

Public sector trails private sector in first worker confidence index

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MORI Social Research Institute and The Work Foundation have launched the first Workers'™ Index, the start of an ongoing series to monitor trends in the workplace. The results show that more workers in the private sector than in the public sector believe that their organisations know where they are going and feel pride in what their organisation delivers to customers and clients.

Among private sector employees, 69% feel their senior management have a clear vision of where the organisation is going, compared with 61% of public sector workers.

Public sector workers are also more likely to be critical of their organisation to customers, friends and family than those in the private sector. Fifteen per cent of public sector workers are critics of their organisation as an employer compared with just 10% of private sector workers.

Indeed public sector workers are more likely to say they need less bureaucracy, more resources, less stress and better management to do a better job than those in the private sector.

Though pay is important, it does not differentiate between those workers who are advocates or critics of their employer. Instead better management, better internal communications, higher morale, less internal bureaucracy and better training would all make the difference to how unhappy workers feel about their jobs.

Overall, the Index finds that two in three employees (66%) think their senior management provides clear leadership. A similar proportion - 65% - would speak highly of the services their organisation provides and slightly fewer - 58% - would speak highly of their employer.

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The further people are from the top of their organisation, the less likely they are to be aligned with its objectives.

Managers/senior officials are much more likely to think that top management has a clear vision for their organisation than manual/elementary staff (79% compared with 56%). Older workers are also less likely to say that senior management has a clear vision (58% of those aged 55+, compared with 69% of under 44 year olds).

As Alexandra Jones, Associate Director of The Work Foundation says, "Employee commitment to their organisation has an impact upon the services they provide. High quality public services require the Government to ensure that the changes taking place across the public sector go hand in hand with initiatives to build worker morale and confidence."

Gideon Skinner, Research Director at MORI, says, "Public service workers'™ morale is a key issue, as we know that staff advocacy is an important driver of reputation. This raises the question: what are public sector workers telling their friends, family, and customers about the quality of the public services they provide?"