

Job Quality Insights from Small Business Employees

Survey Conducted on Behalf of Aspen Institute Economic Opportunities Program

August 2025

Focus of Research

This survey provides a snapshot of how hourly employees in **small U.S. businesses (<100 employees, including full-time and part-time employees)** perceive the quality of their current job. Employees were surveyed across **seven key industries**: retail, food service, construction, agriculture, manufacturing, hospitality, and childcare.

*For simplicity, throughout this report this audience is referred to as **employees**.*

Objectives and Methodology

Objectives

To assess how small business hour employees (under 100 employees) feel about the quality of their jobs. The survey covers factors such as pay, important job features, and benefits.

Methodology

KRC Research conducted an online survey between June 6-23, 2025 among 760 hourly workers, including full-time and part-time employees, employed by small businesses across specific industries. The industries* surveyed include the following:

- Retail, n=127
- Food service/restaurant, n=127
- Construction, n=127
- Agriculture/livestock, n=92
- Manufacturing, n=126
- Travel/Tourism/Hospitality, n=101
- Childcare, n=60

Respondents were screened on having a personal annual income under \$100k, being employed as an hourly worker, and working at a small business (less than 100 employees). The average length of time to complete the survey was 14 mins.

**The industries surveyed were agreed upon by [EQP](#) and WS based on budget, feasibility, and wanting to highlight sectors represented by our grantees*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY & KEY FINDINGS

Executive Summary

Employees expressed overall contentment with their current jobs, sharing that they generally were satisfied with their jobs, intended to remain in their jobs for the next six months, and would recommend their company as a great place to work. At the time the survey was conducted, unemployment numbers continued to rise and reports about economic risks spurred by tariffs and executive branch actions dominated coverage. This media and economic environment may have had an impact on the responses offered by survey participants.

Despite fairly positive thoughts from employees to the open-ended survey questions, the **data suggest a need for job quality improvements for up to approximately one-third of survey respondents** in a few categories.

Deeper explorations of the nuances in employees' feelings about work demonstrated that **there are concerns related to several areas connected to job quality**.

Compensation remains a primary concern. Employees cite pay not keeping up with inflation as their top issue, with over thirty percent saying their wages don't cover basic living costs. This is especially acute in travel, hospitality, childcare, retail, and food service, where nearly forty percent report not earning a livable wage.

Benefits also fall short, with sixty percent saying their benefits don't fully meet their needs. While employees highly value paid time off, health insurance, and sick leave, fewer than half of employers offer these benefits, and even fewer provide retirement plans or supplemental insurance. Many view lower pay and limited benefits as key disadvantages working for a small business.

Key satisfaction drivers include competitive pay, work-life balance, job security, and positive work environments, but few employers are rated excellent in these areas.

Key Findings

- Thirty percent of employees say their primary job does not pay a wage to meet basic living costs.
 - Competitive pay is also ranked as significant influence on job satisfaction, but inadequate pay, specifically pay keeping up with inflation, is a top concern.
 - Those in manufacturing and construction are most likely to say their job pays a livable wage. Those in the agriculture industry are also likely to say this.
 - Managers and those with five years or more of tenure are also significantly more likely to say they earn a livable wage.

Key Findings

- **Low job satisfaction was reported by nearly forty percent of respondents**, with the highest levels of dissatisfaction reported by part-time workers (47%) and workers with 2 or more jobs (45%).
- **Employers are not meeting worker expectations** when it comes to the following categories:
 - Providing a safe and healthy work environment (51% rank it extremely important, 26% believe it is being achieved.)
 - Competitive Pay (40% rank it extremely important, 15% believe it is being achieved.)
 - Work-life balance (41% rank it extremely important, 26% believe it is being achieved.)
 - Predictable schedule (41% rank it extremely important, 28% believe it is being achieved.)
 - Feeling valued for work contributions (40% rank it extremely important, 20% believe it is being achieved.)
 - Offering a good benefits package (36% rank it extremely important, 17% believe it is being achieved.)

Key Findings

- Workers reported that competitive pay, work-life balance, job security, a good working environment, and a benefits package were the top 5 job qualities factoring into their satisfaction.
- Benefits are a particularly weak spot for employers.
 - Sixty percent say their employee benefits do not fully meet their needs.
 - Over half of workers say paid time off, health insurance and paid sick leave are must have benefits but less only a little over half report their employer offers paid time off, and less than half offer life insurance or paid sick leave.

Key Findings

- Work-life balance is an important factor in job satisfaction, but even here there are cracks.
 - Forty percent say they only sometimes (or less often) have the time and energy outside of work to take care of personal or family matters.
 - One-third often feel stressed at work.
 - Only one-third strongly agree their employer cares about them outside of work.
- The key advantages of working for small businesses are sense of community, close relationships with managers and feeling valued, but these soft metrics may not compensate for structural issues that are disadvantages like low pay and lack of benefits.

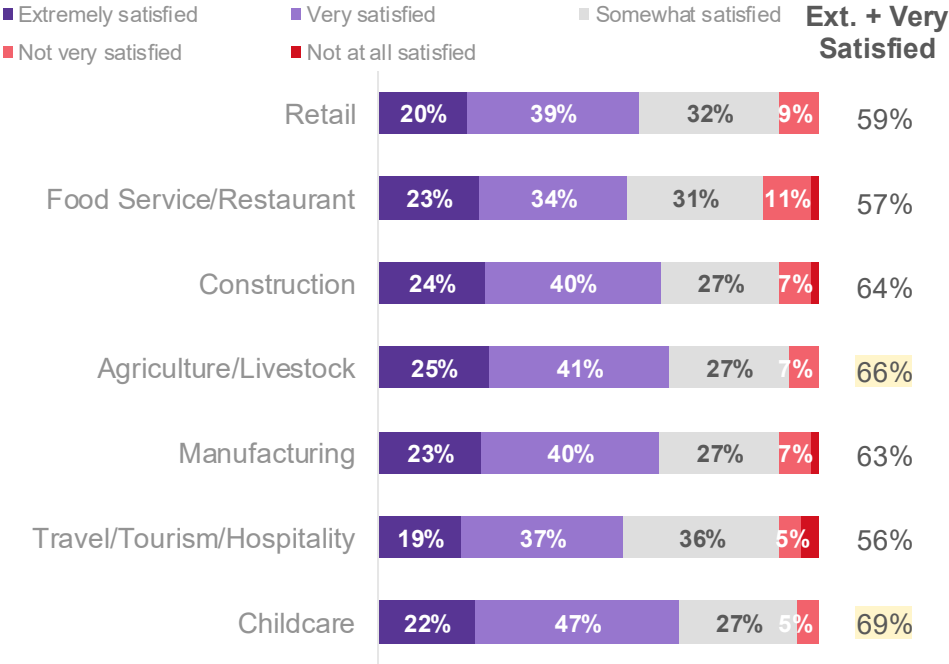
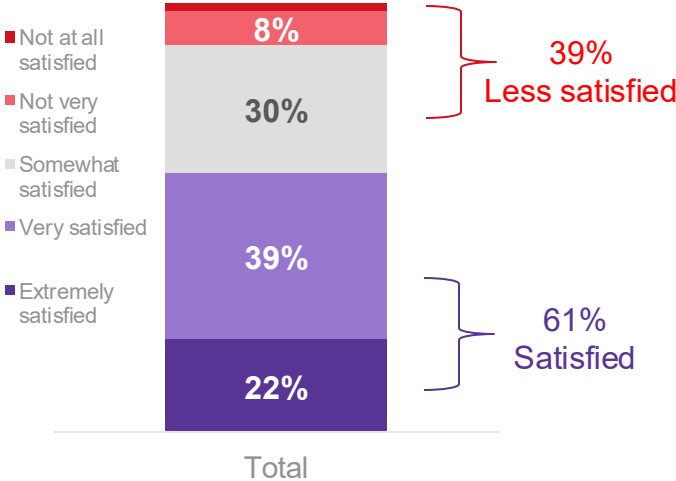
Detailed Findings


Overall Job Satisfaction

While sixty percent of employees are very or extremely satisfied with their current job, forty percent are either only somewhat satisfied or dissatisfied.

Those in childcare and agriculture are most satisfied.

Job Satisfaction All Employees



Q2. Overall, how satisfied are you with your current job? (n=760)
Statistical significance testing included at the 95% confidence interval for the surveyed industries of top 2 box.
Shading  represents the most satisfied industries

Those with high personal or household income and senior level employees are most likely to be satisfied with their job.

Employees who work part-time, have 2+ jobs, and are earlier in their career are more likely to be dissatisfied.

Job Satisfaction

All Employees

More Likely to be Satisfied

% Extremely/Very (Top 2 box)

Personal income \$75k-\$99k (72%)

Senior-level employees (69%)

Household income \$75k-\$99k (69%)

Supervisor/manager (68%)

Length of employment 5+ years (65%)

More Likely to be Dissatisfied

% Somewhat/Not Very/Not at All (Bottom 3 box)

Part-time employees (47%)

2 or more jobs (45%)

Not a supervisor/manager (45%)

Gen Z (45%)

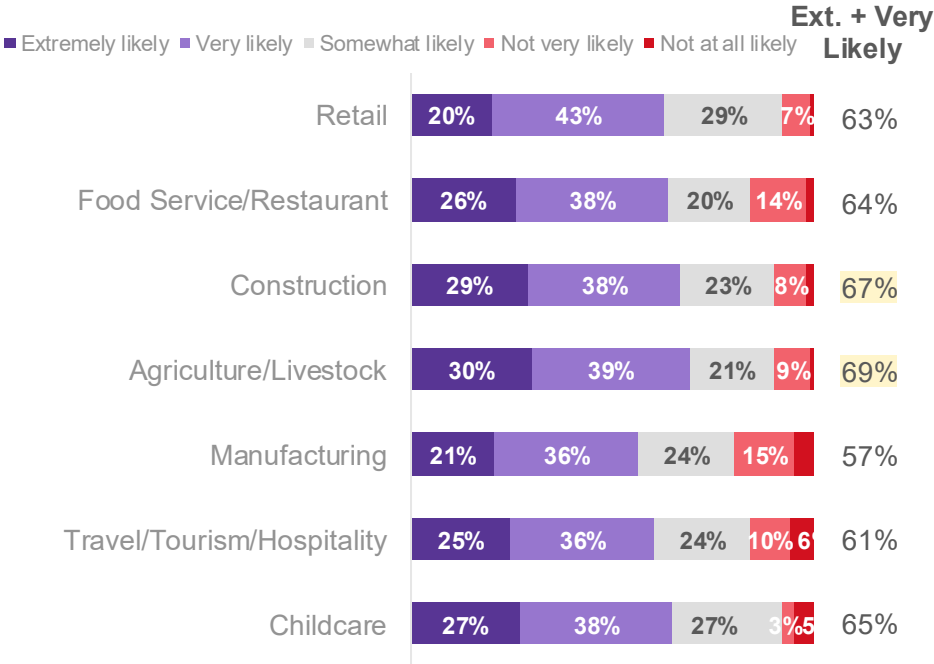
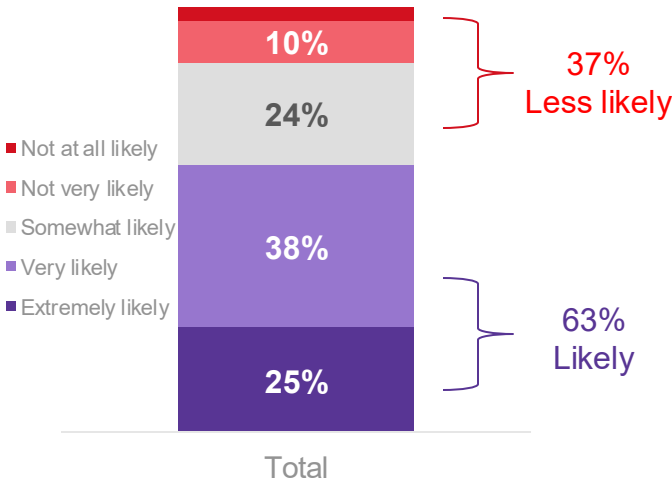
Mid-level (44%)



Over sixty percent of employees are very or extremely likely to recommend their workplace as a great place to work.

Those in construction and agriculture are most likely to recommend their company as a place to work.

Likelihood to Recommend Workplace All Employees



Q3. All things considered, how likely are you to recommend your company or organization as a great place to work? (n=760)
Statistical significance testing included at the 95% confidence interval for the surveyed industries of top 2 box.
Shading represents the most likely industries to recommend workplace



Those with high personal income, senior level employees, and managers are most likely to recommend their workplace.

Employees who live in the New England region, are entry level, and not a manager are less likely to recommend their workplace.

Likelihood to Recommend Workplace *All Employees*

More Likely to Recommend Workplace

% Extremely/Very (Top 2 box)

Personal income \$75k-\$99k (74%)

Senior-level employees (73%)

Supervisor/manager (72%)

West North Central region (71%)

Parents (70%)

More Likely to Not Recommend Workplace

% Somewhat/Not Very/Not at All (Bottom 3 box)

New England region (51%)

Entry level employees (46%)

Not supervisor/manager (45%)

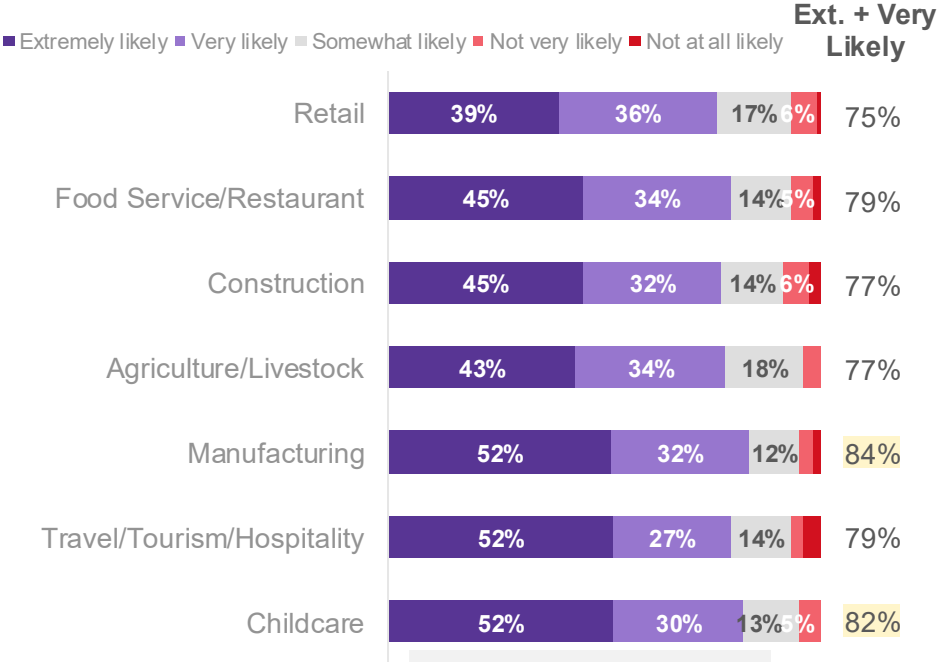
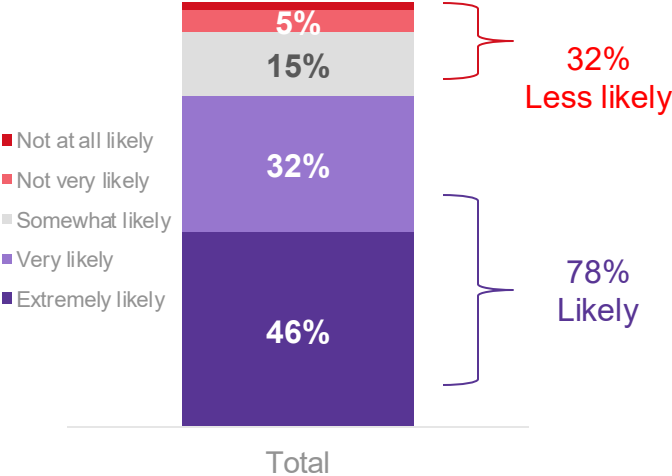
Personal income under \$35k (41%)

Part-time employees (41%)



Despite tempered job satisfaction and likelihood to recommend, the majority of employees are likely to stay at their job for the next 6 months.

Likelihood to Stay at Job 6+ Months All Employees



Q4. Assuming there are no layoffs or major changes, how likely are you to remain with your company or organization for at least the next 6 months? (n=760)
Statistical significance testing included at the 95% confidence interval for the surveyed industries of top 2 box.
Shading represents the most likely industries to have employees stay at their job for the next 6 months

Retail is the least likely to stay in their job the next six months.



Those with high personal or household income and baby boomers are most likely to stay at their job for at least the next six months.

Younger and entry-level employees are less likely to remain at their job for 6+ months.

Likelihood to Stay at Job 6+ Months *All Employees*

More Likely to Stay at Job 6+ Months

% Extremely/Very (Top 2 box)

Personal income \$75k-\$99k (86%)

Household income \$75k-\$99k (86%)

Baby Boomers (86%)

Senior-level employees (83%)

Length of employment 5+ years (83%)

More Likely to Not Stay at Job 6+ Months

% Somewhat/Not Very/Not at All (Bottom 3 box)

Gen Z (28%)

Entry-level employees (25%)

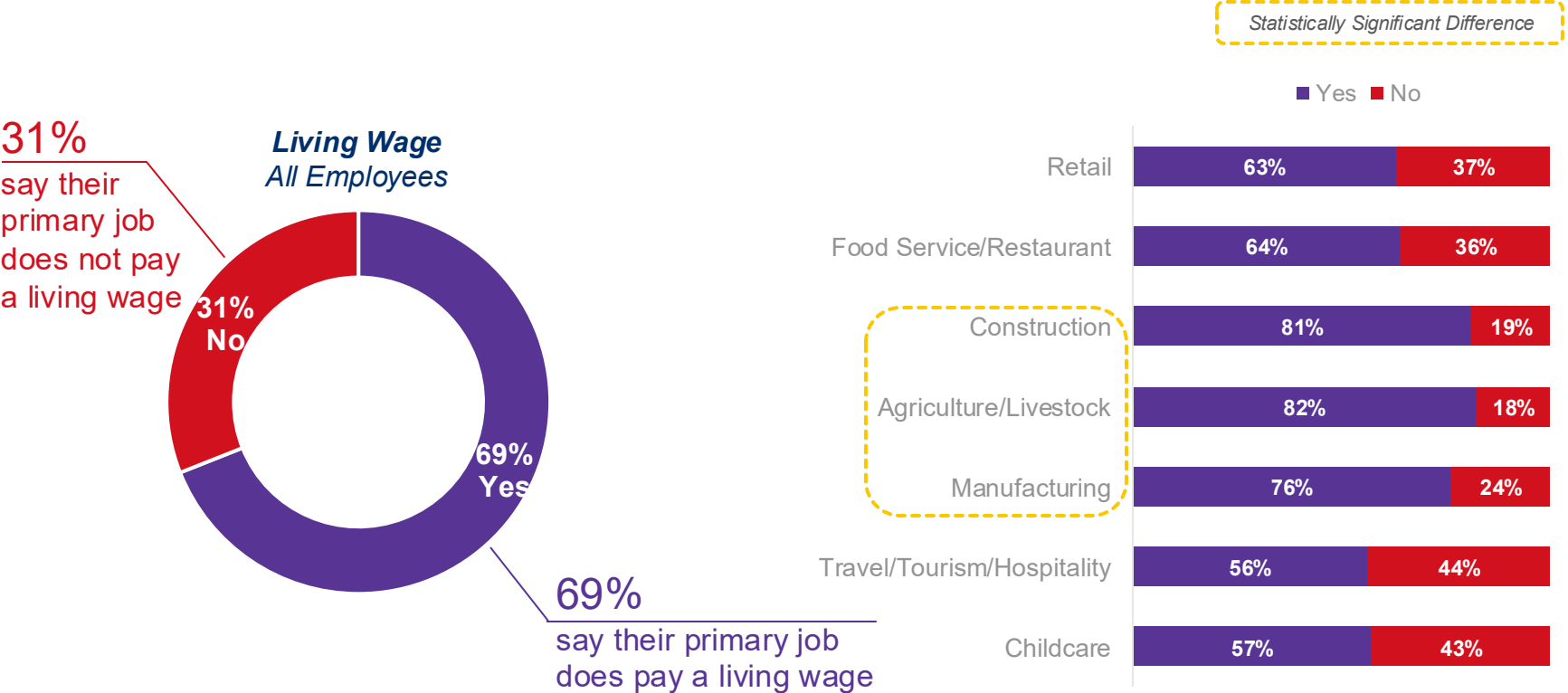
Personal income less than \$35k (25%)

Part-time employees (25%)

2 or more jobs (25%)



A third say their primary job does not pay a livable wage, although this is not as common among the construction, agriculture, and manufacturing industries.



Q5. Does your primary job pay a living wage? A living wage means your hourly pay, after taxes, covers the basic costs of living for yourself and your family such as housing, food, transportation, or other necessities. (n=760)
Statistical significance testing included at the 95% confidence interval for the surveyed industries of % yes.



Managers and those more tenured and senior in their job are most likely to have a primary job that pays a living wage.

Part-time and entry-level employees are most likely to not have a job that pays a living wage.

Living Wage *All Employees*

Most Likely to Have Primary Job Pay Living Wage % Yes

Supervisor/manager (80%)

Satisfied with job (80%)

Length of employment 5+ years (78%)

Senior-level employees (77%)

Full-time employees (76%)

Urban community (76%)

Most Likely to Not Have Primary Job Pay Living Wage % No

Part-time employees (52%)

Entry-level employees (46%)

Personal income less than \$35k (43%)

Not supervisor/manager (40%)

Suburban community (37%)

Length of employment 1 to 5 years (36%)

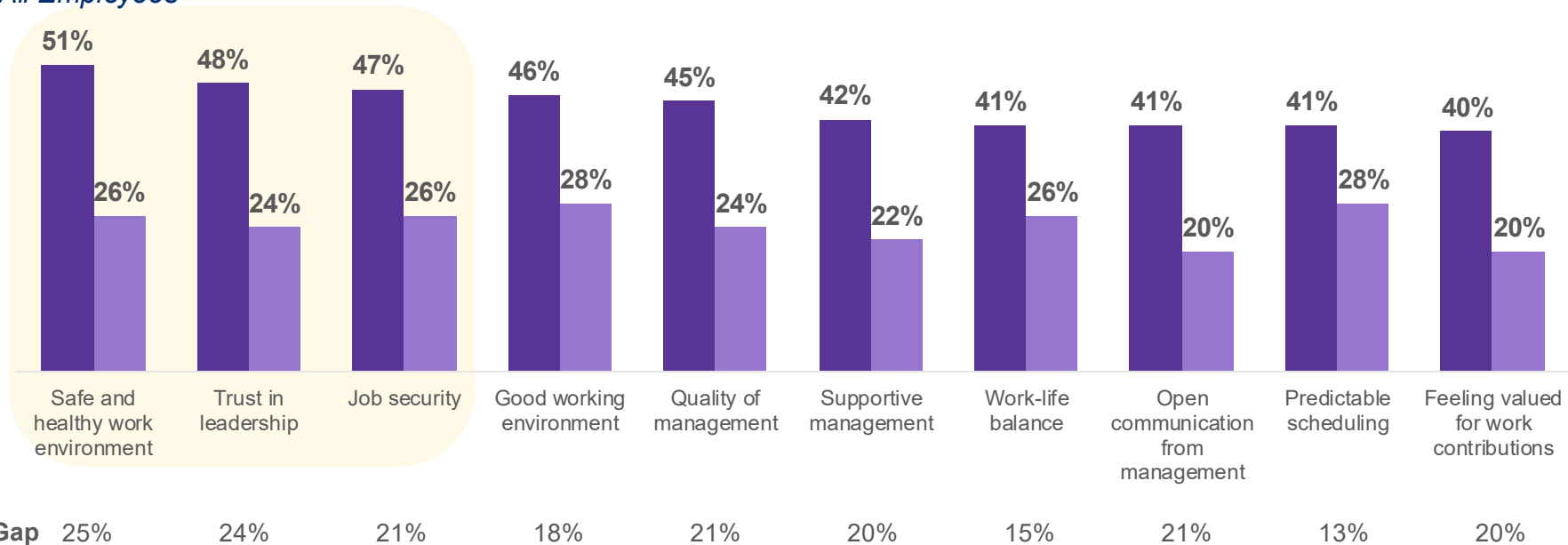
Detailed Findings

Important Attributes and Concerns of a Job

Employees say a safe work environment, trust in leadership, and job security matter most to their job satisfaction—but far fewer say their current employer delivers on these.

Job Attribute Importance & Evaluation
All Employees

Extremely important Excellent



Q6. How important are each of the following features to your overall job satisfaction?

Q8. How would you rate your primary job in each of the following areas? (n=760)

NOTE: Showing features ordered on extremely important.

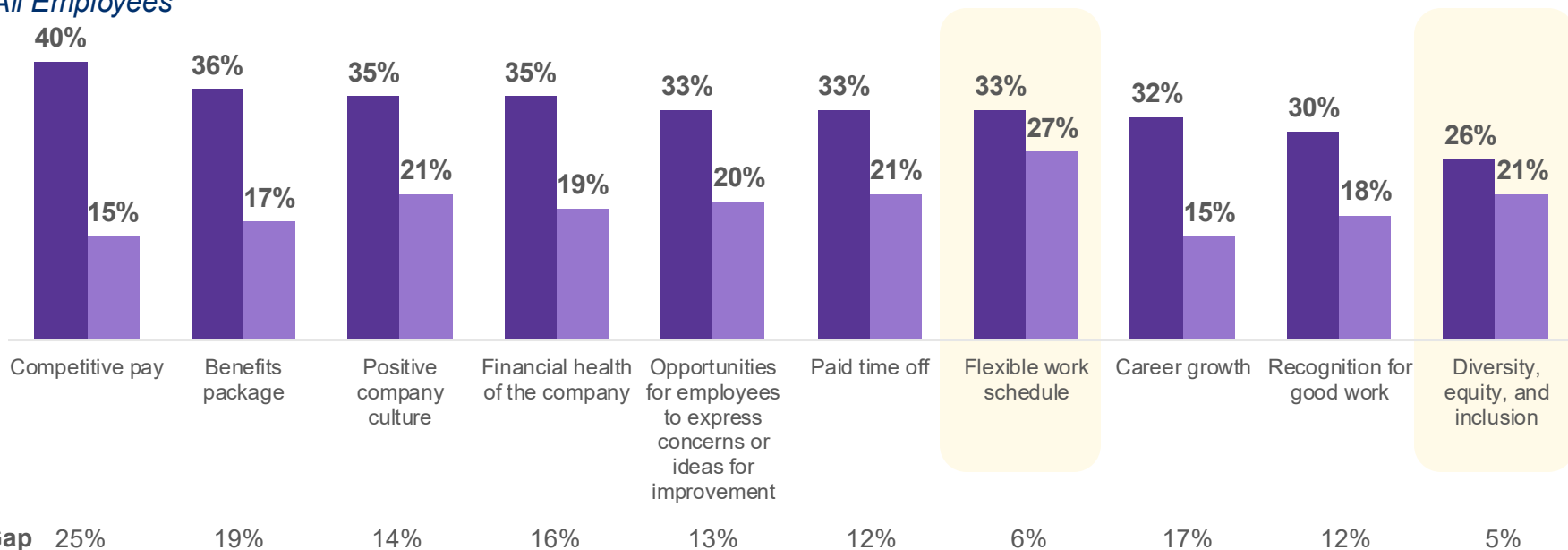
Employees are more likely to positively rate their employer on attributes that are less important, such as flexible work schedule and DEI.

Job Attribute Importance & Evaluation

All Employees

Extremely important

Excellent



Q6. How important are each of the following features to your overall job satisfaction?

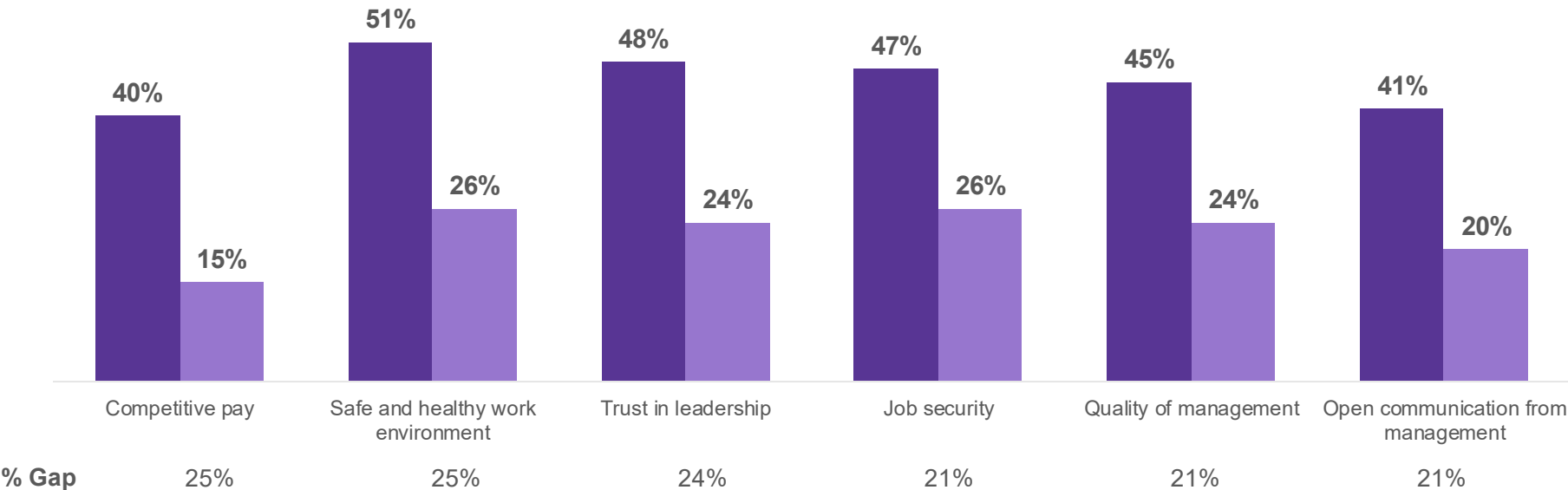
Q8. How would you rate your primary job in each of the following areas? (n=760)

NOTE: Showing features ordered on extremely important.

The largest areas for improvement according to employee priorities, are pay, safety, job security, and leadership support and communication.

Important Opportunities For Improvement
All Employees

■ Extremely important ■ Excellent



Q6. How important are each of the following features to your overall job satisfaction?

Q8. How would you rate your primary job in each of the following areas? (n=760)

NOTE: Showing features ordered % gap.

When asked to pick the most important job qualities, pay, work-life balance, job security, and working environment rise to the top.

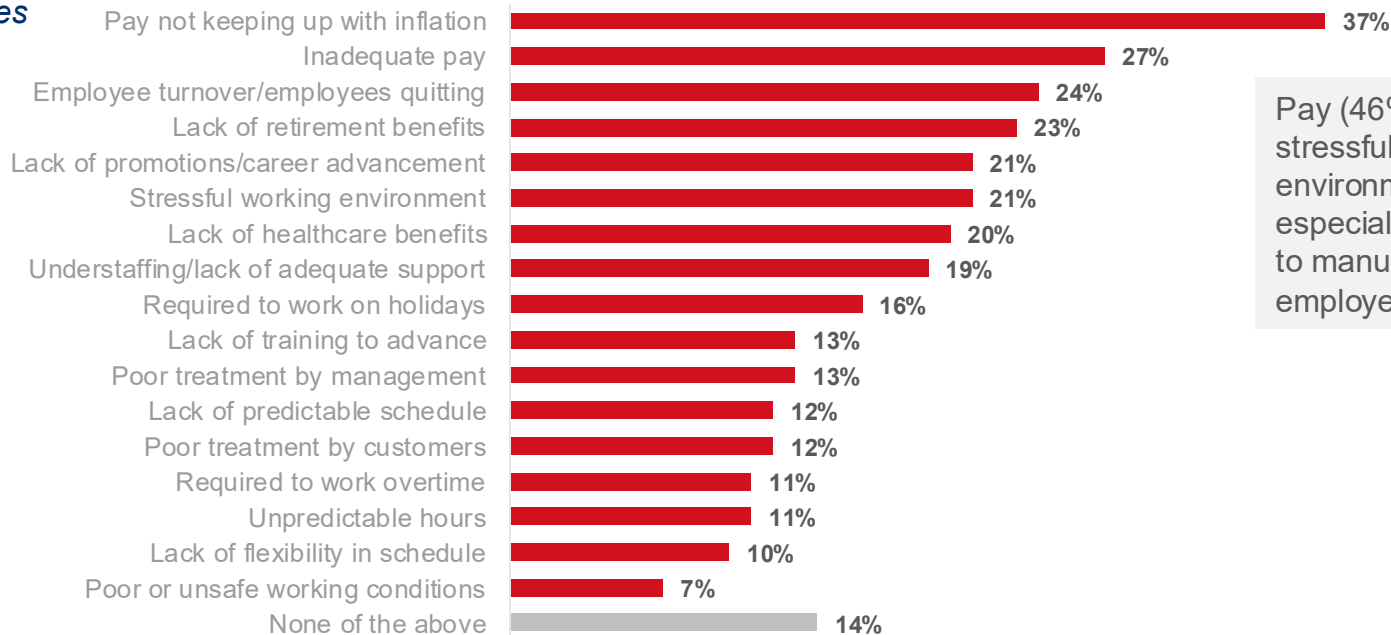
Top 3 Most Important Job Qualities All Employees



Inadequate pay, including pay not keeping up with inflation, is a top concern for employees.

Top Issues With Primary Job

All Employees



Pay (46%) and a stressful work environment (30%) are especially top concerns to manufacturing employees.



When asked in an open-ended survey question what they most value about their current job, employees are most likely to cite the people and culture.

Most Valued Aspects of Current Job

(Unaided; Open end)

All Employees

 29%

People / Management

Positive experience working with coworkers, interacting with customers, and communicating with leadership.

- Good management
- Positive coworkers
- Interacting with customers
- Love the people

 25%

Work Environment

Positive work culture that encourages collaboration, promotes positivity, and makes employees feel valued.

- Cares about their employees
- Positive work environment
- Freedom to make my own decisions
- Collaborative atmosphere
- Safe environment

 25%

Schedule

A flexible and consistent schedule that creates a healthy work-life balance.

- Flexible schedule
- Consistent work schedule
- Schedule that works for me
- Good work-life balance

 23%

Pay / Benefits

Competitive pay with career growth opportunities and benefits.

- **Competitive pay** (16% referenced)
- Career growth opportunities
- Benefits



"I see the trust in the customers when we interact and that makes me feel wanted and valued. I also feel valued by my employer and am rewarded for it." – Lead/Team Coordinator, Agriculture/Livestock, Colorado

"Aside from working with an amazing cast of higher management, having such a positive work culture and incredible coworkers." – Lead/Team Coordinator, Food Service/Restaurant, California

"I have a very flexible schedule and can take time off when I need it. My manager is understanding and open to any concerns I have and will work with me to accommodate me if necessary." – Manager, Travel/Tourism/Hospitality, Texas

"I attach great importance to whether the company offers opportunities for training, further education or participation in industry conferences." – Manager, Childcare, Virginia

Q10. What do you value most about your current job? Please be as specific as possible. (n=760)

Sub-categories are in descending order and bolded categories were most frequently referenced.

When asked in an open-ended survey question what improvements could be made to their current job, half of employees reference pay or benefits as what needs to be improved.

Improvements To Current Job

(Unaided; Open end)

All Employees

 49%

Pay / Benefits

Increased pay, better benefits, more time off, and more career growth opportunities.

- **Pay increase** (19% referenced)
- **Better benefits** (12% referenced)
- More time off
- Promotions
- Better health insurance

 19%

People / Management

Improved management and improved ability to retain or hire employees.

- **Retain employees** (9% referenced)
- **Better management** (8% referenced)
- Management that listens to employees
- Management resolves issues

 16%

Schedule

Better work-life balance, a stable yet flexible work schedule, and changes to the number of hours worked.

- Want more/less hours worked
- Flexible schedule
- Stable schedule
- Work-life balance

 16%

Work Environment

Appreciation and recognition for work, improved communication from leadership, and better resources.

- Feel appreciated
- Transparency from leadership
- Less stress
- Better resources
- New equipment
- More training

“

“A retirement plan, lower monthly premiums for health benefits, and raises that at least keep up with the cost of living.” – Entry level, Agriculture/Livestock, Washington

“Getting a proper raise would improve my job.” – Mid-level, Retail, Texas

“Better management and communication, dealing with issues between employees directly, more hands to help out on the field, more support and trust from directors, and higher pay because the work we do is tough.” – Mid-level, Agriculture/Livestock, Nevada

“Burnout during the busiest travel seasons could be decreased with more remote options or flexible scheduling.” – Skilled Worker, Travel/Tourism/Hospitality, New Jersey

“Put the schedule out in advance so people have more time to plan their life.” – Mid-level, Food Service/Restaurant, Oregon

“Having more employees lowers stress and boosts productivity.” – Mid-level, Retail, California

“Foster a stronger culture of feedback and transparency.” – Skilled Worker, Agriculture/Livestock, Illinois

Q11. What could be improved about your current job to make it more satisfying? Please be as specific as possible. (n=760)

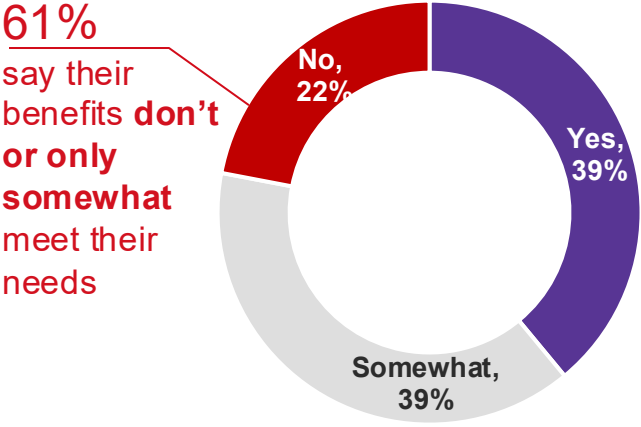
Sub-categories are in descending order and bolded categories were most frequently referenced.

Detailed Findings

Important Benefits

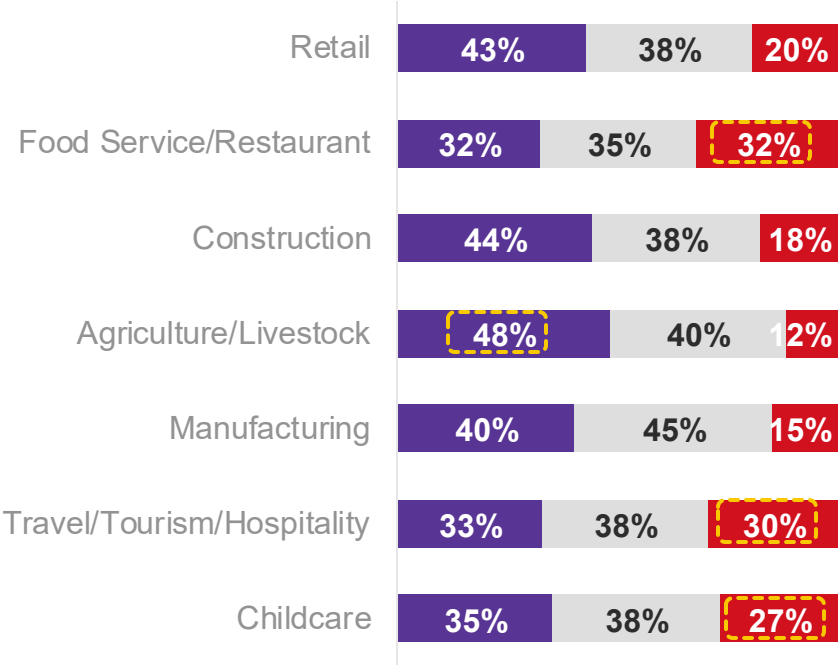
Sixty percent of employees say their benefits don't fully meet their current needs.

Value of Employer Benefits
All Employees



Statistically Significant Difference

■ Yes ■ Somewhat ■ No



Q14. Do you feel the benefits your employer offers meet your current needs? (n=760)
Statistical significance testing included for the surveyed industries at the 95% confidence interval.

Over half of employees say PTO, health insurance, and paid sick leave are must have benefits.

Important Benefits

All Employees

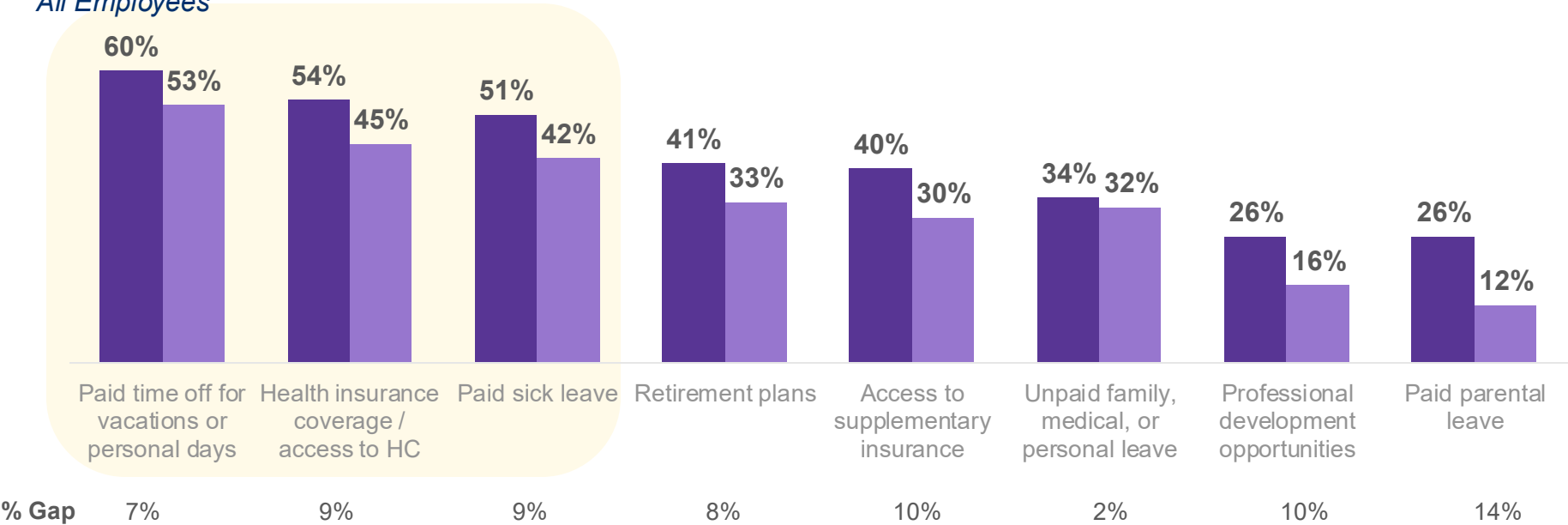
PTO and health insurance are especially important to those in the manufacturing, construction, and retail industries.



Respondents rank access to PTO, health insurance, and paid sick leave as top must have benefits, but report that their employers lag slightly behind in their current offerings.

Benefit Evaluation All Employees

■ Must Have Benefit ■ Currently Offered



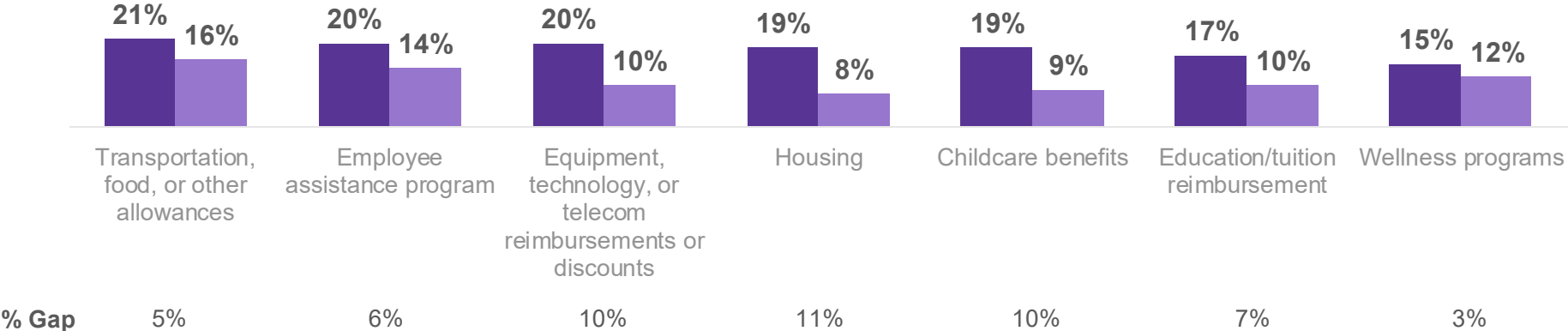
Q12. For each of the following benefits, please indicate if it is a must have, nice to have, or not important to you personally? (n=760)

Q13. Which of the following benefits does your current employer offer to you? Select all that apply. (n=760)

Other benefits are less frequently offered and less likely to be essential.

Benefit Evaluation All Employees

■ Must Have Benefit ■ Currently Offered



Q12. For each of the following benefits, please indicate if it is a must have, nice to have, or not important to you personally? (n=760)
Q13. Which of the following benefits does your current employer offer to you? Select all that apply. (n=760)

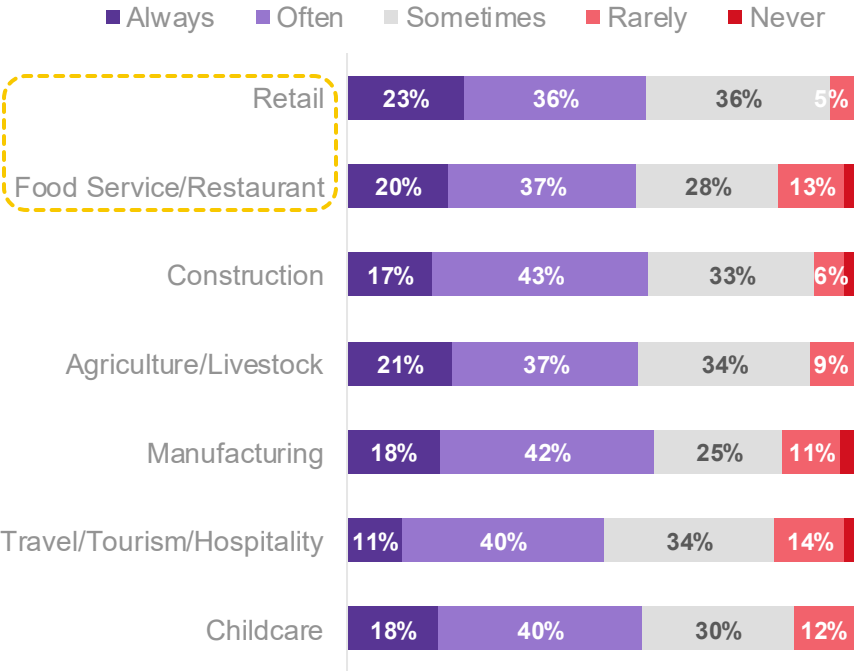
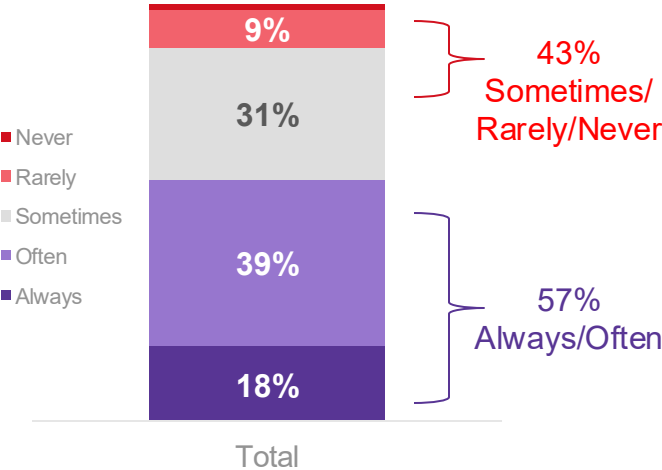
Detailed Findings

Work-Life Balance

Forty percent only sometimes or rarely have enough time and energy outside of work to take care of personal responsibilities.

Statistically Significant Difference

Work Life Balance
All Employees



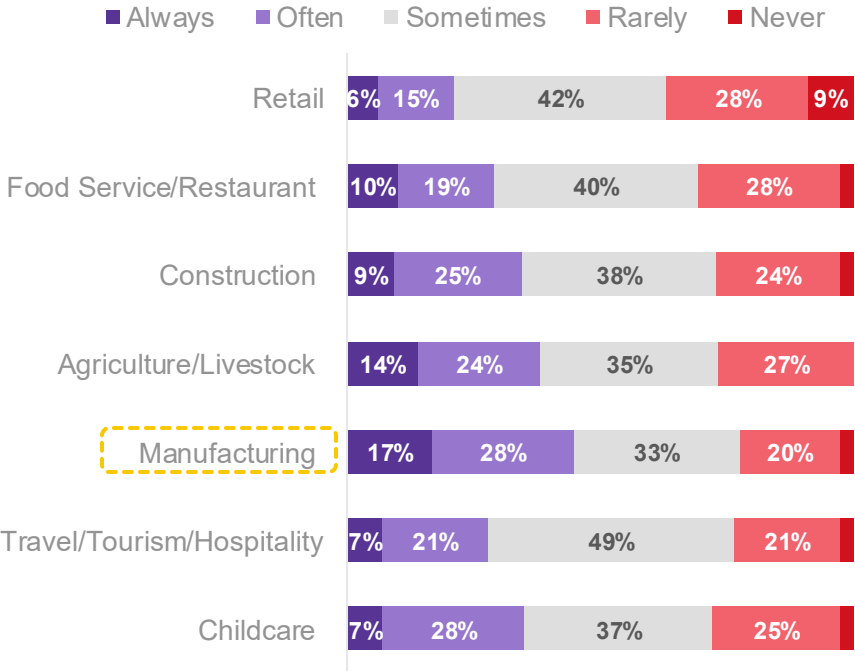
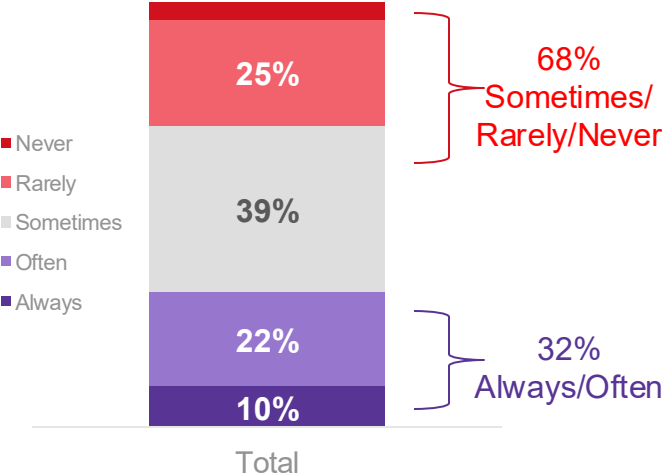
Q15. Do you feel you have enough time and energy outside of work to take care of personal or family responsibilities? (n=760)
Statistical significance testing included for the surveyed industries at the 95% confidence interval.



One-third say they feel stressed about their job always or often. Those in manufacturing are particularly stressed.

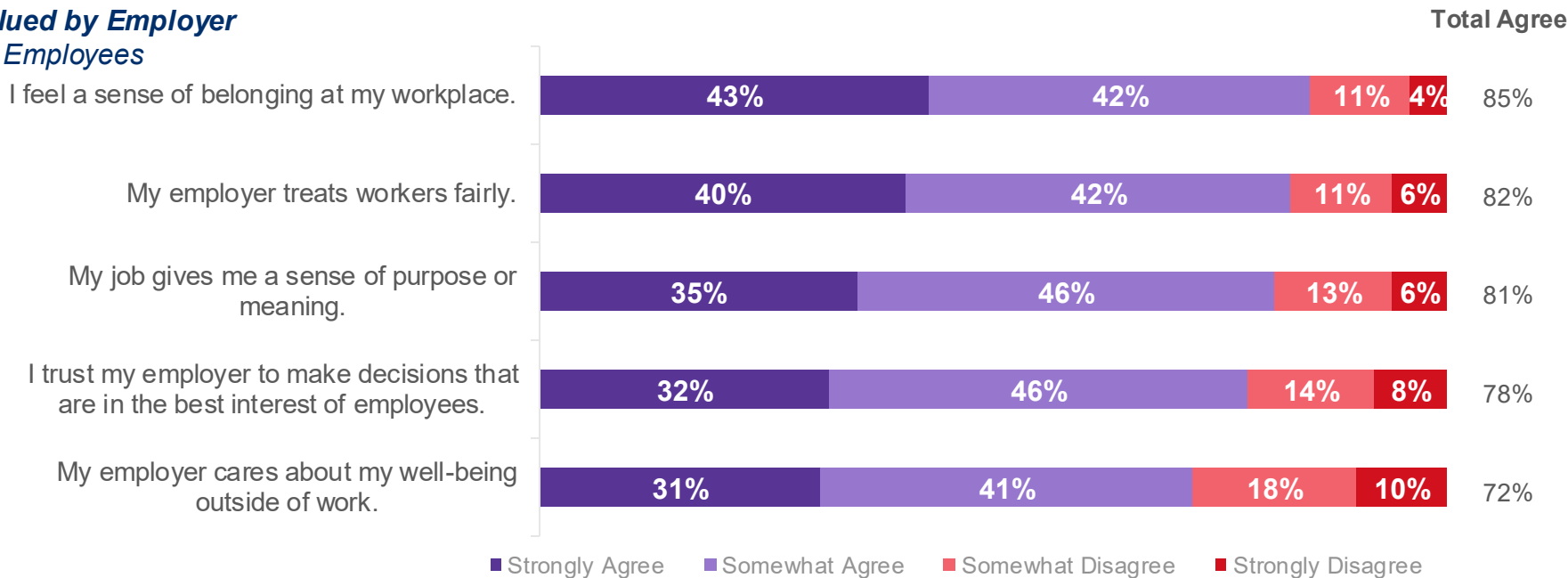
Statistically Significant Difference

Work Stress All Employees



Most employees feel valued, but gaps remain. Only about one-third strongly agree their employer cares about them or that their job gives them a sense of purpose.

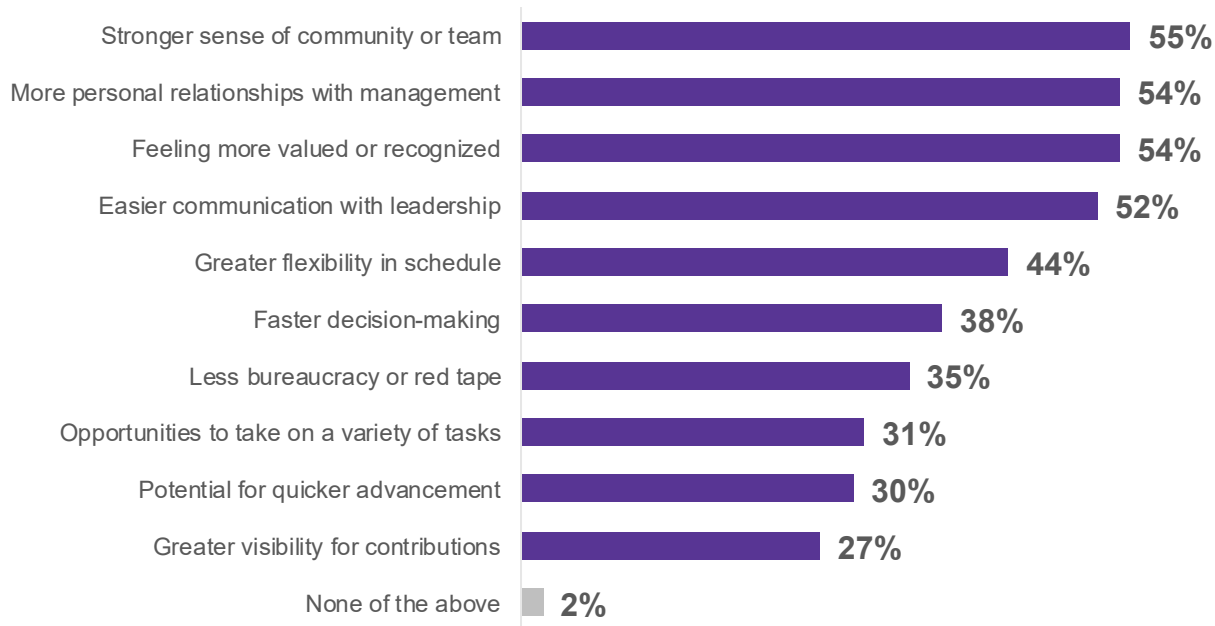
Valued by Employer All Employees



Employees report small businesses provide a stronger sense of community, personal relationships with management, and improved employee recognition.

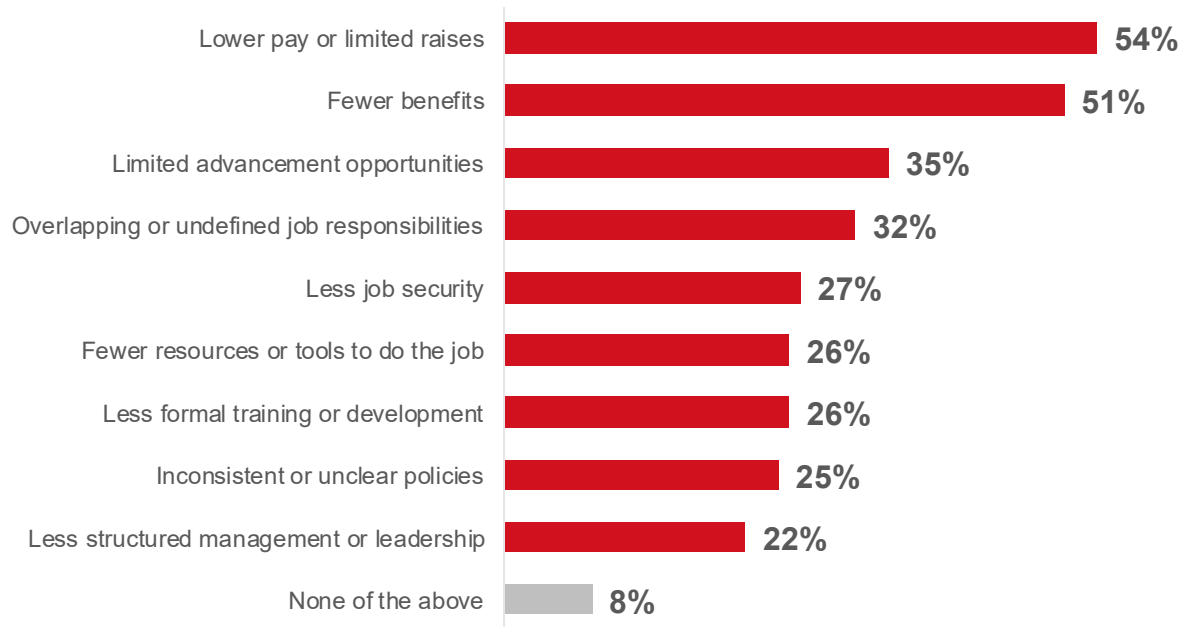
Advantages of Small Business

All Employees



Respondents report small businesses most often struggle with lower pay, limited raises, and fewer benefits.

Disadvantages of Small Business *All Employees*



Respondent Profile

Employee Profile

Industry

Retail	N=127
Food service/ restaurant	N=127
Construction	N=127
Agriculture/ livestock	N=92
Manufacturing	N=126
Travel/Tourism/ Hospitality	N=101
Childcare	N=60

Annual Personal Income

Less than \$35k	33%
\$35k-\$55k	31%
\$55k-\$75k	26%
\$75k or more	10%

Employment Status

Full-time	76%
Part-time	24%

Number of Jobs

1 job	86%
2 jobs or more	14%

Title/Level

Entry Level	14%
Mid-level	19%
Senior-level	12%
Manager	20%
Team Coordinator	8%
Skilled/Technical worker	18%
Support/Service	5%

Number of Employees at Job

1-10	21%
11-25	27%
26-50	26%
51-75	14%
76-100	12%

**Had to work at a company
with less than 100 employees*

Manager Status

Yes, manage people	48%
No	52%

**Had to personally make less than \$100k annually*

Demographic Information

Gender

Male	54%
Female	45%

Region

New England	4%
Middle Atlantic	12%
East North Central	18%
West North Central	7%
South Atlantic	18%
East South Central	7%
West South Central	11%
Mountain	9%
Pacific	14%

Generation

Gen Z	15%
Millennials	45%
Gen X	31%
Baby Boomers	8%

Community Type

Urban	38%
Suburban	37%
Rural	25%

Parent Status

Parent	42%
Non-parent	58%

Race/Ethnicity

White	73%
Black/African American	13%
Hispanic/Latinx	9%
Asian	2%
Native American	2%

Marital Status

Married	33%
Single, never married	45%
Divorced	13%
Separated	3%
Widowed	2%

Education Level

High school graduate or less	34%
Some college/Trade school	42%
College degree	24%

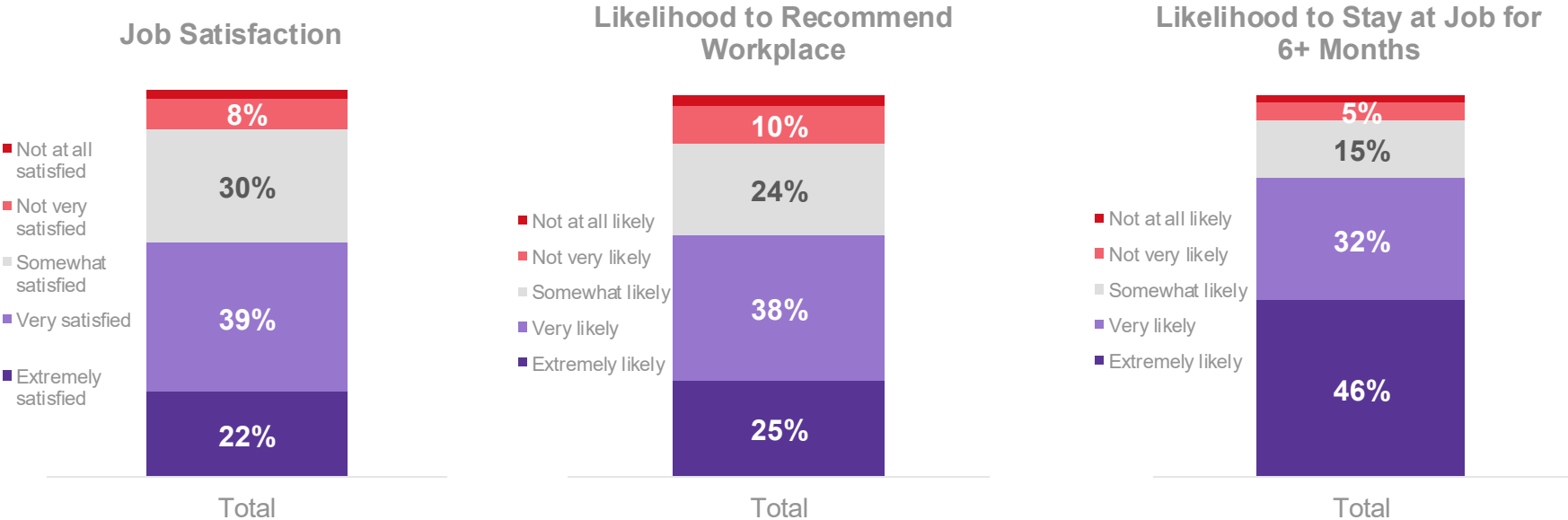
Household Income

Less than \$35k	28%
\$35k-\$55k	30%
\$55k-\$75k	25%
\$75k or more	17%

Appendix

Employment Overview

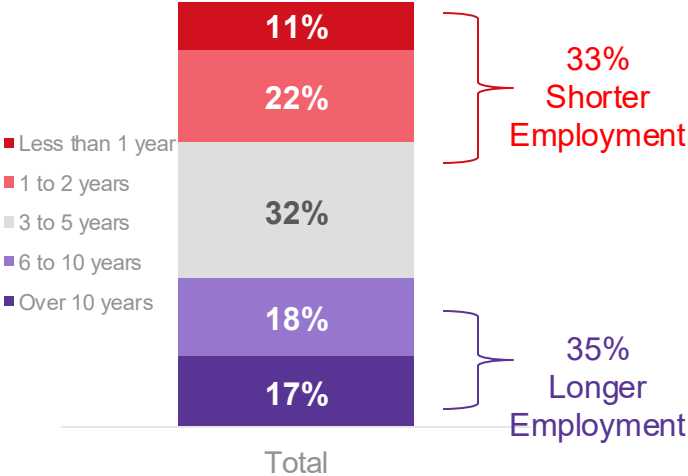
All Employees



Q2. Overall, how satisfied are you with your current job? (n=760)
Q3. All things considered, how likely are you to recommend your company or organization as a great place to work? (n=760)
Q4. Assuming there are no layoffs or major changes, how likely are you to remain with your company or organization for at least the next 6 months? (n=760)

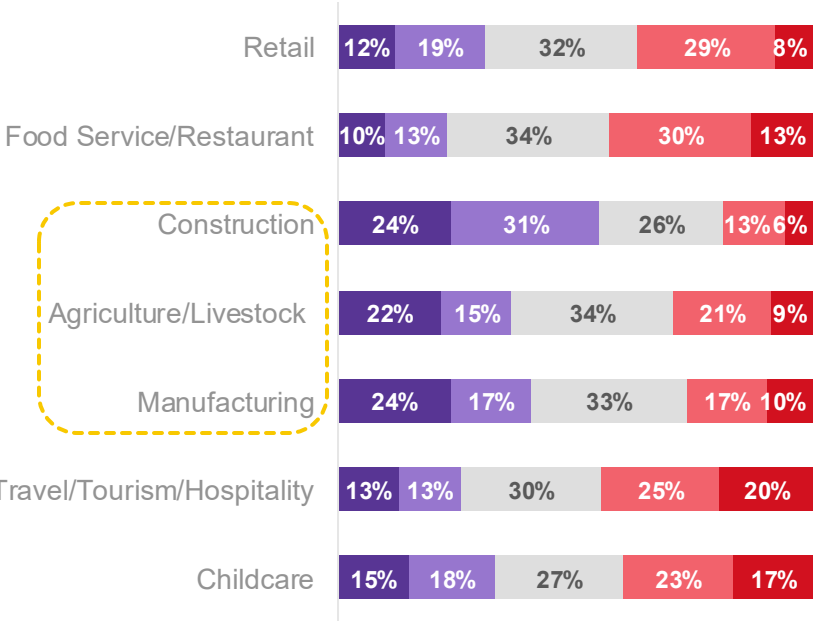
Length of Employment

Length of Employment
All Employees



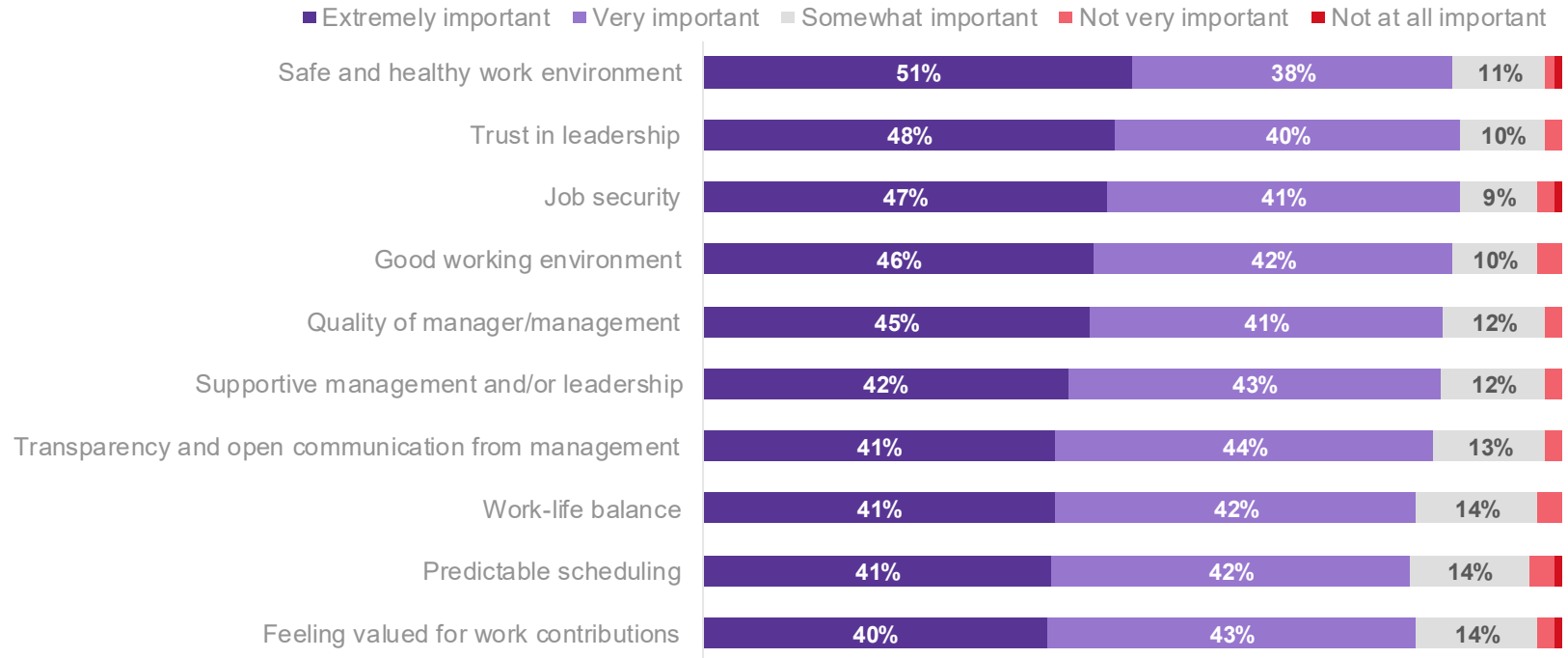
Statistically Significant Difference

Over 10 years 6 to 10 years 3 to 5 years 1 to 2 years Less than 1 year



Areas of Importance for Job Satisfaction (Top 10)

All Employees



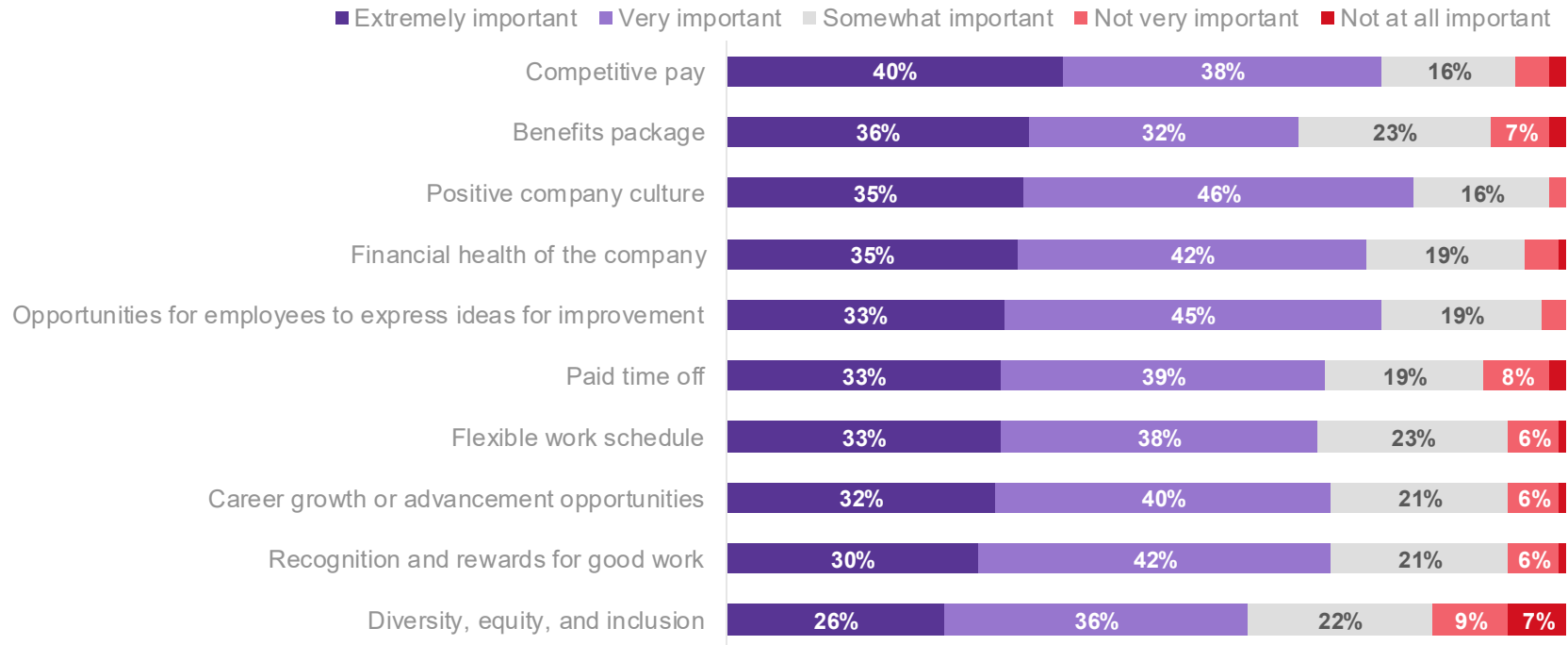
Q6. How important are each of the following features to your overall job satisfaction? (n=760)

NOTE: Showing features ordered on extremely important. Only showing 5% and greater



Areas of Importance for Job Satisfaction (Bottom 10)

All Employees



Q6. How important are each of the following features to your overall job satisfaction? (n=760)

NOTE: Showing features ordered on extremely important. Only showing 5% and greater



Areas of Importance for Job Satisfaction (Top 10)

Statistically Significant Difference

% <i>Extremely Important</i> (Top 10)	Retail	Food Service/ Restaurant	Construction	Agriculture/ Livestock	Manufacturing	Travel/ Tourism/ Hospitality	Childcare
Safe and healthy work environment	52%	57%	45%	42%	52%	54%	48%
Trust in leadership	47%	54%	40%	50%	49%	49%	43%
Job security	45%	46%	52%	37%	52%	52%	43%
Good working environment	43%	47%	42%	46%	46%	50%	52%
Quality of management	45%	54%	41%	35%	44%	50%	45%
Supportive leadership	41%	47%	35%	42%	37%	47%	55%
Transparency from management	42%	44%	39%	40%	44%	37%	43%
Work-life balance	40%	45%	39%	41%	43%	41%	35%
Predictable scheduling	45%	43%	37%	40%	44%	36%	43%
Feeling valued for work	40%	39%	34%	37%	52%	37%	40%



Areas of Importance for Job Satisfaction (Bottom 10)

Statistically Significant Difference							
% Extremely Important (Bottom 10)	Retail	Food Service/ Restaurant	Construction	Agriculture/ Livestock	Manufacturing	Travel/ Tourism/ Hospitality	Childcare
Competitive pay	38%	42%	50%	26%	46%	40%	32%
Benefits package	38%	31%	50%	26%	46%	29%	23%
Positive company culture	32%	37%	32%	33%	38%	41%	35%
Financial health of the company	37%	33%	38%	26%	44%	28%	30%
Opportunities for employees to express ideas for improvement	35%	35%	30%	33%	34%	30%	37%
Paid time off	32%	32%	35%	25%	40%	29%	33%
Flexible work schedule	40%	41%	27%	27%	32%	30%	28%
Career growth	35%	31%	39%	23%	31%	31%	25%
Recognition for good work	28%	27%	26%	36%	38%	29%	28%
DEI	28%	27%	20%	22%	27%	30%	28%



% Top 3 Most Important Job Qualities (Top 10)

Statistically Significant Difference

% Top 3 Most Important Job Qualities (Top 10)	Retail	Food Service/ Restaurant	Construction	Agriculture/ Livestock	Manufacturing	Travel/ Tourism/ Hospitality	Childcare
Competitive pay	30%	28%	40%	13%	36%	27%	22%
Work-life balance	27%	24%	21%	34%	22%	28%	25%
Job security	22%	22%	29%	13%	31%	27%	25%
Good working environment	19%	31%	20%	26%	19%	27%	32%
Benefits package	25%	17%	33%	12%	32%	16%	10%
Safe and healthy working environment	22%	20%	20%	25%	25%	18%	20%
Flexible work schedule	20%	21%	18%	15%	13%	22%	17%
Paid time off	14%	11%	24%	12%	20%	14%	18%
Feeling valued for work contributions	16%	18%	12%	14%	16%	11%	17%
Career growth	13%	12%	19%	9%	11%	18%	7%

Q7. Now, please select the top 3 most important qualities to you personally in a quality job. (Base: Total Asked n=757).

Statistical significance testing included for the surveyed industries at the 95% confidence interval.



% Top 3 Most Important Job Qualities (Bottom 10)

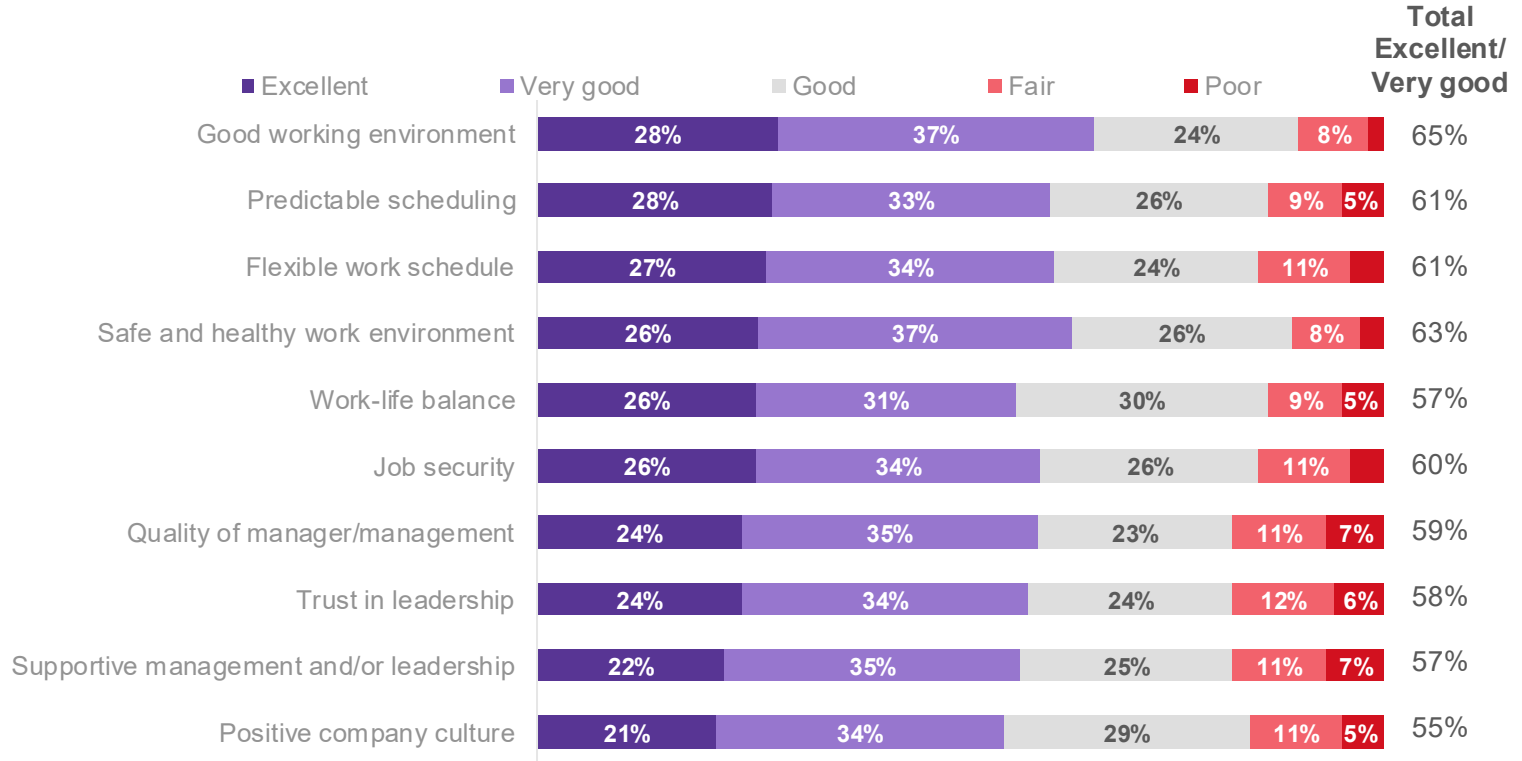
Statistically Significant Difference							
% Top 3 Most Important Job Qualities (Bottom 10)	Retail	Food Service/ Restaurant	Construction	Agriculture/ Livestock	Manufacturing	Travel/ Tourism/ Hospitality	Childcare
Quality of management	10%	21%	10%	12%	10%	12%	5%
Trust in leadership	13%	16%	10%	18%	10%	9%	12%
Supportive leadership	12%	12%	6%	18%	6%	17%	25%
Predictable scheduling	13%	13%	9%	14%	9%	12%	20%
Positive company culture	6%	4%	6%	13%	10%	8%	7%
Open communication from management	6%	7%	7%	13%	5%	7%	7%
Recognition for good work	5%	7%	5%	8%	6%	12%	12%
Opportunities for employees to express concern	10%	4%	3%	18%	4%	5%	13%
DEI	7%	6%	2%	7%	7%	7%	2%
Financial health of comp.	7%	6%	5%	5%	10%	5%	3%

Q7. Now, please select the top 3 most important qualities to you personally in a quality job. (Base: Total Asked n=757).
Statistical significance testing included for the surveyed industries at the 95% confidence interval.



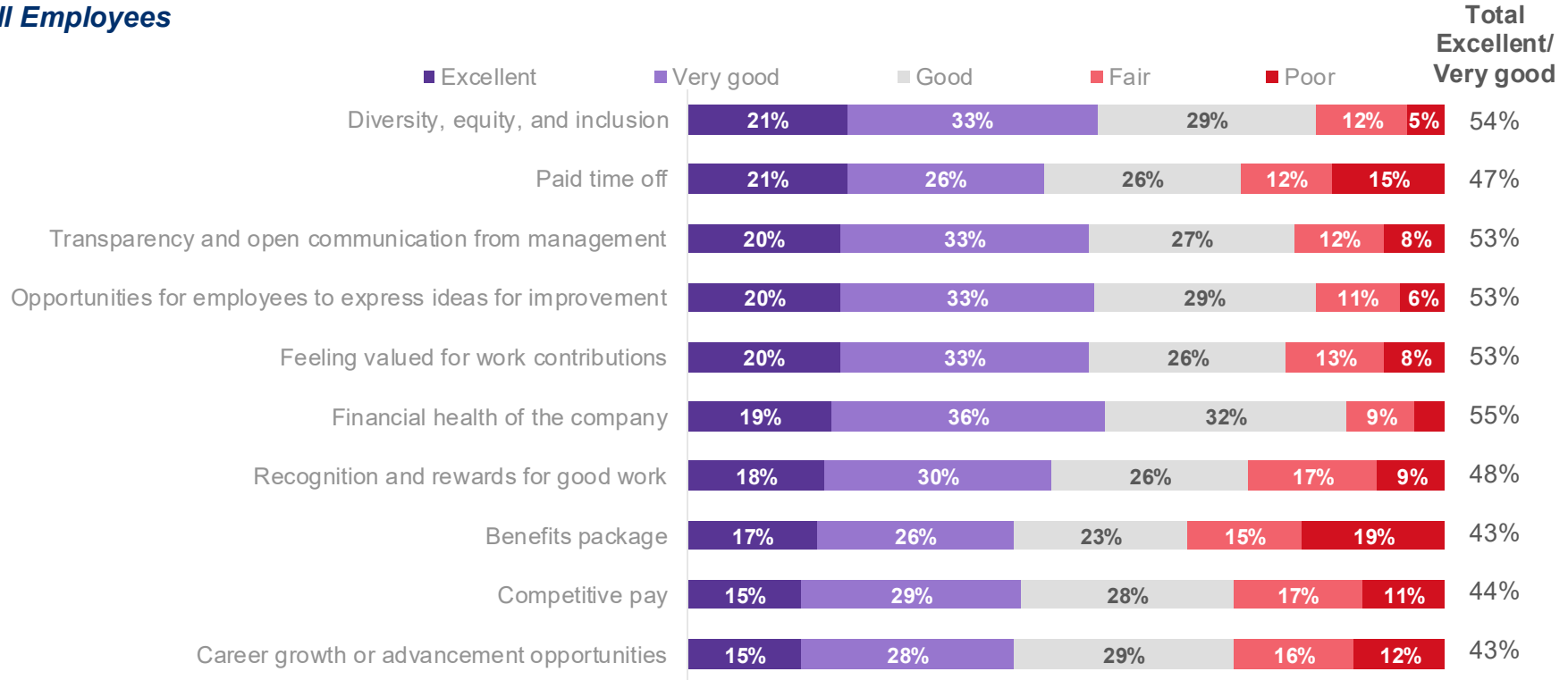
Rating Employer Commitment to Each Area (Top 10)

All Employees



Rating Employer Commitment to Each Area (Bottom 10)

All Employees



Rating Employer Commitment to Each Area (Top 10)

Statistically Significant Difference

% Excellent (Top 10)	Retail	Food Service/ Restaurant	Construction	Agriculture/ Livestock	Manufacturing	Travel/ Tourism/ Hospitality	Childcare
Good working environment	28%	29%	31%	33%	22%	27%	30%
Predictable scheduling	28%	25%	27%	39%	28%	25%	30%
Flexible work schedule	25%	31%	22%	29%	25%	29%	32%
Safe and healthy working environment	26%	26%	29%	33%	21%	23%	30%
Work-life balance	27%	27%	23%	33%	23%	25%	27%
Job security	21%	24%	31%	29%	25%	28%	28%
Quality of management	25%	26%	24%	30%	17%	21%	27%
Trust in leadership	26%	24%	23%	26%	19%	22%	27%
Supportive management	24%	25%	21%	22%	15%	21%	25%
Positive company culture	22%	23%	20%	33%	15%	19%	20%



Rating Employer Commitment to Each Area (Bottom 10)

Statistically Significant Difference

% Excellent (Bottom 10)	Retail	Food Service/ Restaurant	Construction	Agriculture/ Livestock	Manufacturing	Travel/ Tourism/ Hospitality	Childcare
DEI	24%	24%	16%	26%	19%	20%	20%
Paid time off	20%	23%	22%	17%	21%	22%	22%
Open communication from management	23%	23%	21%	20%	14%	17%	22%
Opp. for empl. to express ideas for improvement	17%	22%	21%	23%	21%	17%	23%
Feeling valued for work	24%	16%	22%	29%	14%	18%	23%
Financial health of the company	24%	17%	22%	22%	16%	15%	15%
Recognition for good work	17%	20%	21%	21%	16%	12%	20%
Benefits package	16%	15%	15%	25%	24%	14%	10%
Competitive pay	13%	13%	24%	14%	13%	13%	13%
Career growth	20%	10%	23%	15%	11%	10%	13%



Top Issues or Concerns in Current Job (Top 10)

Statistically Significant Difference

% Top Issues or Concerns (Top 10)	Retail	Food Service/ Restaurant	Construction	Agriculture/ Livestock	Manufacturing	Travel/ Tourism/ Hospitality	Childcare
Pay not keeping up with inflation	32%	33%	33%	32%	46%	44%	38%
Inadequate pay	26%	24%	17%	27%	33%	35%	32%
Employee turnover	20%	25%	20%	24%	29%	30%	17%
Lack of retirement benefits	18%	26%	25%	24%	18%	24%	27%
Lack of promotions	16%	18%	24%	24%	20%	27%	20%
Stressful working environment	17%	24%	26%	16%	30%	16%	17%
Lack of healthcare benefits	24%	30%	15%	15%	13%	20%	28%
Understaffing	15%	20%	15%	18%	22%	23%	18%
Required to work holidays	21%	23%	14%	11%	10%	21%	12%
Lack of training to advance	13%	14%	13%	10%	17%	10%	12%

Q9. Which of the following are the top issues or concerns you have with your primary job? You can select up to 5 choices. (n=760)

Statistical significance testing included for the surveyed industries at the 95% confidence interval.



Top Issues or Concerns in Current Job (Bottom 7)

Statistically Significant Difference

% Top Issues or Concerns (Bottom 7)	Retail	Food Service/ Restaurant	Construction	Agriculture/ Livestock	Manufacturing	Travel/ Tourism/ Hospitality	Childcare
Poor treatment by management	10%	14%	14%	16%	13%	16%	5%
Lack of predictable schedule	9%	12%	13%	13%	10%	13%	13%
Poor treatment by customers	21%	17%	6%	15%	2%	19%	3%
Required to work overtime	7%	9%	15%	13%	16%	5%	8%
Unpredictable hours	13%	9%	13%	10%	10%	14%	10%
Lack of flexibility in schedule	14%	9%	14%	10%	10%	7%	3%
Poor or unsafe working conditions	4%	5%	9%	11%	11%	5%	3%

Q9. Which of the following are the top issues or concerns you have with your primary job? You can select up to 5 choices. (n=760)

Statistical significance testing included for the surveyed industries at the 95% confidence interval.



Top Issues or Concerns in Current Job By Region (Top 10)

Statistically Significant Difference

% Top Issues or Concerns (Top 10)	New England	Middle Atlantic	East N Central	West N Central	South Atlantic	East South Central	West South Central	Mountain	Pacific
Pay not keeping up with inflation	42%	31%	42%	25%	34%	52%	38%	39%	31%
Inadequate pay	30%	28%	32%	27%	24%	30%	23%	26%	25%
Employee turnover	24%	15%	28%	27%	26%	19%	28%	23%	21%
Lack of retirement benefits	15%	20%	22%	38%	25%	9%	27%	19%	24%
Stressful working environment	33%	21%	20%	12%	22%	26%	19%	26%	21%
Lack of promotions	30%	19%	22%	21%	18%	19%	22%	22%	22%
Lack of HC benefits	18%	22%	20%	25%	23%	15%	17%	16%	22%
Understaffing	30%	16%	16%	13%	16%	28%	19%	26%	17%
Required to work holidays	6%	19%	13%	10%	19%	19%	20%	14%	19%
Poor treatment by management	18%	12%	13%	8%	14%	13%	19%	7%	12%

Q9. Which of the following are the top issues or concerns you have with your primary job? You can select up to 5 choices. (n=760)

Statistical significance testing included across regions at the 95% confidence interval.



Top Issues or Concerns in Current Job By Region (Bottom 7)

Statistically Significant Difference

% Top Issues or Concerns (Bottom 7)	New England	Middle Atlantic	East N Central	West N Central	South Atlantic	East South Central	West South Central	Mountain	Pacific
Lack of training to advance	18%	8%	12%	13%	14%	13%	12%	16%	15%
Poor treatment by customers	18%	16%	12%	15%	9%	11%	10%	12%	13%
Lack of predictable schedule	12%	10%	11%	15%	11%	9%	10%	10%	16%
Unpredictable hours	3%	12%	14%	6%	9%	11%	15%	14%	10%
Required to work overtime	9%	11%	10%	10%	5%	9%	12%	20%	13%
Lack of flexibility in schedule	9%	7%	10%	4%	7%	13%	14%	20%	10%
Poor or unsafe working conditions	6%	7%	8%	4%	7%	0%	10%	3%	11%



Must Have Benefits (Top 10)

Statistically Significant Difference

% Must Have Benefits (Top 10)	Retail	Food Service/ Restaurant	Construction	Agriculture/ Livestock	Manufacturing	Travel/ Tourism/ Hospitality	Childcare
PTO for vacations	60%	53%	63%	46%	74%	61%	62%
Health insurance coverage	54%	50%	63%	42%	65%	49%	52%
Paid sick leave	51%	49%	48%	45%	60%	50%	58%
Retirement plans	39%	31%	46%	42%	52%	39%	37%
Access to supplementary insurance	37%	38%	42%	41%	48%	31%	43%
Unpaid leave	31%	36%	28%	33%	34%	38%	38%
Professional development	21%	27%	32%	30%	21%	23%	35%
Paid parental leave	27%	24%	24%	36%	26%	18%	32%
Transportation, food, or other allowances	25%	20%	24%	32%	17%	16%	15%
Employee assistance program	26%	16%	20%	26%	22%	9%	23%

Q12. For each of the following benefits, please indicate if it is a must have, nice to have, or not important to you personally? (n=760)

Statistical significance testing included for the surveyed industries at the 95% confidence interval.



Must Have Benefits (Bottom 5)

Statistically Significant Difference

% Must Have Benefits (Bottom 5)	Retail	Food Service/ Restaurant	Construction	Agriculture/ Livestock	Manufacturing	Travel/ Tourism/ Hospitality	Childcare
Equipment, technology, or telecom reimbursements or discounts	19%	16%	24%	27%	24%	15%	13%
Housing	14%	19%	16%	23%	22%	21%	18%
Childcare benefits	24%	14%	14%	20%	20%	13%	32%
Education/tuition reimbursement	20%	13%	15%	25%	17%	9%	23%
Wellness programs	18%	15%	14%	15%	19%	11%	10%



Must Have Benefits By Region (Top 10)

Statistically Significant Difference

% Must Have Benefits (Top 10)	New England	Middle Atlantic	East N Central	West N Central	South Atlantic	East South Central	West South Central	Mountain	Pacific
PTO for vacations	55%	66%	65%	58%	53%	63%	57%	64%	60%
Health insurance coverage	52%	49%	50%	46%	52%	57%	52%	61%	68%
Paid sick leave	52%	52%	47%	50%	49%	57%	42%	59%	58%
Retirement plans	39%	36%	37%	40%	38%	46%	42%	55%	45%
Access to supp. insurance	30%	37%	39%	33%	41%	39%	41%	46%	44%
Unpaid leave	36%	33%	30%	42%	31%	33%	31%	35%	38%
Professional dev.	21%	26%	28%	25%	22%	26%	35%	28%	27%
Paid parental leave	27%	22%	19%	21%	31%	33%	20%	28%	33%
Transportation, food, or other allowances	12%	18%	16%	21%	25%	20%	23%	29%	25%
Employee assistance program	15%	20%	16%	17%	17%	30%	19%	28%	25%

Q12. For each of the following benefits, please indicate if it is a must have, nice to have, or not important to you personally? (n=760)

Statistical significance testing included across regions at the 95% confidence interval.

Must Have Benefits By Region (Bottom 5)

Statistically Significant Difference

% Must Have Benefits (Bottom 5)	New England	Middle Atlantic	East N Central	West N Central	South Atlantic	East South Central	West South Central	Mountain	Pacific
Equipment, technology, or telecom reimbursements or discounts	6%	20%	20%	12%	20%	15%	19%	30%	25%
Housing	9%	17%	18%	23%	19%	22%	17%	26%	17%
Childcare benefits	15%	16%	19%	23%	17%	17%	19%	25%	19%
Education/tuition reimbursement	15%	19%	22%	12%	17%	17%	9%	22%	15%
Wellness programs	12%	18%	14%	12%	18%	13%	10%	22%	13%

Current Benefits Offered By Employer (Top 10)

Statistically Significant Difference

Current Benefits (Top 10)	Retail	Food Service/ Restaurant	Construction	Agriculture/ Livestock	Manufacturing	Travel/ Tourism/ Hospitality	Childcare
Paid time off	46%	37%	67%	43%	73%	50%	50%
Health insurance coverage	48%	28%	57%	39%	67%	39%	23%
Paid sick leave	42%	31%	59%	33%	50%	38%	35%
Retirement plans	36%	20%	40%	36%	52%	19%	18%
Unpaid leave	32%	28%	28%	40%	33%	32%	30%
Access to supplementary insurance	28%	21%	35%	33%	45%	27%	15%
Transportation, food, or other allowances	13%	19%	22%	24%	10%	15%	10%
Professional development	17%	14%	14%	25%	12%	11%	25%
EAP	16%	9%	11%	21%	18%	11%	10%
Wellness programs	17%	6%	10%	10%	16%	13%	10%

Q13. Which of the following benefits does your current employer offer to you? Select all that apply. (n=760)

Statistical significance testing included for the surveyed industries at the 95% confidence interval.

Current Benefits Offered By Employer (Bottom 5)

Statistically Significant Difference

<i>Current Benefits (Bottom 5)</i>	Retail	Food Service/ Restaurant	Construction	Agriculture/ Livestock	Manufacturing	Travel/ Tourism/ Hospitality	Childcare
Paid parental leave	17%	8%	11%	10%	13%	10%	13%
Equipment, technology, or telecom reimbursements	8%	6%	21%	14%	11%	4%	7%
Education/tuition reimbursement	13%	9%	6%	11%	13%	8%	13%
Childcare benefits	8%	5%	10%	13%	4%	4%	33%
Housing	8%	3%	8%	10%	7%	11%	7%



Employer Care and Belonging

Statistically Significant Difference

Total Agree	Retail	Food Service/ Restaurant	Construction	Agriculture/ Livestock	Manufacturing	Travel/ Tourism/ Hospitality	Childcare
My employer cares about my well-being outside of work.	71%	73%	72%	83%	62%	70%	77%
My job gives me a sense of purpose or meaning.	77%	80%	83%	90%	75%	75%	92%
I trust my employer to make decisions that are in the best interest of employees.	82%	77%	79%	86%	69%	72%	83%
I feel a sense of belonging at my workplace.	88%	81%	84%	88%	77%	84%	97%
My employer treats workers fairly.	84%	80%	83%	88%	79%	76%	87%



Advantages of a Small Business

Statistically Significant Difference

<i>Advantages of a Small Business (% Selected)</i>	Retail	Food Service/ Restaurant	Construction	Agriculture/ Livestock	Manufacturing	Travel/ Tourism/ Hospitality	Childcare
Stronger sense of community or team	54%	52%	54%	58%	53%	58%	58%
More personal relationships with management	49%	56%	50%	50%	51%	63%	63%
Feeling more valued or recognized	55%	50%	46%	64%	48%	53%	67%
Easier communication with leadership	49%	56%	43%	59%	52%	58%	52%
Greater flexibility in schedule	49%	43%	41%	50%	36%	48%	52%
Faster decision-making	41%	34%	37%	39%	45%	42%	17%
Less bureaucracy or red tape	33%	39%	34%	33%	33%	42%	25%
Opportunities to take on a variety of different tasks	35%	34%	23%	46%	30%	30%	22%
Potential for quicker advancement	32%	33%	35%	30%	30%	23%	18%
Greater visibility for contributions	28%	21%	30%	32%	26%	27%	25%

Q18. What are the advantages of working for a small business rather than a large corporation? Please choose all that apply. (n=760)

Statistical significance testing included for the surveyed industries at the 95% confidence interval.



Disadvantages of a Small Business

Statistically Significant Difference

<i>Disadvantages of a Small Business (% Selected)</i>	Retail	Food Service/ Restaurant	Construction	Agriculture/ Livestock	Manufacturing	Travel/ Tourism/ Hospitality	Childcare
Lower pay or limited raises	50%	54%	42%	51%	57%	64%	67%
Fewer benefits	50%	54%	40%	53%	44%	60%	62%
Limited advancement opportunities	35%	32%	30%	29%	39%	45%	33%
Overlapping or undefined job responsibilities	22%	31%	31%	34%	40%	41%	28%
Less job security	29%	28%	27%	23%	31%	27%	22%
Fewer resources or tools to do the job	28%	22%	23%	29%	34%	23%	22%
Less formal training or development	20%	28%	28%	29%	29%	26%	17%
Inconsistent or unclear policies	25%	25%	20%	22%	29%	29%	22%
Less structured management or leadership	23%	22%	20%	20%	25%	27%	15%

