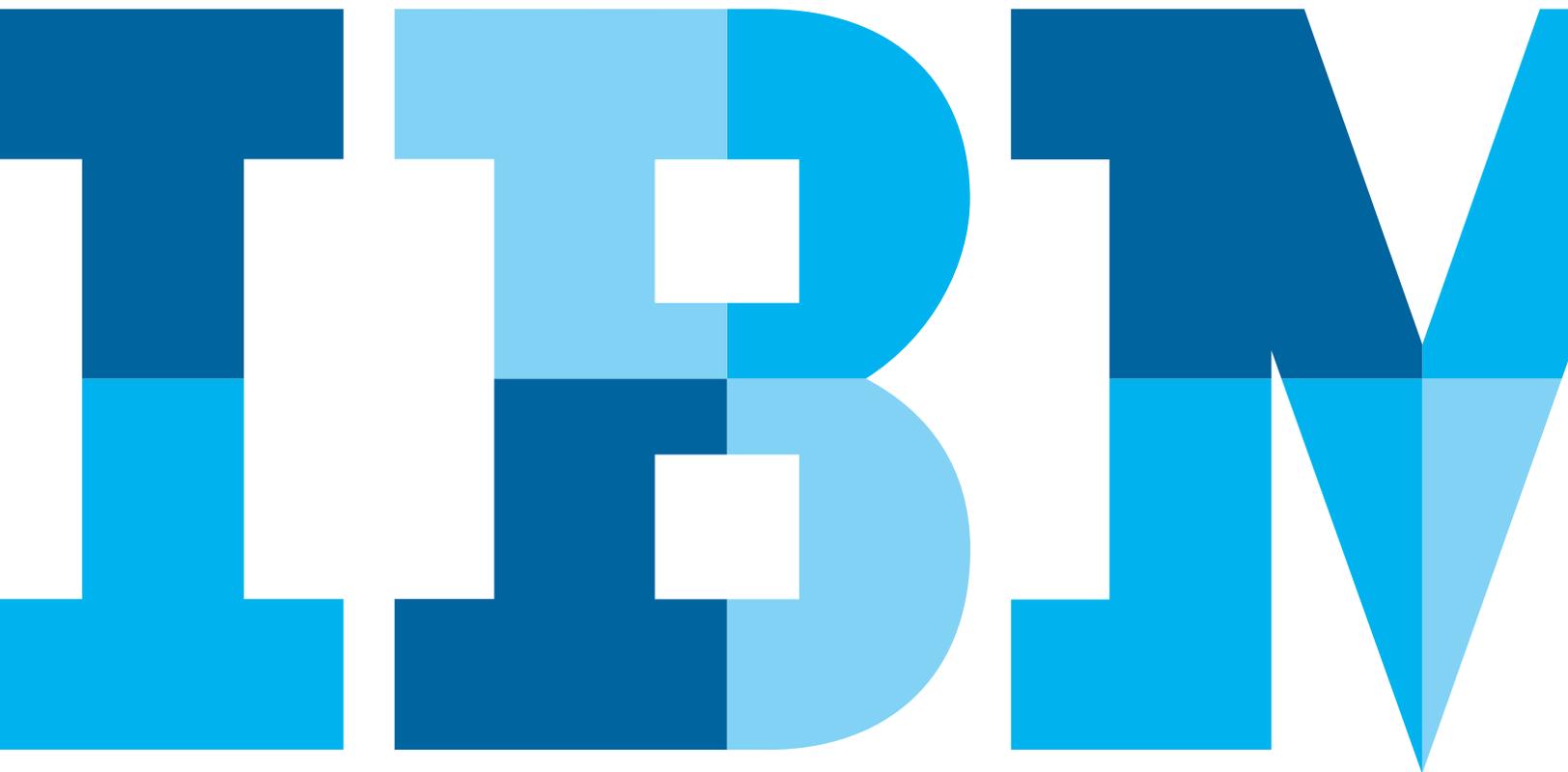


Inspire me, respect me, reward me

The advice for Chief Executive Officers from their employees



Leadership advice for Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) has traditionally taken the “how I made it” approach. Take a look at the top selling leadership books on Amazon and you will find dozens from CEOs who believe their way is the best way. We have purposefully taken a different approach to the discussion of leadership. This is not a story of one person, and it does not offer wisdom from up high. This research into leadership has been “crowd-sourced.”

We are accessing the wisdom of the crowd to get their take on leadership and organizational success. Our crowd consists of more than 50,000 employees from 22 countries around the world.¹ These economies account for almost 80 percent of the world’s gross domestic product, and the participating employees work in virtually every industry and type of job, from truck drivers to tax accountants.

We asked the employee crowd what they most wanted from their organization’s top leader and then explored how leaders who provide these “wants” become more successful in the process. This research clearly demonstrates that giving employees what they want makes bottom-line business sense.

Our research revealed that employees have nine “wants,” which can be grouped into three clusters (see *Figure 1*).

Inspire

Employees want leaders who can deal with the challenges the organization faces, set a clear direction, and are credible, honest and truthful when it comes to business.

Globally speaking, the majority of employees agree that their leaders do have the ability to deal with the organization’s challenges. The bad news is that it is a slim majority at just 62 percent.

Respect

Employees want to work for grateful leaders who appreciate the contributions that employees make. They want top leaders who are available, considerate of their employees, willing to listen to their points of view and who are fair, objective, impartial, and just in their implementation of human resource policies. Here again there is room for improvement, as just 42 percent of employees around the world agree that their leaders treat them fairly.

Reward

Employees want to work for leaders who provide “proper” compensation for the efforts they extend, who can help them develop their skills to grow their careers, and who create confidence about a secure future – both for the organization itself and for individual employees. Without this, employees are much less likely to be engaged and much more likely to want to leave. We found that 55 percent of employees globally, who could not see opportunities for advancement at their current company, had intentions to leave.



Figure 1: Three clusters of nine wants

While it is interesting to look at what our crowd of employees wants, does it really provide a leadership framework for business success? We looked at organizations with leaders who fulfil their employees' wants and discovered:

- Employee engagement levels more than three times higher than for organizations whose leaders do not provide employees with what they want.
- Four times the level of employee confidence in the performance of the organization (which is a valid proxy for actual organizational performance).
- Significantly higher customer satisfaction scores (measured via the American Customer Satisfaction Index).
- Almost three times higher Return On Assets (ROA).
- Significantly better three-year Total Shareholder Return (TSR).

This research clearly demonstrates that employees are an amazing resource for insights to help you get it right. The keys to success – the answer to the question of how best to lead your employees and optimize your organization's performance – are right there. You just have to listen to the crowd.

For more information

To learn how to build a smarter workforce, visit:
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¹ Kenexa WorkTrends Survey. 2012. In its current form, WorkTrends is a multi-topic survey completed online by a sample of employees representative of a country’s working population in terms of industry mix, job type, gender, age and other key organizational and demographic variables. In most countries, survey takers must be adults who work full-time for an organization of 100 employees or more; this threshold drops to 25 employees or more in countries with smaller economies or hard-to-reach populations. The survey has over 200 items that cover a wide range of workplace issues, including senior leader and direct manager effectiveness, recognition, growth and development, employee engagement, customer orientation, quality emphasis, innovation, corporate social responsibility, workplace safety, work stress and performance confidence. In 2012, over 33,000 employees were surveyed, representing 28 countries.



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