WHAT SINGAPORE THINKS, FEELS AND DOES AT WORK

The latest insights into workplace trends across Singapore for 2024

Ipsos

Introduction

This report offers the latest research into the employee experience in Singapore.

It explores topics including:
• Are employees proud to work where they do?
• Would they recommend their employer?
• What attracts them or pushes them out the door?

It also prompts employers to reflect on whether they are meeting these needs and expectations.

About Ipsos

Our global team is made up of business psychologists, consultants, project managers, data scientists and content creators, all using their specialist skills to improve employee experience in organisations across the world.

We use the latest research practice and technology to provide accurate, relevant information to some of the world's biggest brands, alongside trusted advisory to help them turn that information into practical actions with transformative outcomes.

We help our clients manage all aspects of the employee experience. We know what matters most in a partner for employee research, strategy and campaigns – that's why so many choose to partner with us today.

Methodology

About this report

Data from this report comes from research undertaken by Ipsos among a representative sample of 1,000 Singapore employees in December 2023.

Throughout this report this icon is used when making comparisons to global benchmarks. These benchmarks are from a range of multinational employers and panel surveys conducted by Ipsos Karian and Box.

Response breakdown

Gender

49% Man

51% Woman

Age

8% 18–24

32% 25–34

30% 35–44

19% 45–54

10% 55–65

Job role

52% I work in a team and am not a team leader

30% I lead a team

11% I manage people who lead teams

7% I am a senior leader of my organisation

Headline insights

01
Advocacy and pride lag global norms

62%

…are proud to work for their organisation

- Pride and advocacy (57%) are both double digits below global benchmarks (-12pts, -15pts).
- Women and 45–65 year olds are notably less likely to be proud to work for their organisations.

02
Lack of recognition drives talent attrition

44%

…of employees planning to leave in the next year cite lack of recognition as push factor

- Low motivation and seeking career opportunities are also common factors for these 'flight risk' employees.
- Pay and benefits are the leading reason people would consider leaving their job across all demographic groups.
- 29% of employees say they will leave in the next two years, 9pts above the global norm.

03
Pay and benefits are biggest pull towards a new job

65%

…say pay and benefits are among the most important factors when considering a new job[1]

- Two in five chose flexible working opportunities, putting this ahead of career development (30%) and job security (28%).
- Pay and benefits are a more common pull for more junior employees.
- Women are more likely than men to value flexible working.

[1] "Which of the following factors would be the two or three most important when considering a new job?"

04
Workplace culture critical to advocacy

82%

…of employees who feel their workplace culture is supportive would recommend their organisation as a place to work

- Those who describe their workplace culture positively are 41pts more likely to recommend their employer than those who describe it negatively.
- A third of words (32%) used to describe cultures are negative. Cultures that are biased, narrow-minded and feature favouritism have the largest negative impact on advocacy.

05
Mixed views by seniority on employers welcoming feedback

52%

…of non-managers feel their employer welcomes open and honest feedback

- Among senior leaders, this climbs to 80%, suggesting some messages get lost in the management chain.
- 58% of Singapore employees say employers welcome feedback, 5pts above the global norm.
- Those who don't feel their employer welcomes feedback are more likely to describe the culture as 'inefficient', 'biased' and liable to 'favouritism'.[2]

[2] In an equally weighted list of positive and negative words.

Pride and advocacy lag behind global norms

Insights

- Pride and advocacy are fundamental to attract and retain talent.

- In Singapore, 62% of employees feel proud to work for their organisation and 57% would recommend it as a great place to work. Both measures fall below global benchmarks.

- 29% of employees are looking to leave within 2 years, 9pts higher than the global benchmark.
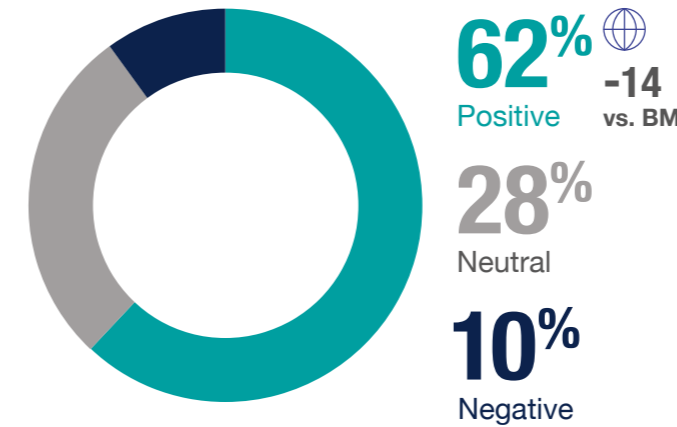
Key population differences

19pt

difference between senior leaders and individual contributors in pride

Women are less proud

59% are proud vs 65% of men

Pride decreases with age
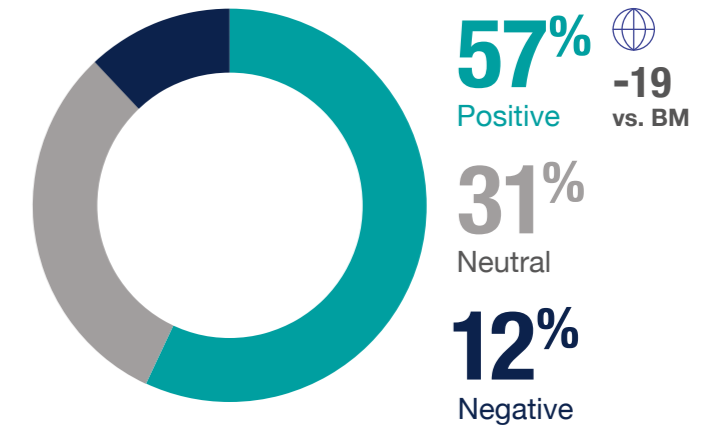
75% 18–24 year olds

53% 55–65 year olds

Implications for employers

- Employees are your biggest advocates when competing for talent; pride and advocacy reflect their experiences and expectations.

- A well-defined, accurate employee value proposition is an opportunity to bring these experiences and expectations into alignment.

- The age and gender gaps on pride speak to potential inequities in the workplace. Consider barriers employees may face based on personal characteristics, and how these might limit their potential.
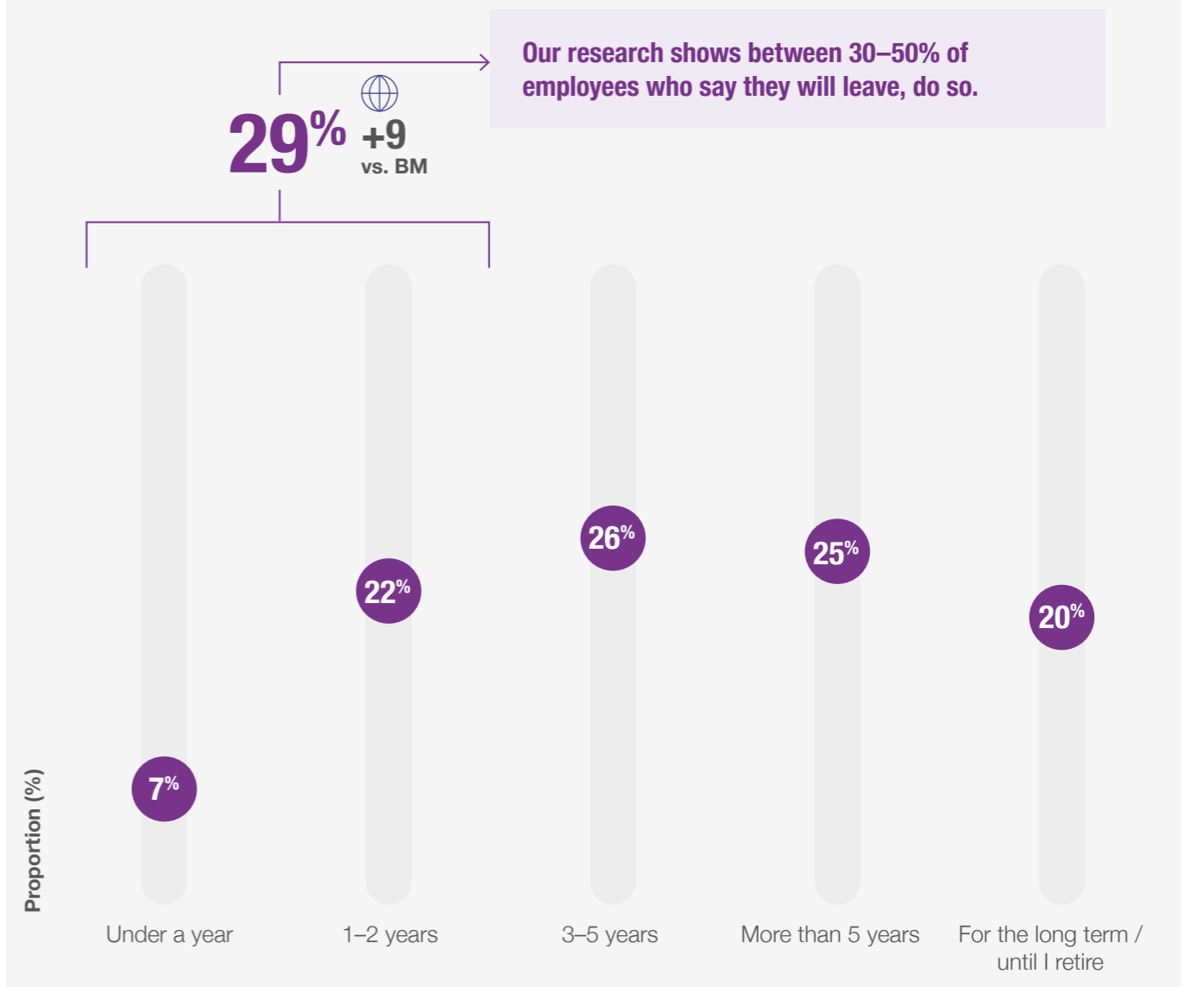
I am proud to work for my organisation

62% -14 vs. BM
Positive

28% Neutral

10% Negative

I would recommend my employer as a great place to work

57% -19 vs. BM
Positive

31% Neutral

12% Negative

I plan to stay working for my employer for:

29% +9 vs. BM

Our research shows between 30–50% of employees who say they will leave, do so.

Proportion (%)

Under a year	1–2 years	3–5 years	More than 5 years	For the long term / until I retire
7%	22%	26%	25%	20%

Lack of career progression drives short-term talent attrition

Insights

- Employees consider leaving an organisation for many reasons, including career opportunities, culture and management.

- However, pay and benefits are the leading reason people would consider leaving their job across all demographic groups in Singapore.

- For employees who plan to leave within a year, recognition, career opportunities and lack of motivation are also particularly strong push factors.

Key population differences

After pay and benefits, workload is the most important push factor for 18–24 year olds	Feeling valued is as important to 55–65 year olds as pay and benefits	For senior leaders and middle managers, career development is the most important push factor after pay

Implications for employers

- It is crucial to address push factors, including pay and benefits, to limit talent flight risk.

- A positive culture can promote a sense of belonging that makes employees reluctant to leave – even for higher pay elsewhere.

- Managers have a powerful influence on motivation, career development and how valued employees feel. Ensure managers prioritise the right behaviours to help support their teams.

What would be the main reasons for you to consider leaving your current employer?

Key: ⚠ Indicates factors that are considerably more important to those planning to leave their employer imminently

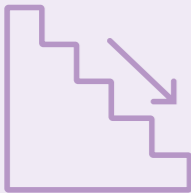|		When planning to leave in under a year	Global norm
Pay / benefits	45%	46%	48%
Not feeling valued, appreciated or recognised	32%	44% ⚠	26%
Workload / work-life balance challenges	32%	29%	21%
Career progression / development opportunities	28%	37% ⚠	30%
Manager behaviours	26%	31%	25%
Not feeling motivated in your job	25%	35% ⚠	22%
Job security / concerns over job stability	22%	18%	23%
Feeling ready for a change	20%	18%	26%
Wanting to broaden experience / career change	20%	28% ⚠	14%
Lack of confidence in the organisation's future	18%	25%	8%
Flexible working policies	16%	13%	22%
Major / too much change (restructures, reorganisation)	14%	12%	9%
Slow and complex processes making it hard to get things done	13%	13%	11%
Retirement	12%	4%	15%

Pay, flexibility and career opportunities are top pull factors for new jobs

Insights

- Two thirds (65%) cite pay and benefits as one of the most important factors when considering a new job.
- Flexible working opportunities is also a top consideration, more so than career development or job security.
- The most important factors for attraction relate to individual experience rather than an organisation's broader vision or ethos.

Key population differences

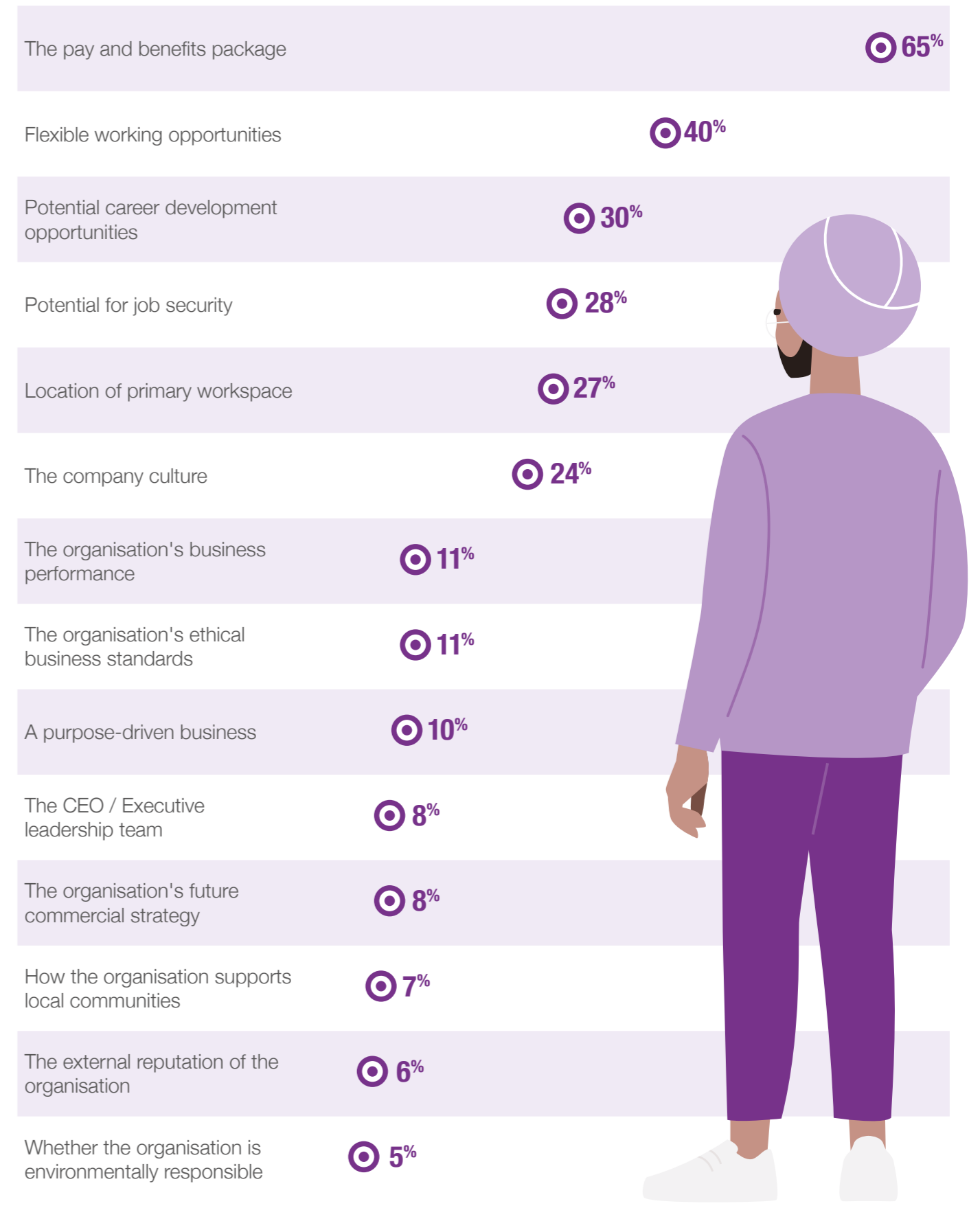| The importance given to career development opportunities diminishes with increased age	Flexible working is a more important factor for women in comparison to men (46% vs 33%)	Pay and benefits is less important the more senior you are (44% for senior managers vs 70% for non-managerial employees)

Implications for employers

- Flexible working is seen as a key work benefit rather than 'unusual' or 'uncommon'.
- Ways of working must reflect this shift in attitude while managing the impact on innovation, decision-making and career development.[1]
- Demotivation is a common reason to leave an organisation in the short term (see pg. 9).
- Although vision and ethos are not top pull factors, they can be critical for motivating and retaining new starters and should be clearly set out during recruitment.

[1] Making the Case for the Office

Which of the following factors would be the two or three most important when considering a new job?

Key: ⊙ Proportion of employees selecting option (%)

The pay and benefits package	⊙ 65%
Flexible working opportunities	⊙ 40%
Potential career development opportunities	⊙ 30%
Potential for job security	⊙ 28%
Location of primary workspace	⊙ 27%
The company culture	⊙ 24%
The organisation's business performance	⊙ 11%
The organisation's ethical business standards	⊙ 11%
A purpose-driven business	⊙ 10%
The CEO / Executive leadership team	⊙ 8%
The organisation's future commercial strategy	⊙ 8%
How the organisation supports local communities	⊙ 7%
The external reputation of the organisation	⊙ 6%
Whether the organisation is environmentally responsible	⊙ 5%

Friendly, supportive and trustworthy cultures drive advocacy

Insights

- Employees in Singapore are more likely to describe organisational culture positively – most often 'friendly' and 'respectful'.

- 'Healthy work-life balance', 'supportive', 'caring' and 'trustworthy' are also popular terms.

- Unsurprisingly, advocacy is much higher for those who chose mostly positive culture words (71%) than those who chose mostly negative words (30%).

- Cultures described as biased, narrow minded or featuring favouritism, have the lowest advocacy.

Key population differences

Long hours is mentioned most by 18-24 year olds

'Inefficient' is driven by employees looking to leave in the next year

The extent employees cite their experience as friendly and respectful increases with seniority
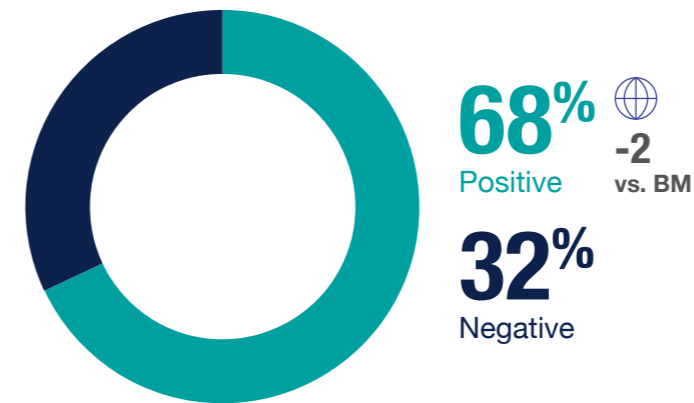
Implications for employers

- Despite the influence of pay and benefits, organisational cultures can win hearts and minds.

- Fostering a more innovative and creative culture could promote greater advocacy alongside broader business developments.

- In many organisations demographic groups and business functions develop their own subcultures. Ensure that these complement the overarching culture and values rather than creating tension or silos.

Culture words

Experience of workplace culture in Singapore

68% Positive

-2 vs. BM

32% Negative

71% employer advocacy for those who report a **mostly positive cultural experience**

30% employer advocacy for those who report a **mostly negative cultural experience**

% selected	Global norms		Advocacy when selected
Positive words			
27%	37%	Friendly	75%
25%	28%	Respectful	74%
24%	20%	Healthy work-life balance	70%
22%	25%	Supportive	82%
19%	23%	Always looking to improve	69%
19%	13%	Trustworthy	77%
18%	19%	Learning / developing	73%
18%	26%	Customer / client focused	60%
18%	33%	Collaboration	72%
18%	19%	Taking responsibility	67%
Negative words			
17%	21%	Long hours	40%
14%	16%	Inefficient	32%
12%	14%	Political	36%
10%	11%	Favouritism	25%
10%	10%	Controlling	44%
10%	13%	Hierarchical	33%
10%	5%	Biased	21%
9%	5%	Narrow minded	28%
9%	13%	Blindly following processes	34%
8%	20%	Bureaucratic	37%

Key:
cultural factors with greatest **positive impact** on advocacy

Key:
cultural factors with greatest **negative impact** on advocacy

Employers who are seen to welcome feedback have more engaged employees

Insights

- 58% believe their organisation welcomes open and honest feedback.

- Pride and advocacy are much higher among this population (+57pts and +60pts respectively).

- They are also more likely to say their employer is 'respectful', 'supportive' and 'friendly'.

- When people don't feel their employer is open to feedback, they are more likely to describe the culture as 'inefficient', 'biased' and liable to 'favouritism'.[2]

Key population differences

80%
of senior leaders feel their organisation welcomes feedback...

...but just 52%
of non-managerial employees feel the same

Men are 10pts
more confident that their employer welcomes feedback than women

Implications for employers

- Given the gap between senior leaders and non-managers, consider how much senior leaders truly hear about what is happening across their organisation and in their teams. Are important messages being lost in the management chain?

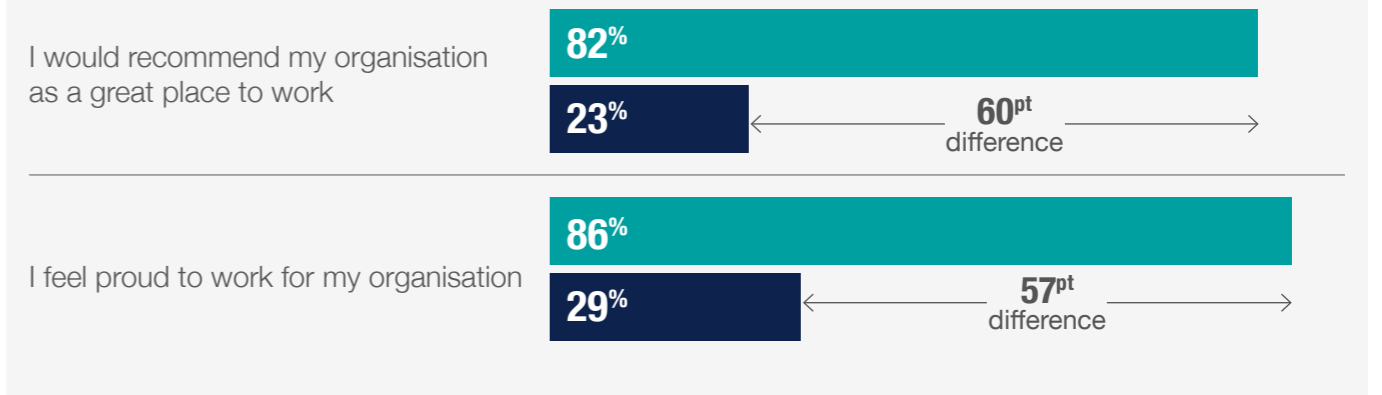[2] In an equally weighted list of positive and negative words.

I feel my organisation welcomes open and honest feedback on them as an employer

Key: ■ Positive ■ Neutral ■ Negative

58% 🌐 +5 vs. BM	27%	15%

Impact on advocacy and pride when org welcomes feedback vs when it doesn't

Key: ■ Score when positive ■ Score when not positive

I would recommend my organisation as a great place to work
- 82%
- 23% — 60pt difference

I feel proud to work for my organisation
- 86%
- 29% — 57pt difference

Impact on culture words most chosen when employer welcomes feedback vs when it doesn't

	Don't welcome feedback	Gap	Do welcome feedback
Things those who believe their employer welcomes feedback are more likely to say			
Respectful	12%	+22	34%
Supportive	9%	+22	31%
Friendly	14%	+21	36%
Trustworthy	9%	+17	26%
Integrity	8%	+13	21%
Things those who believe their employer does not welcome feedback are more likely to say			
Inefficient	23%	-15	7%
Biased	18%	-14	3%
Favouritism	18%	-13	5%
Demoralised	15%	-12	3%
Blindly following processes	16%	-12	4%

For more information reach out to

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