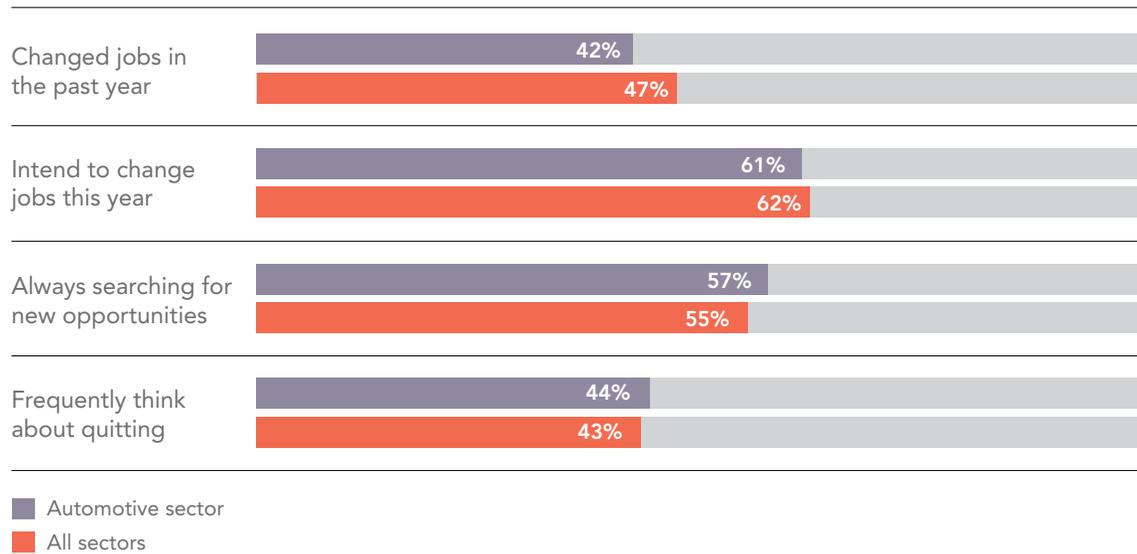
What's interesting about this is that even with the high number of employees that have already switched jobs recently, many more are considering another move this year and it doesn't seem to be for the reasons we may think.

Two-thirds of the workers that intend to seek a job elsewhere this year say they 'frequently think about quitting' their job and their employer (43% out of the 63%). This indicates that most workers looking elsewhere are in fact doing so because they are

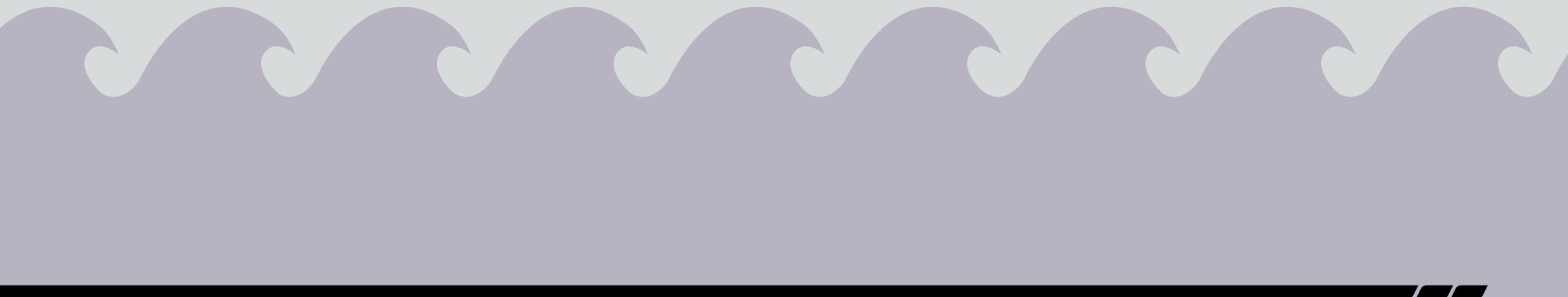
significantly frustrated where they are. It's more than mere dissatisfaction or a 'grass is always greener' mentality—it's bigger and deeper than that.

It's this intense frustration about the work they do, not mere ambivalence, that requires greater focus from HR professionals and leadership teams worldwide.

How the Automotive sector compares:



Advancement
and the desire for
progress are linked

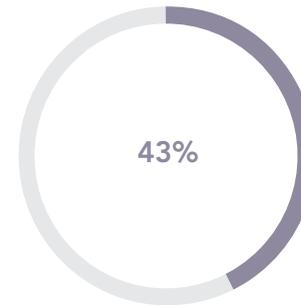


If so many workers are on the move each year, what is it that they are really seeking from employers and their jobs? And, is it possible to provide it?

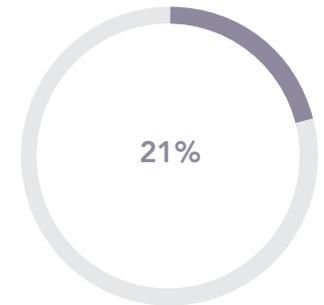
Although 21% of workers say poor salary and benefits would be the number one reason for them to leave a job, the same proportion say lack of opportunity for advancement would be the key issue.

But are so many employees really seeking promotions? Although it can seem this way at first glance, behavioural economist and regular TedTV presenter Dan Ariely makes a good argument for concluding otherwise. His research points to the fact that workers are simply seeking a sense of progress.

Doing the same thing with the same outcomes leads to a sense that they are not 'going anywhere' and nothing is changing. Cyclical and repetitive tasks and outcomes are exceptionally demotivating to workers and are major factors in attrition. Progress means different things to different people, but this also means there are many and varied ways to offer it. Even physically moving locations can provide a sense of progress, and some 74% of workers say they are willing to move houses for the right job. Of these, 28% would happily move countries or continents for the privilege.



Slightly more employees in this sector feel they have meaning in their work (compared with 41% in all sectors).



Employees in this sector are more likely than other workers to say they would relocate for the right job. Just 21% say they would not relocate (compared with 26% in all sectors).

With this in mind, it is up to HR leaders and business managers to better communicate the progress that workers and the business they are working for is making. How we do this depends on:

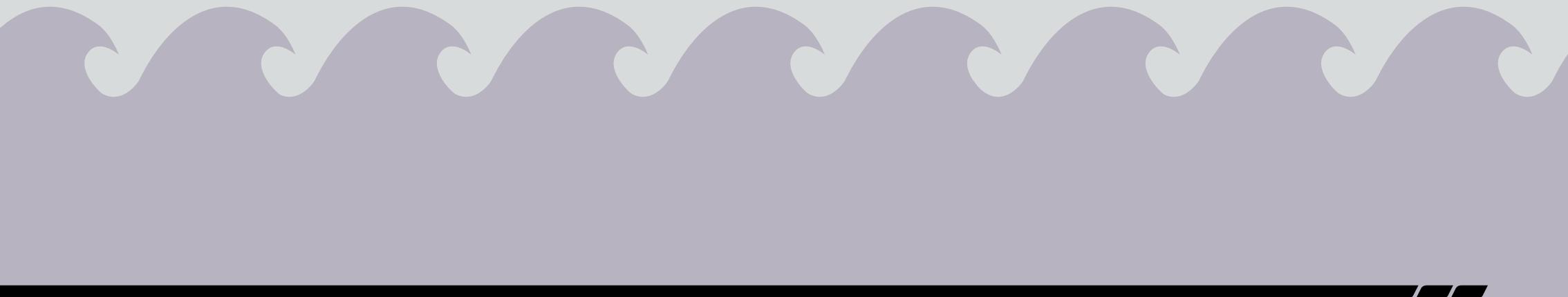
- our ability to track progress in meaningful ways, both at a micro and macro level within the organization; and
- how connected our organization really is to the customers and communities it serves.

People want meaning in their work. And this requires organizations to analyze their own mission and progress to help each and every employee feel connected to the company.

When our own research shows that just four in 10 workers worldwide (41%) feel they gain a sense of meaning from their work, something is lacking in many workplaces. Even a small, incremental sense of change and advancement can make a big difference.



The right
people in
the right jobs



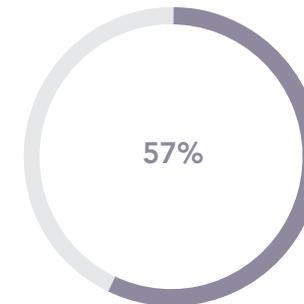
People do need to love what they do. Sounds obvious, but how many people do you know are in a job they don't really like? We're not talking about the company they work for or their boss, we're talking about people who actually like to do the tasks that are part of their specific skill-set.

What is a little disheartening is that very few people who have moved jobs recently have found what they are really looking for. Just 48% say they are happy or very happy in their new role.

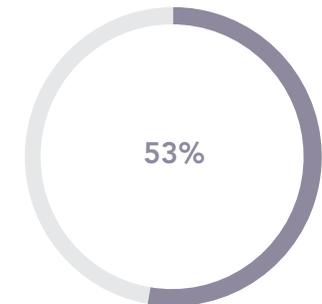
The key reasons for not feeling satisfied by their job change appear to be that:

- The job differs from what was expected (17%)
- The opportunity for advancement and personal growth is not as expected (16%)
- The work is not as challenging or interesting as expected (14%)

In fact, just 52% of workers globally say they are happy or very happy in their job, which underlines the critical nature of finding the right fit for the role and for the organization more generally. Too much focus on specific skill-sets or previous experience may fail to



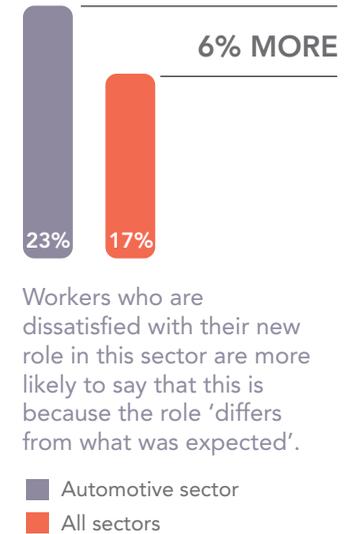
Workers in this sector are more likely to report being happy or very happy in their job (compared with 52% in all sectors).



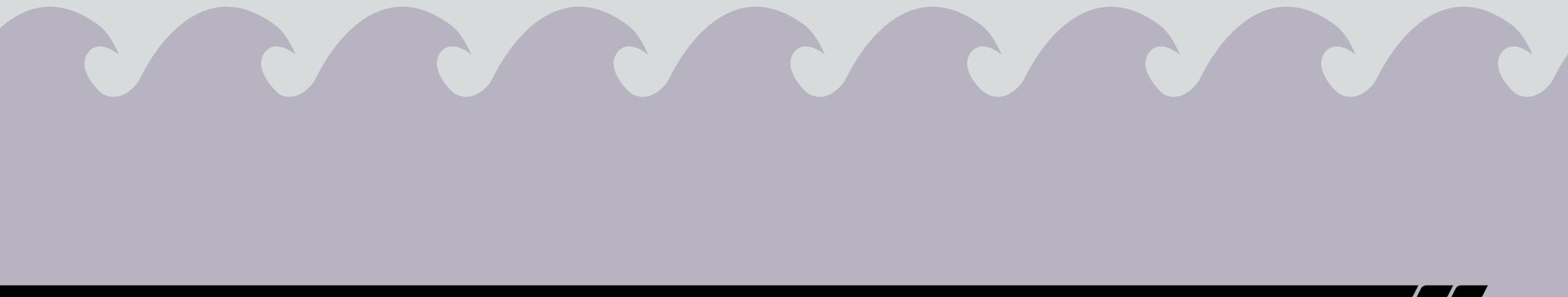
Of those who have recently changed jobs in the sector, 53% say they are happy or very happy in their new role (compared with 48% in all sectors).

address the fact that job satisfaction, retention and motivation come down to personal factors and that these are sometimes overlooked in the recruitment process.

Across all industries, just 29% of employees say they would be very likely to recommend their employer to a colleague or friend looking for work, and they provide a mean rating of just 6.8 out of a possible 10 points. This clearly shows that employers often fail to differentiate themselves to employees—workers feel that employers are ‘much the same’ and few companies know how to target the key satisfaction and engagement issues to change this perception.



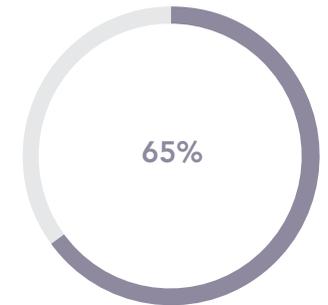
Engagement, connection and trust



Meaning and satisfaction in our work does stem, at least in part, from our connectivity with others. This is what makes organizations tick, it's what collaboration is all about, and it's actually a very big part of why we keep turning up to our jobs.

So, it should be no surprise that 63% of workers say their direct manager or supervisor has a very significant impact on their satisfaction and engagement at work. And, it seems that many workers (37%) would like more transparency from their managers in the way they communicate.

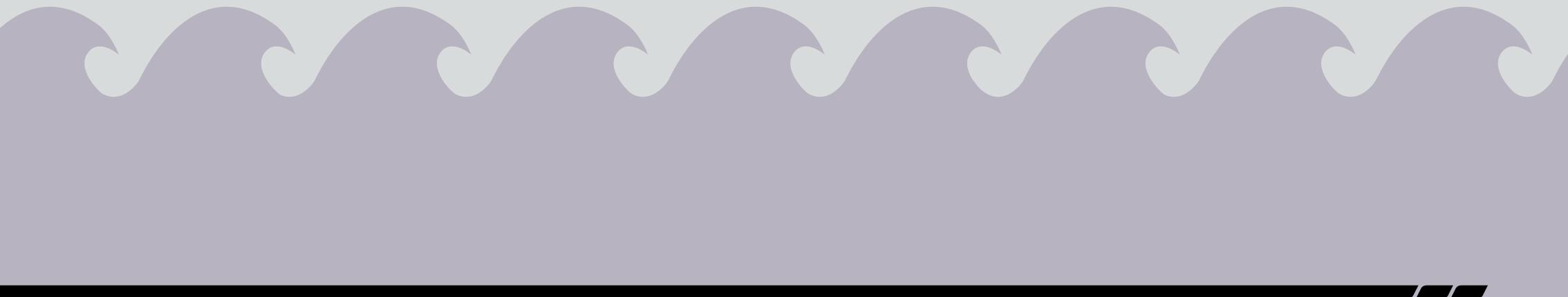
It also seems that connectivity with the outside world, and an ability to have clear ownership and trust in the way that employees use technology, and in particular social media, is a key point for many. Six in 10 employees (61%) feel it is important to very important to be given the flexibility to use their personal technology while at work. For 37% of workers, the ability to use employer-provided technology for both work and personal use would highly influence their decision to accept a particular job or position.



Slightly more workers in this sector say their direct manager has a significant impact on their satisfaction at work (compared with 63% in all sectors).

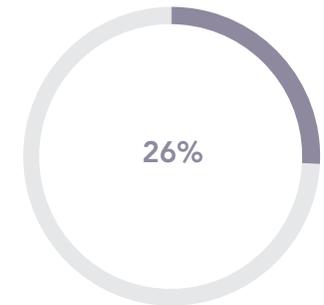
While employers may shake their heads at this idea and feel it's a 'small' issue to which they should not have to agree, it goes to the heart of how trusted employees feel they would be inside an organization. The reality is that most people do the 'right' thing and setting expectations upfront about work and personal technology use indicates a sense of distrust from the outset. For younger workers, finding ways to clearly differentiate between work and personal time is also exceptionally difficult and these kinds of rules can create an 'us and them' mentality from the outset, which is particularly unappealing to younger workers.

The opportunity
to work hard
(yes, really)



Few people say they are leaving their current job and employer because of money. In fact, they are more likely to say they are seeking greater personal development opportunities, personal fulfilment, more interesting and challenging work or more responsibility (47% combined) than more money (13%).

People consistently say they want a challenge more than they want money or a promotion, yet this is rarely the basis of how people are matched to roles. In fact, it's usually quite the opposite. Employers tend to seek employees with all the knowledge and experience required to do the job from the outset, and seem to promise advancement after they've proven they can do what they have said they can. The mismatch arises when employees, already well-equipped to do the tasks assigned them in a new role, perform well and are then not offered advancement or new challenges due to lack of availability within the organizational structure. This is when talent starts walking out the door.



Slightly more workers in this sector say their satisfaction at work would be improved by more autonomy being offered to them via their direct manager (26% compared with 23% in all sectors).

Being challenged and having the ability to learn is key to all kinds of workers, but particularly to talent. Being fully engaged with what you do requires effort and concentration, it needs to feel special and like it's worth your effort to be there instead of somewhere else.

When asked what a manager could do to improve their satisfaction at work, 53% of workers said they would like more training opportunities.

The value we place on our work is strongly correlated with how much (meaningful) effort we need to put into it and how much ownership we have of the end product/outcome.



Responsibility and feeling needed

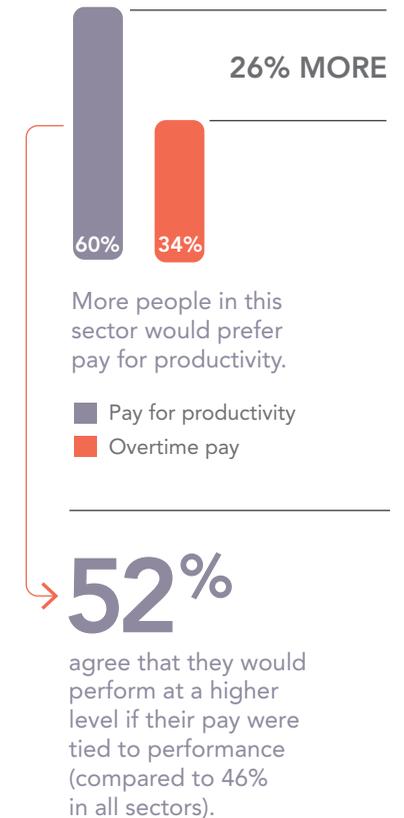


A number of theorists, organizational psychologists and even philosophers have explored the connection between satisfaction at work and the impact it has on someone or something else.

It seems that, the more disconnected we become from seeing the outcomes and output of our work, the less satisfying we find it. This is precisely the conclusion that British philosopher Alain de Botton came to in his book *The Pleasures and Sorrows of Work*. After investigating the ups and downs of many different professions, Botton himself concludes that those with direct relationships with products, or with great personal investment in their work, find their jobs most rewarding.

The key here is in the effort and responsibility workers are asked to invest in their job. This is not about long hours (and in fact, this has been proven to erode satisfaction) but instead it is about the sense that employees have about how much their organization and team really needs them.

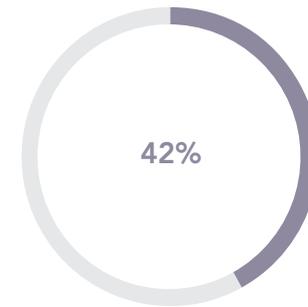
This is backed up by our own research. We found that most people prefer to be paid for productivity not for the amount of hours they work (57% compared to 36%), and many agree or strongly agree (46%) that they would perform better if they were rewarded more in line with their effort than their hours worked.



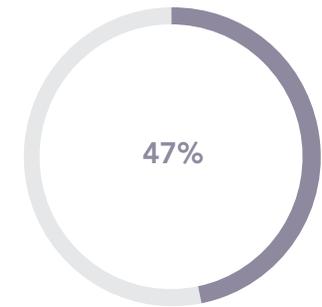
On top of this, when asked what would make them more committed to their job, some 32% said, 'The opportunity to do more challenging and interesting work'. A further 14% said, 'More meaningful responsibility'. And just 45% of people say they feel valued by their employer.

Quite deliberately, organizations have become adept at industrializing tasks, processes and even decisions—sometimes to the point that there's very little opportunity for individuals to deeply influence and affect significant change. This is what organizations do best: they take out the individual factors to streamline, replicate and scale each and every action. But along the way, the feeling of just being another cog in a big wheel has become the norm.

Yes, most organizations say they want talent—the kind that can innovate, effect change and think outside the box—but they are not well set up to utilize it. More, meaningful responsibility built into tasks, processes and decisions is what many more job descriptions need if organizations are to extract real value from the talent they hire, both permanently and on a contingent basis.



More automotive workers agree or strongly agree that their pay is equitable than the general working population (compared to 38% in all sectors).



Slightly more workers in this sector say they feel valued by their employer (compared to 45% in all sectors).

CONCLUSION

Time and again, our research into worker behaviors and attitudes shows a significant gap between what employees really seek and what most employers are providing.

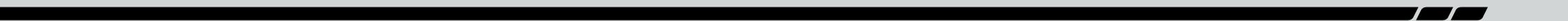
However, the gap isn't always a result of the factors HR teams and leadership teams assume it is. Instead of offering new benefits or higher pay, or even flexible working options, as if this will bridge the divide, the issues at stake for people's genuine commitment to and satisfaction with their work is far deeper than this. And, not least of all, because most workers already expect flexibility to be a given.

In fact, most employees expect that issues such whether they can use the work laptop for personal email or whether they can work from home are no longer relevant. They've already made the connection between these issues and the productivity outcomes. Yet, it appears many employers are some way from agreeing.

As a result, workers consistently reveal that they have a deep disconnection from what their job really contributes to customers, communities and the progress of their organization more generally. People want to make a difference, and they are willing to work hard to achieve it. They don't want to focus on 'small' issues or be an easily replaceable cog in a well-oiled but meaningless wheel.

Addressing these challenges requires HR departments and leadership teams to think differently about how they market themselves to the talent they already have, and the talent they are seeking. But above all, it requires them to think differently about the kind of work they ask their people to do, and how much genuine responsibility they give them to do it.

That's what talent really wants.



THE TALENT PROJECT

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

HOLLY ERLICHMAN is Vice President with the Global Solutions group and serves as a strategic consultant with a special focus on Automotive and Premier Brands. In her role, she is focused on identifying workforce trends, labor supply and demand dynamics impacting these complex industries, and designing large-scale, talent supply chain solutions. Holly brings over 18 years of knowledge and experience in leadership, strategy, sales, solution design, and service delivery within the staffing and workforce solutions space. Holly holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Delaware.



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