

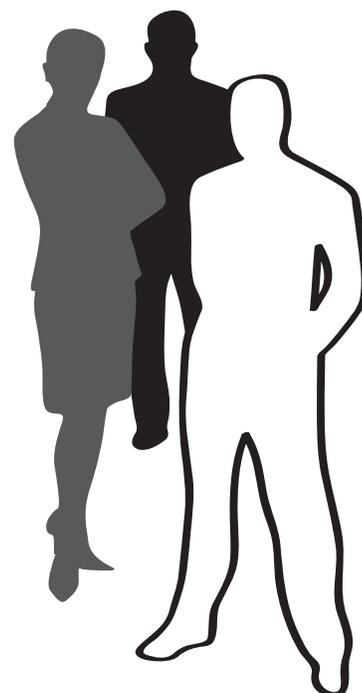
America's Workforce:

A revealing account of what employees really think about today's workplace

Leading the charge

In recent years, tough economic times and an unsteady job market have made most people with jobs try to make the best of their current positions due to necessity. However, the America's Workforce survey finds it may be harder than companies think to hang on to many of their employees. This may be linked to employees' weak relationships with their supervisors, skepticism of the company's leaders, a fuzzy picture of the organization's vision and their contributing role in the outcome, challenging accountability relationships with other teams or functions, and a limited amount of job-applicable training. This could lead to tough times at organizations considering major strategic changes that impact engagement, culture, productivity, and operations.

The survey's insights can help leaders and organizations retain their best employees as the economy continues to improve and more successfully drive strategic outcomes to positively impact the business.



About the survey

The America's Workforce: A Revealing Account of What U.S. Employees Really Think About Today's Workplace study was conducted to help organizational leaders gain a firsthand understanding of what America's employees think and feel about their jobs, the companies they work for, and the leaders who manage them. The study analyzed more than 1,000 U.S.-based employees across a variety of industries, companies, and positions. The results provide information on key areas of importance:

- Leadership
- Manager/Employee Relationships
- Communication
- Strategic Change
- Teamwork
- Employee Training

The findings are designed to serve as a resource for organizational leaders to take action where appropriate to attract, engage, and retain top talent.

The Missing Link

Employee passion could improve in many areas, perhaps by strengthening relationships with managers and increasing trust.

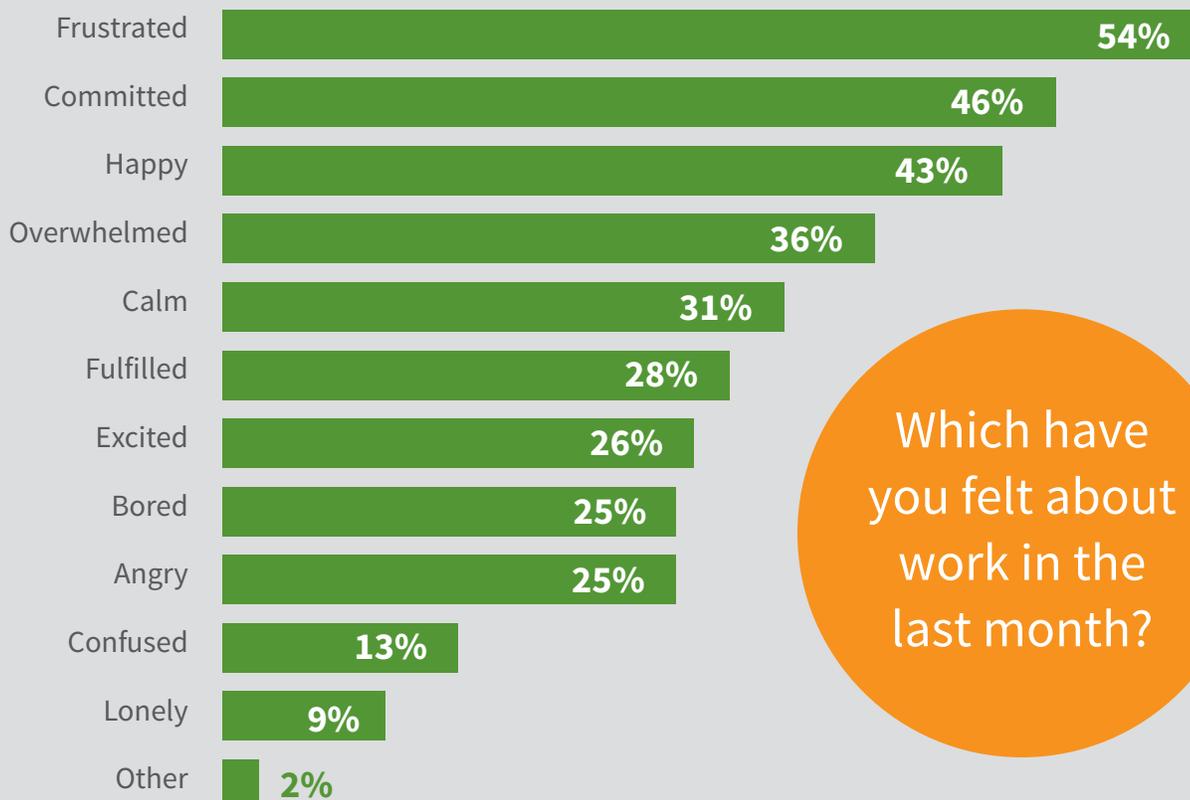
Waning interest

Less than half of employees today can assert that they have felt committed (**46%**), fulfilled (**28%**), or excited (**26%**) about work in the last month.

- Fewer 18–34-year-olds than those who are 45+ could describe themselves as committed (**40% vs. 50%**) or fulfilled (**23% vs. 31%**) in relation to their jobs in the past four weeks.

Less than positive

Furthermore, a quarter (**25%**) even admit they have experienced job-related anger in the past four weeks.



Which have you felt about work in the last month?

Not from the top

Many workers seem to doubt the ability of leaders to make workplaces run smoothly, drive accountability, and inspire risk-taking. More than two in five (**43%**) believe that individual employees, not leaders, have the biggest impact on a company's culture.

Far from their strong suit

This disconnect between employees and leadership might be because more than two in three (**68%**) workers feel that most of their company's leaders are better at their own jobs than inspiring others to excel.

- More men than women (**71% vs. 65%**) feel this way about the senior executives at their companies.

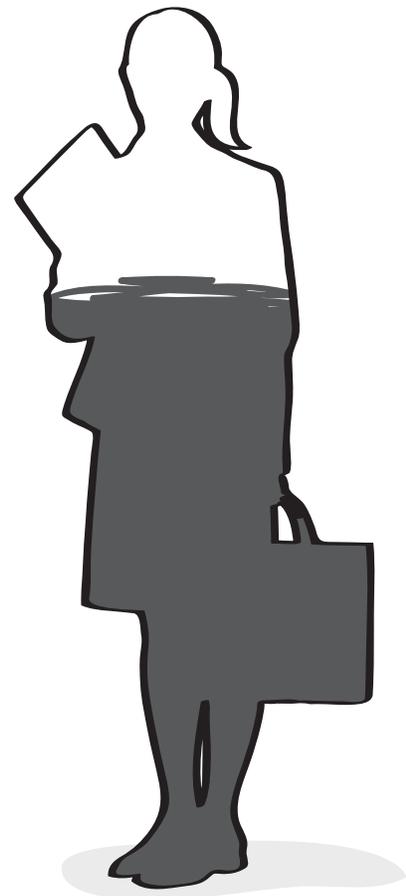
Not taking chances

Also troubling is the fact that nearly two in three (**67%**) American workers can name at least one thing that would prevent them from taking any kind of risk at work. Topping this list for **46%** of these employees is not having enough support from supervisors.

Low in faith

What's more, fewer than a quarter (**22%**) of workers feel that upper management truly has the best interests of most of their employees at heart. And less than half think that these executives are committed to the company's vision (**48%**) or have the organization's best interests at heart too (**46%**).

68%



68% of workers think their company's leaders are better at their own jobs than inspiring others to succeed.

Starting From the Top

The leadership styles and culture that managers and senior leaders foster may be contributing to disconnects between the people on the "front lines."

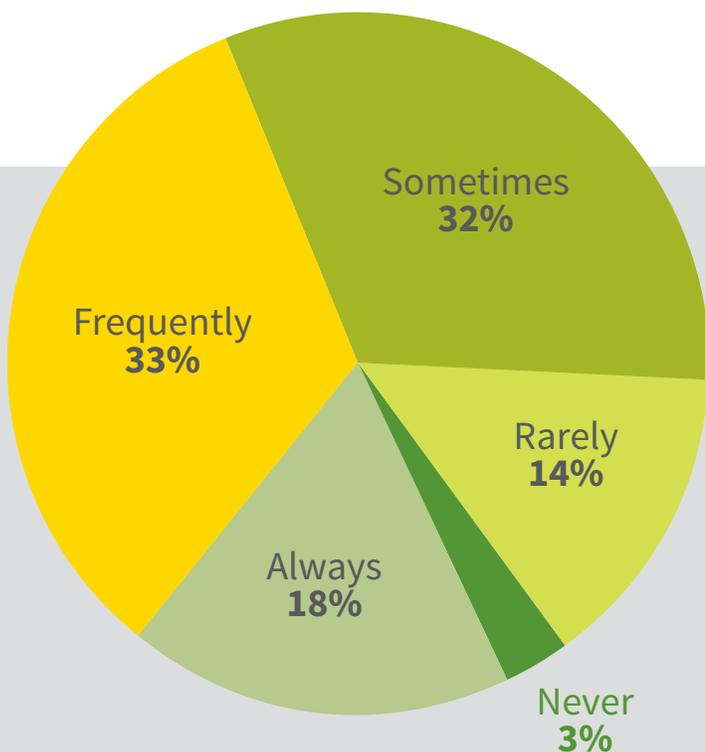
Hard to believe

Almost half (**49%**) of the nation's workforce feel that their leaders are genuine or authentic in their actions only sometimes, at best, if not less often.

Executives falling short

Fewer than half of employed Americans would be able to describe their company's leaders as having the organization's best interests at heart (**46%**), being intelligent (**37%**), or being honest (**30%**). And just **22%** think they have most employees' best interests on their minds.

- Fewer 18–34-year-olds than those who are 35+ feel that their organization's leadership has the company's best interests at heart (**36% vs. 48%**) and could be classified as intelligent (**31% vs. 39%**).



How often do you think your company's leaders are being genuine or authentic when they communicate with the rest of the company?

I strongly agree that...



Most of the managers in my company embody the values they want their employees to have

26%



My manager has established an effective working relationship with me

38%



My manager understands his or her role at the company

39%

Not leading by example

Furthermore, just **26%** of workers can strongly agree that most of the managers in their organization embody the values or behaviors that they would like their employees to have. Even fewer (**14%**) believe that their company's leaders are generally willing to change their ways.

Lack of clarity

Fewer than two in five (**39%**) strongly believe that their managers understand their roles at the company.

Could be better

This issue often leads to poor working relationships with managers and the people under them. Fewer than four in ten (**38%**) workers can strongly state that their managers have established effective working relationships with them.

Low priority

Perhaps this is why a minority of employees who feel accountable for something at work tend to place the success (**36%**) or happiness (**32%**) of their supervisors on this list of responsibilities.

Mission Control

There's also a need for clearer and stronger communication between senior executives, managers, and the rest of the organization about the company's vision.

Not invested

Just under half (**48%**) of the nation's workers believe that senior executives at their company are committed to the organization's overall vision or mission.

Lack of comprehension

Even less (**40%**) strongly feel that their managers understand the company's strategy or goals.

No connection

This is likely why **40%** also confess that they don't completely understand their company's vision – some of these folks haven't even been exposed to it at all.

Not part of the business

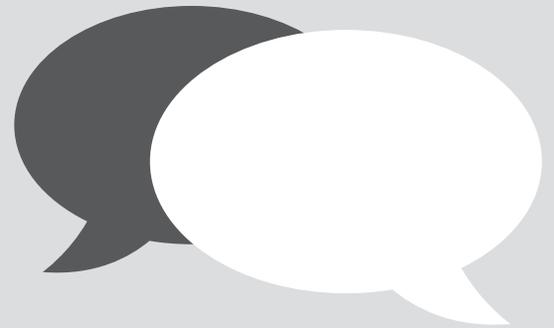
Almost six in ten (**57%**) employed Americans feel accountable for something at work, and do not count their company's revenue, profit, or growth among those items.

Tying it all together

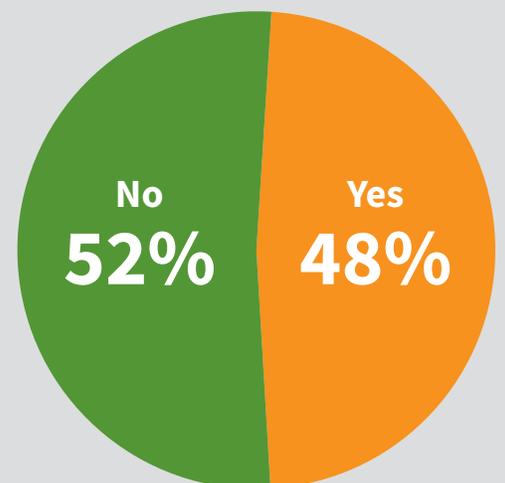
Additionally, only **29%** strongly agree that their managers have the ability to make the company's mission relevant to their own specific job responsibilities.

Not coming through

While many senior executives should be able to help workers understand the organization's vision, fewer than one in five (**16%**) employees think that's what these folks do best.



The senior executives at my company are committed to the company's vision or mission.



Team Efforts

An important area to address is the division of responsibilities and how to drive accountability when different departments work together.



They're in this together

Perhaps because they don't always get the support they need from senior executives, numerous employees have built strong relationships with their teams. Among the **84%** of workers who feel at least somewhat accountable at work, the two items they feel most accountable for are the success (**69%**) and the happiness (**46%**) of their departments.

As part of my current position, I feel at least somewhat accountable for...*

* Among respondents who feel at least somewhat accountable for something as part of their current position



Fractured faith

This system breaks down a bit, however, when other teams are involved. Fewer than three in ten (**27%**) strongly agree that when they work with other groups, they can confidently depend on these outsiders to fulfill their specific duties.

Lack of definition

Around the same number (**30%**) can strongly assert that when they collaborate with other teams, each individual's responsibilities are clear.

- This sentiment is even weaker among workers who don't manage others at all than those who do (**27% vs. 33%**).

Disconnect among peers

This is likely why more than four in ten (**43%**) employees concur that "managing across" to empower colleagues in other departments is harder to do than managing up or down.

Separation of responsibility

What's more, over three quarters (**76%**) of workers would prefer that each team was held accountable for their own tasks in situations that involve cross-team collaboration.

- More workers who are 45 and older than those in the 18-44 age group (**82% vs. 70%**) feel this way.

Which is most difficult?

43%

Managing **across**



35%

Managing **up**



22%

Managing **down**



Areas for Opportunity

Companies tend to work best when they try to replicate successful processes.

If it isn't broken...

More than half (**54%**) of employed Americans feel that their company is better at identifying what works well in order to mirror these approaches elsewhere than trying to fix processes that aren't working.

The best way to go

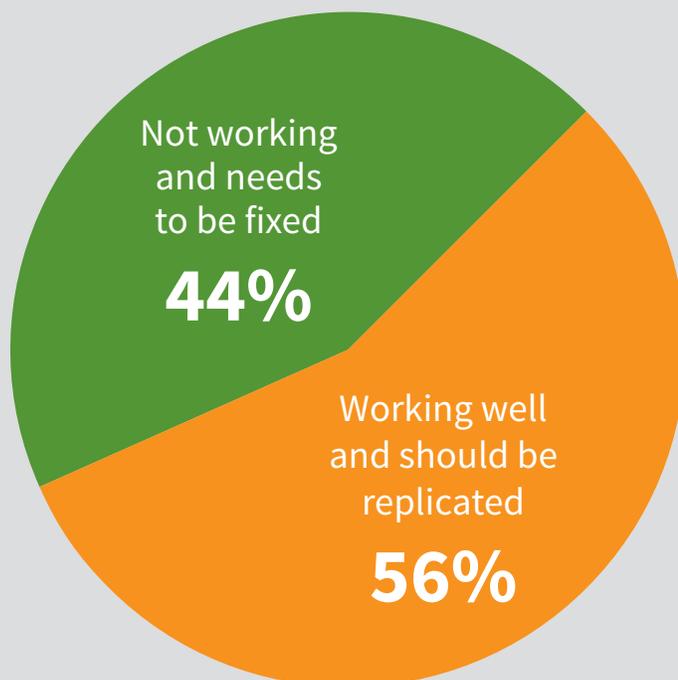
Similarly, **56%** believe that companies tend to be more successful when they take this tactic.

- This fact is clearer to more 18–34-year-olds than their 35+ elders (**65% vs. 53%**).

Lack of transparency

However, there may be little information along these lines available to employees as a whole. Less than a third (**32%**) strongly agree that they know about or understand which departments or processes aren't working as well as they should be.

Companies are more successful when they identify what is...



Important Improvements

In order to implement best practices, employees are in need of relevant on-the-job training.

Missing a key benefit

More than a quarter (**26%**) of workers report that they don't have any training available to them at work right now.

Waste of resources

What's worse, more than six in ten (**62%**) of those who do have training available believe that it is either only somewhat relevant to their jobs or not applicable at all.

Cause for concern

This could be why **14%** have worried at least once in the last six months that they don't have the skills they need for advancement.

Workplace needs

Clearly, there's a demand for more on-the-job training opportunities. A great deal of employed Americans would prefer to gain knowledge or skills for their jobs in the workplace, either in-person (**62%**) or online (**41%**).

- More women than men (**65% vs. 58%**) would opt for in-person training at work to get better at their jobs.

Positive impacts

This may go a long way toward boosting employee engagement. More workers who have training available to them at work than those who don't have felt committed (**48% vs. 39%**), happy (**45% vs. 37%**), fulfilled (**31% vs. 21%**), and excited (**30% vs. 14%**) about work in the past four weeks.

I would like to gain knowledge or skills for my job via...



Agents of Change

This need for better leadership especially comes into play as companies undergo major culture shifts or significant organizational transformation.

Less than confident

Fewer than one in three (**30%**) workers strongly believe that if their company was going through a major organizational shift, they'd trust their managers to tell them everything they needed to know.

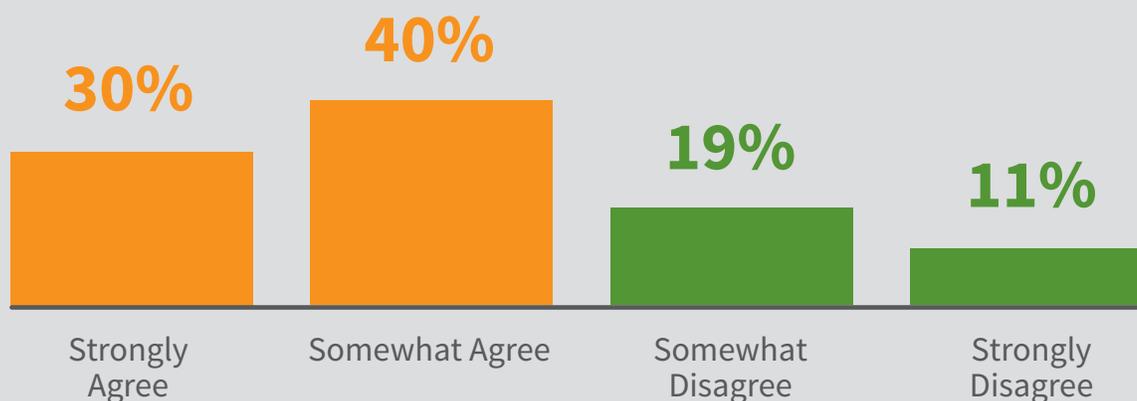
Potentially troubling times

This is likely why close to half (**49%**) feel that most of their colleagues would be either worried, nervous, or skeptical if their companies were undergoing a big change.

Worries on the rise

In fact, **13%** of workers even confess that, at least once in the past six months, they've been concerned that significant changes in their companies might negatively impact their performance.

If my company was undergoing a major change, I would trust my manager(s) to provide me with all the information I needed to know.



Margin of Error = +/- 3%

Sample = 1,061 American Workers Ages 18+

About the America's Workforce survey

Survey was conducted between December 20, 2012 and January 2, 2013 among 1,061 Americans who work full time or part time using an email invitation and an online survey.

Results of any sample are subject to sampling variation. The magnitude of the variation is measurable and is affected by the number of interviews and the level of the percentages expressing the results.

In this particular study, the chances are 95 in 100 that a survey result does not vary, plus or minus, by more than 3 percentage points from the result that would be obtained if interviews had been conducted with all persons in the universe represented by the sample. The margin of error for any subgroups will be slightly higher.

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