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Workplace Attitudes 2010

Positive Managers, Positive Organizations (Despite Everything)

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Introduction

The success of companies large and small across the North American continent lies in the attitudes and behaviors of the men and women that work for them. What do these North Americans think about their work and the organizations they work for? To address this question, CCL maintains an ongoing survey of managerial attitudes, to which we invite people from around the world to participate to provide us with their perspectives.

This report looks at both the attitudes reflecting how North American managers and other professionals are thinking about their work, and how they see the dynamics in their own organization. We do this because **it is important to understand attitudes of employees at all levels of an organization because those attitudes affect organizational performance** – and with the difficult economy, organizations need to take advantage of every opportunity to improve corporate performance. For example, organizational commitment, organizational support, and job satisfaction are related to decreased absenteeism, lower turnover, and better job performance – all of which are issues critical to the organization's bottom line. Organizations benefit by understanding employee attitudes.

Overall, we are seeing that American managers and other professionals report being highly engaged in their work and see their organizations as a place providing support for good performance. In light of our recent economic and environmental struggles, this is good news. The voices of 1,544 respondents tell us that Americans see the workplace positively. This is not to say that employees or managers have a Pollyanna-type view of organizational life. They noted plenty of problems especially with the way organizations manage politics and the levels of work facing each individual. However, this does suggest that **our managerial and professional workforce finds meaning in work and is motivated to take part in organizational life** – both of which help organizations to be successful and can provide a competitive advantage.



Executive Summary

The purpose of the World Leadership Survey (WLS) is to provide a window into the internal world of the employee – at every level within the organization. This view of the employee experience will help organizations understand what the employee is experiencing, both with regard to feelings of motivation, commitment, and satisfaction, and with regard to evaluations of the organization as a whole. Organizations can use this information as a benchmark, and to track trends over time that may affect them.

The sample for this report (January 2009 through June 2010), shows that CCL's **U.S. and Canadian respondents are mostly happy and intrinsically motivated workers**. Respondents in this sample are generally satisfied, committed to their organizations and plan to stay put in their current jobs. At every level surveyed, they feel supported by their organization and by their direct supervisor. They continue to see high levels of political behavior within their organization, though people at higher levels say they see less of it than do people at lower levels. They believe that their organizations are economically stable. There are minor differences in employees' attitudes depending on gender and age. However, **the biggest differentiator in how people perceive their organization appears to be their level within that organization**. This makes sense given that the level of responsibility and power are likely to increase as one moves up the ranks, and those differences are likely to affect one's experience of the organization. People in management, particularly in senior management positions, are likely to be more invested than individuals lower in the organization, and thus are likely to have different perceptions of how the organization is doing.

Summary of Findings

In the past 18 months (January 2009 through June 2010), people at work have been about as upbeat as they were in the previous year (2008), despite all of the ups and downs we have collectively experienced from the financial world and the global economy.

- Respondents report feeling committed to their organization – and commitment has not declined since 2008.
- Respondents report higher levels of motivation associated with productivity, engagement, and innovation. We find that people at higher levels in the organization appear to like their work more than do people at lower levels in the organization, as do older people.
- More than 90% of respondents reported working at least 40 hours a week. People in management roles within the organization are more likely to work more hours than are people not in management, as are men (compared with women). People of different generations (e.g., Baby Boomers or Generation X) do not work different numbers of hours when compared with people at their same level in the organization.
- Job satisfaction is high, and has not declined since 2008.
- Pay satisfaction is neutral to mildly positive, and has not changed since 2008.
- Respondents report feeling generally supported by their organization and supervisor, which has not changed since 2008. Consistent with the result about work-family support from the organization, people at higher levels report feeling more supported by their organization than do people at lower levels.
- Respondents may be happy, but it doesn't mean they don't feel as if they are overloaded at work, and more than half of respondents report problems with work-life balance and role overload (women more than men).
- Respondents continue to report high levels of political behavior in organizations, unchanged since 2008. People at higher levels in the organization continue to report less political behavior than do people at lower levels of the organization.
- Respondents today are about as positive about their organization's economic stability as they were in 2008. Interestingly, perceptions of job stability have not changed since 2008 either.
- Probably not surprisingly, intention to turnover has declined slightly since 2008.



Report Methodology and Sample

The World Leadership Survey has continued to collect data online in English since its inception in March 2008, and began collecting data in twelve additional languages in March 2009. **Participants in the research come through partner organizations, interested individuals, and enrollment in CCL programs.** Participants fill out a survey online that is hosted by Clear Picture Corporation and takes them approximately 20 minutes. In thanks for their participation, participants receive a free CCL Guidebook to download immediately upon completion of the survey. Questions about the survey are sent to the World Leadership Survey e-mail account at WorldLeadershipSurvey@ccl.org. The sample for this report was collected from January 2009 through June 2010. This sample includes:

- 1,544 respondents from the United States and Canada. (respondents from other regions will be included in separate reports).
- 74% of respondents had enrolled in a CCL program.
- Both public and private organizations from more than 50 industries.
- Respondents' companies ranged from very small (1 to 9 employees) to very large (10,000 or more employees) with the vast majority (79%) coming from companies with at least 100 employees.

- 49% male.
- 82% white.
 - > “Non-white” includes approximately 7% Black, 2% Asian, and 8% Other (Hispanic, Multiracial, Other)
- 98% between the ages of 28 and 63 (Gen X and Baby Boomers¹).
- Most are managers or professionals: 6% of the sample indicating that they are at the top (C-level), 30% describing themselves as an executive, 34% upper management, and 30% professional.

(See Appendix for a more complete description of demographics.)

It is important to note that this is not a random sample of North American managers or employees, and therefore it is likely not fully representative of the working population. **Our sample consists of people who are employed, are currently proactively working on their own development, and who were willing to take 20 minutes of their own time to participate.** Though it is not a representative sample, it is a good sample of managers and professionals at higher levels in organizations who have maintained their employment throughout the recession and are engaged in improving their work skills.

Employee Attitudes

Respondents report feeling committed to their organization. Nearly three-quarters (74%) of respondents discuss their organizations with others, and 75% say that the organization has a great deal of personal meaning to them (see Figure 1). Almost two-thirds (64%) indicate they would be happy to spend the rest of their

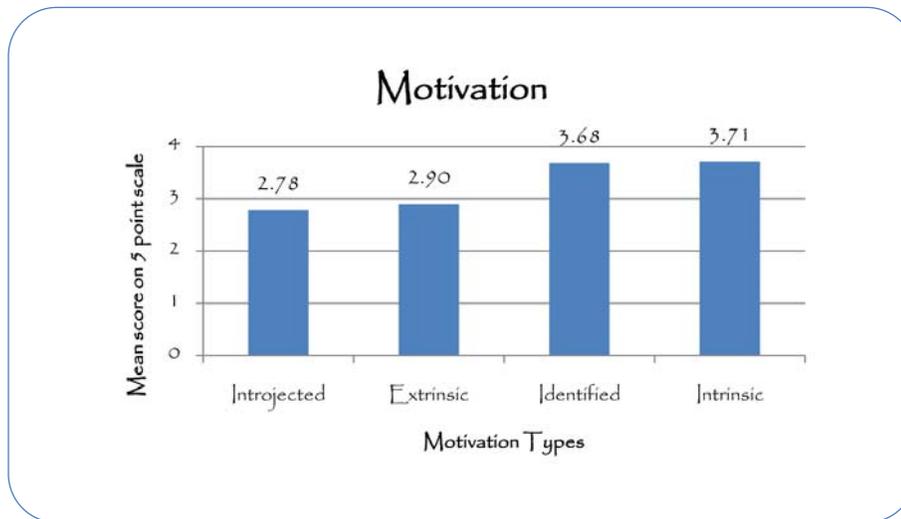
Figure 1



¹ Millennials (born 1982-2000); Gen X'ers (born 1964-1981); Late Boomers (born 1955-1963); Early Boomers (1946-1954); and Silents (born 1930-1945).

careers with their current organization. **People at higher levels in the organization continue to express significantly greater commitment to their organization than do people at lower levels.** Though the significance is marginal, women express less commitment to their organizations than do men, and Gen Xers express less commitment to their organizations than do Boomers (either Early or Late), at all levels within the organization. These findings are similar to those from 2008, indicating that organizational commitment did not decline substantially in 2009 and the first half of 2010.

Figure 2



Given the level of commitment respondents have, it isn't surprising that the respondents also reported high levels of motivation – at least of the types of motivation² that result in productive employees (see Figure 2)! Overall, respondents report higher levels of intrinsic and identified motivation than extrinsic and introjected motivation. This should please employers, managers, and bosses because **intrinsic motivation (finding joy in your work) and identified motivation (feeling driven to achieve goals) are closely associated with productivity, engagement, and innovation.** We also find that people at higher levels in the organization appear to like their work more than do people at lower levels in the organization.

Similarly, older people (Early Boomers) report greater joy in their work than do younger people (Late Boomers and Xers). Why? You would think this is because older people are at higher levels in the organization (as they are in this sample), but that isn't the answer. **Older people express more joy in their work than their level peers who are younger regardless of their level in the organization.** So why are they more intrinsically motivated? While some people would suggest that this is a result of a defect in younger generations, the most likely explanation is a simple one: Older people are on average happier than are younger middle-aged people³.

People higher in the organization (especially C-level executives and other top executives) expressed greater identified motivation (feeling driven to achieve goals) than did people lower in the organization (middle managers and professionals), women expressed more of it than did men, and non-whites expressed more of it than did whites.

² Intrinsic motivation is defined as the extent to which one finds joy in work. Extrinsic motivation is defined as the extent to which one is motivated by money and other tangible rewards. Identified motivation is defined as the extent to which one is motivated to achieve goals. Introjected motivation is defined as the extent to which one is motivated to protect his or her reputation.

³ Stonea, A.A., Schwartz, J.E., Joan E. Brodericka, J.E., and Deaton, A. (2010) *A snapshot of the age distribution of psychological well-being in the United States*. Published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, published ahead of print May 17, 2010.

Interestingly, **professionals expressed greater extrinsic motivation than did C-level executives.** Though we would think this is because of the breathtaking disparity between the compensation packages of professionals and top executives resulting in professionals believing they should be compensated more proportionately, this is not likely to be the explanation because professionals did not express greater dissatisfaction with their pay than did people higher in the organization.

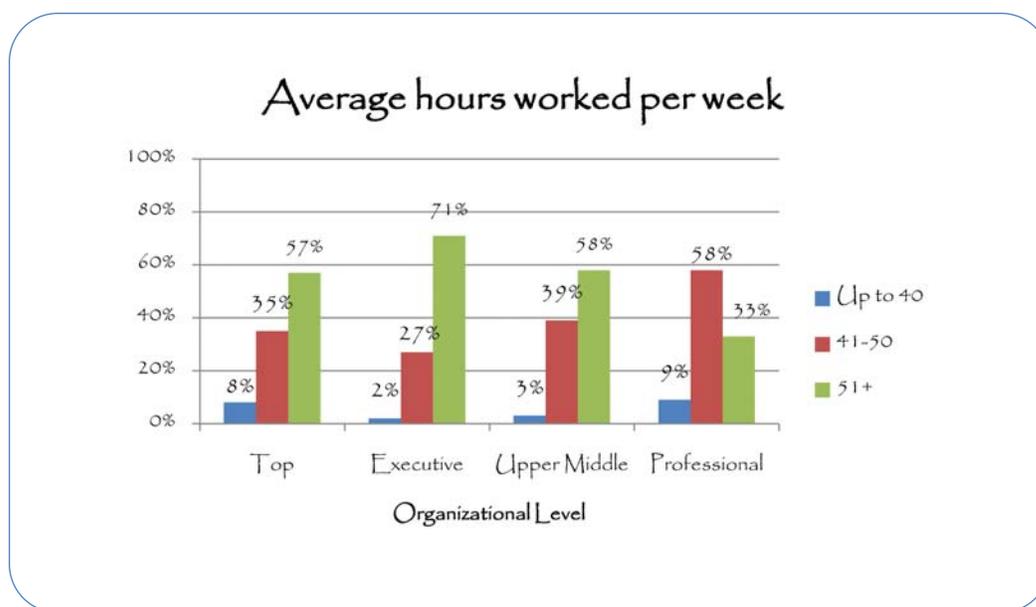
Hours Worked and Job Satisfaction

Respondents' expressed commitment and motivation is clearly matched by their work hours; the vast majority of the sample work more than 40 hours a week. This is true of 92% of those at top levels, 98% of executives, 97% of those in upper middle management positions, and 91% of those in professional roles. Not surprisingly, people in management positions report working more hours than do professionals in non-management roles. On average, top executives report working 10 hours in a day, executives report working 10.3, upper middle managers report working 10.02, and professionals report working 9.58. The vast majority of our sample report working more than 40 hours per week. Figure 3 also demonstrates that those in management roles are much more likely to work more than 50-hours per week than those in professional roles (see Figure 3).

Though nearly all respondents reported working more than 40 hours, **men report working more hours than women – regardless of level in the organization or generation.** More than half of men (58%) reported typically working more than 50 hour weeks, while 15% fewer women (43%) reported doing so. This result is consistent with results reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics⁴.

When compared with level-peers, all generations report working about the same number of hours.

Figure 3



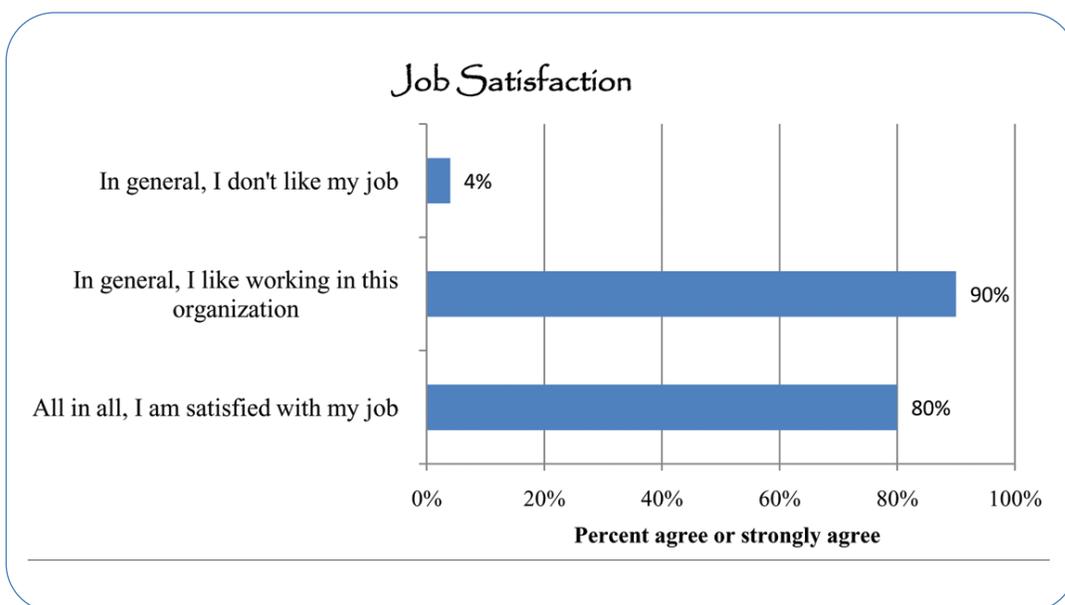
⁴ <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/atus.nr0.htm>



In addition to being committed to their organization and motivated to work hard, respondents also actually like their jobs: 80% report satisfaction with their jobs and 90% like working for their organization (see Figure 4). For a small percentage of people, they may like the organization that they are in, but not their current position, which could explain the slight discrepancy between the two items. People at the top of the organization express greater job satisfaction than do middle managers and professionals. These findings are similar to the WLS results from 2008, indicating that job satisfaction did not decline substantially in 2009 and 2010.

With regard to satisfaction with pay as part of job satisfaction, respondents were neutral to slightly positive about their pay (3.4 on a 5 point scale, with 5 being the highest possible rating.) Interestingly, how satisfied respondents were with their pay was not a result of their level in their organization. In fact, men and

Figure 4



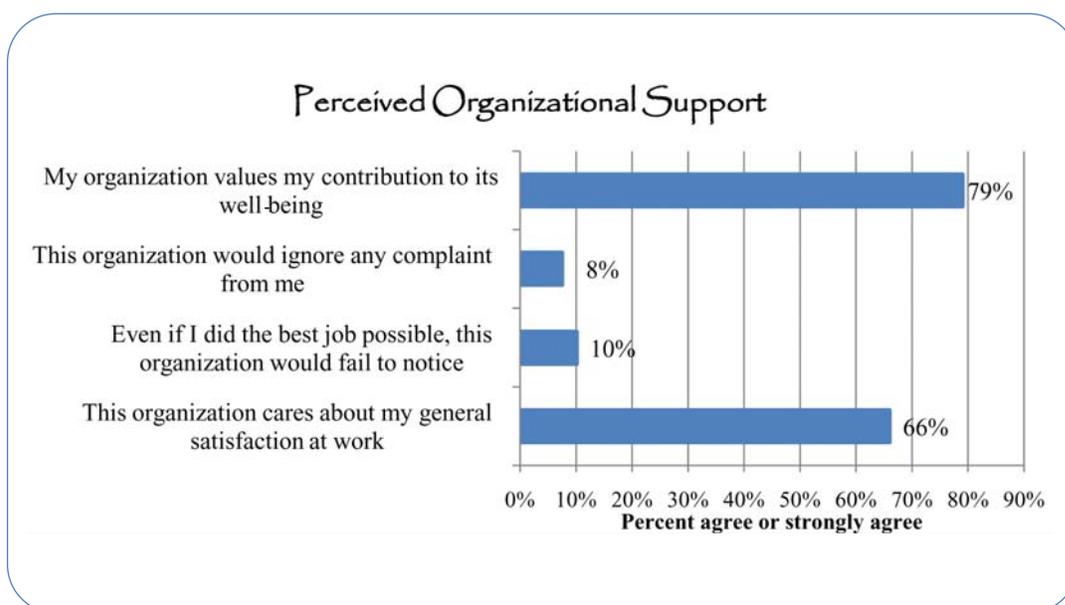
women and people at all levels of the organization were equally satisfied – or dissatisfied – with their pay. What was relevant was generation. **Gen Xers were less satisfied with their pay than were Boomers** (both Early and Late). Respondents have about the same opinion about their pay now as they did in 2008.

Organization and Supervisor Support

It is likely that part of the reason respondents feel so committed to their organizations, motivated to do their work, and satisfied about their job is because they feel supported by their organization and their supervisors at work. Respondents report feeling generally supported by their organization and supervisor, with more than three quarters (79%) reporting their organizations value their contributions, two thirds (66%) agreeing that their organization cares about their satisfaction, 71% believing that their supervisors take pride in their accomplishments, and 73% believing that their supervisors care about their well-being. Very few respondents feel they are ignored (8%), their efforts are not noticed (10%), their managers aren't concerned about them (10%), or their manager doesn't appreciate their extra effort (16%) (see Figure 5). People at all levels feel equally supported by their supervisors, but people at all levels do not feel equally supported by the organization. How supportive an individual feels their organization is largely depends on their level in the organization. Specifically, people lower in the organization feel less supported than people higher in the organization. **Organizations need to pay attention to making sure that employees at every level feel supported by the organization** because feeling supported by your organization has been shown to be strongly related to increased job satisfaction, positive mood, reduced stress, employee commitment, retention, and performance – all of which contribute to the company's bottom line.

We see very little change in perceived organizational support or perceived supervisor support in comparison with 2008. It is important that organizations continue to support their employees, especially during times of organizational and economic hardship.

Figure 5





Work Family Conflict

Though respondents were generally committed to their organization, they did identify issues that organizations would benefit substantially by addressing: role overload, asking too much, office politics, and strength of the economic position of the organization.

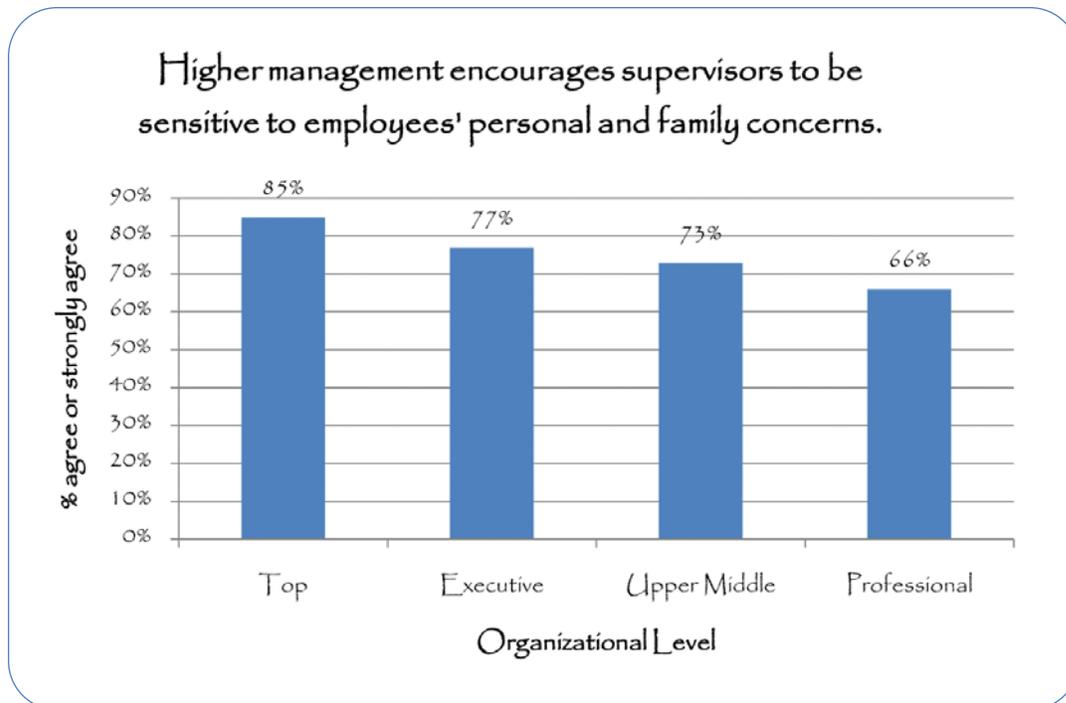
People may be happy, but it doesn't mean they don't feel as if they are doing too much, and people report problems with feeling overloaded. Women on average report feeling more overloaded than do men. For instance, 72% of women agreed or strongly agreed they don't have enough time to get everything done in their job, compared to 60% of men. Interestingly, women higher in organizations do not report feeling more overloaded than do women at lower levels, and women of all generations report feeling roughly equally overloaded. This indicates to us that **women in general feel overloaded, regardless of generation or level.** Interestingly, a recent study by the Families and Work Institute⁵ reported a conflicting finding – that men are now reporting experiencing greater levels of conflict than women are reporting. The times, may in fact, be changing with regard to role overload felt by men and women, and we will continue to monitor this trend in our data.

People of all levels, generations, races, and both sexes, report that they experience work-family conflict. For all groups, ratings of work-family conflict averaged about a “3” on a 5 point scale (with 5 being the highest level), meaning that they experienced some work-family conflict. Of all of the items used to measure work-family conflict, respondents most strongly agreed with the statement “due to work-related duties, I have to make changes to plans for personal time or family activities.” Basically, **organizations are asking too much of their people, especially when it comes to taking them away from pre-planned family or personal time.** Despite the issue with work-family conflict being a real one for nearly everyone, people higher in organi-

⁵ Gallinsky, E., Aumann, K, and Bond, J.T. (2008). Times are Changing: Gender and Generation at Work and at Home. 2008 National Study of the Changing Workforce, Families and Work Institute.

zations express greater confidence in the work-family support employees at their organizations receive from the organization in general and their managers in particular. Those highest in the organization are most likely to agree or strongly agree that upper management is supportive of family and personal concerns (see Figure 6). This may be because they set the policies or have access to greater flexibility than workers at lower levels. It may also be that they are more willing to be pulled away from family or personal time, and therefore feel less conflict when it happens.

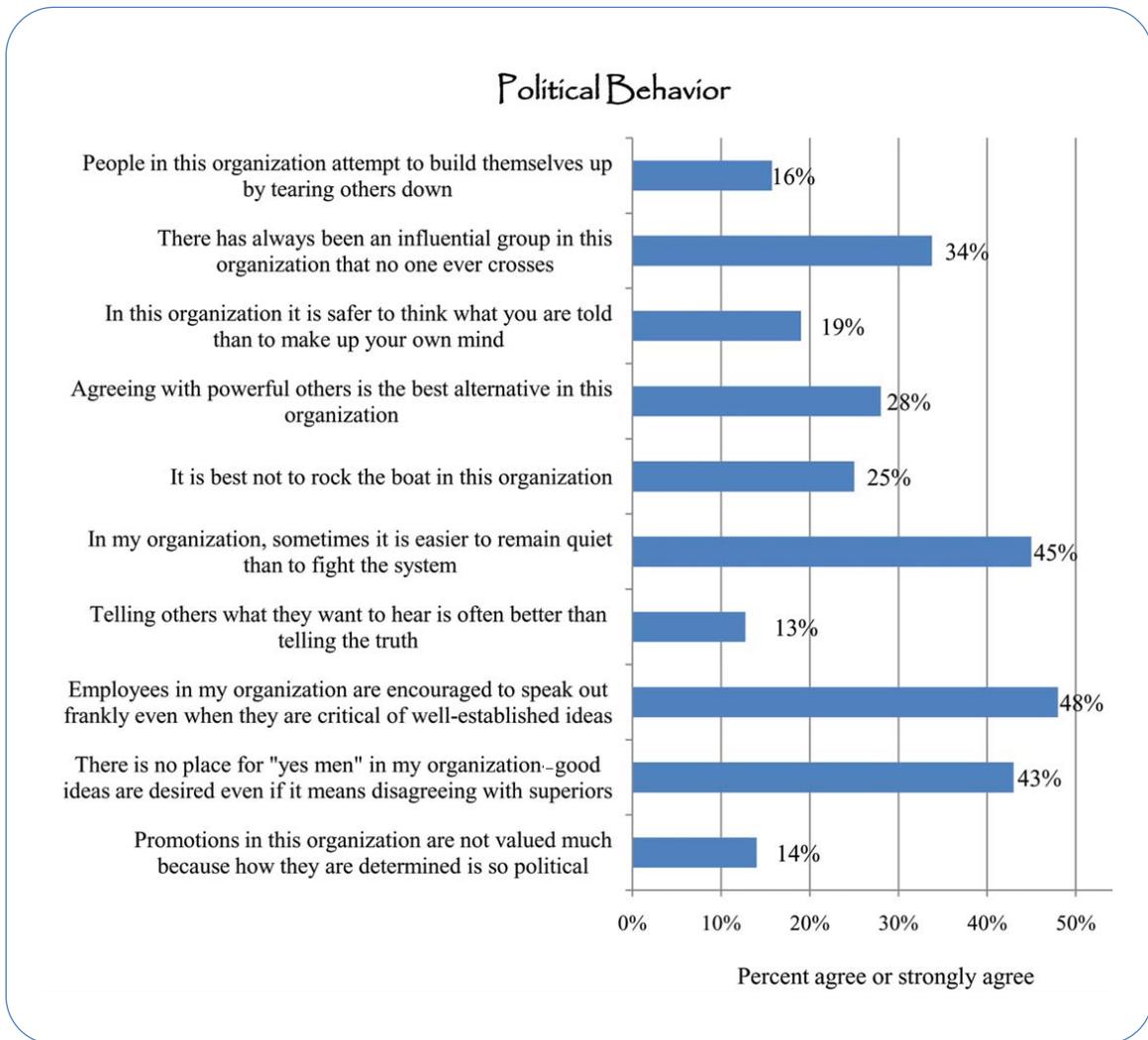
Figure 6



Office Politics

Another area our respondents saw as problematic was the degree to which behavior in the organization is considered political. **Political behavior can be a double-edged sword in organizations. On the one hand it can help expedite decisions and on the other it undermines trust in leadership.** Organizations that are highly political frequently have employees who perceive the workplace as unfair, which often results in lower organizational commitment, less efficiency, increased turnover, and less trust in leadership. According to our respondents, political behavior is clearly prevalent in organizations, and levels have not changed since 2008. For example, **while 45% of respondents believe it is sometimes easier to remain quiet than fight the system, 48% agree that they can speak out frankly** (see Figure 7). Further, there are differences in perceived political behavior depending on organizational level – the higher you are, the less political behavior you perceive. Specifically, those at the Top of the organization (e.g., C-level) tend to perceive less political behavior than those at all other levels, Executives (e.g., VP level) perceive less political behavior than those at the middle management level, and professionals perceive more political behavior than do all higher levels.

Figure 7

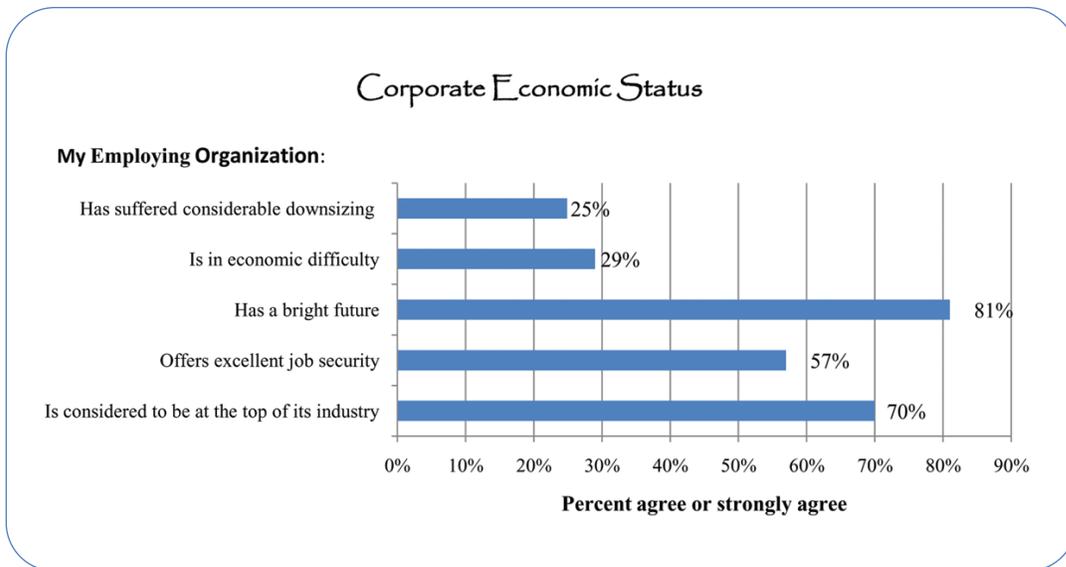


Economic Stability and Turnover

Interestingly, **despite all of the economic issues we have been facing world-wide, respondents are generally positive about their organization's economic stability and health.** More than three-quarters (81%) of the respondents believe their company "has a bright future" (see Figure 8). This is a very positive result because employees who view their organization as economically stable are more committed to their organization, give extra effort in their job, get more satisfaction out of their work, see coworkers as altruistic and conscientious, and more readily identify with their organization – all of which results in a more productive workforce.

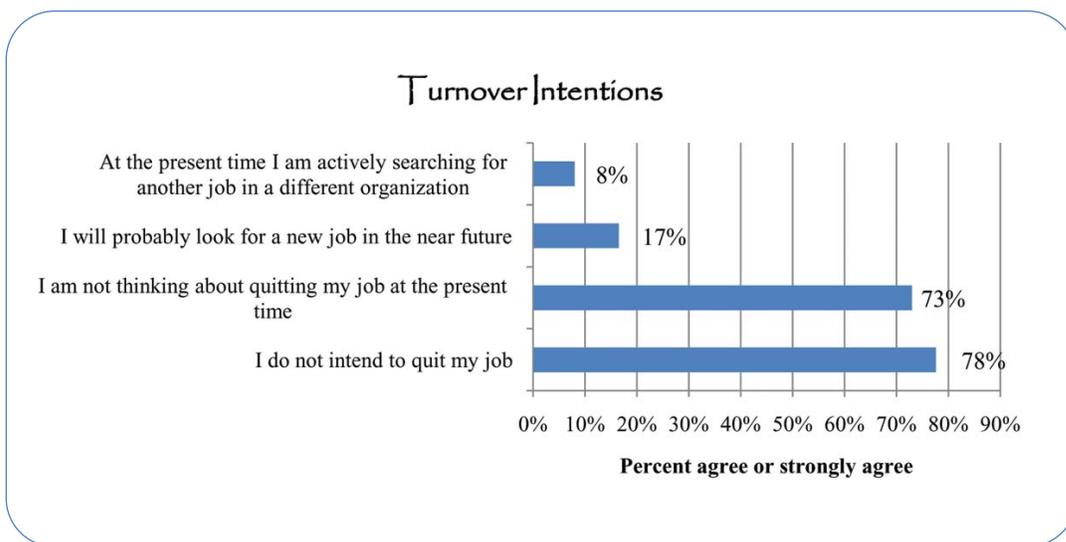
Neither respondents' optimism about their organization, nor their beliefs about their job security have changed substantially since the data collected during 2008, but more respondents do report that their organizations have suffered considerable downsizing or are in economic difficulty than did in 2008.

Figure 8



Given the state of organizational commitment, motivation, job satisfaction, and issues with the organization, what does that mean for turnover? **Despite everything that has happened in the past couple of years, approximately three quarters of respondents say they are *not* thinking about quitting their jobs (73%) or intending to quit their jobs (78%; see Figure 9).** Further, only 8% are actively looking for another job. Not surprisingly, turnover intentions in 2009 and 2010 decreased from the levels reported in 2008. The job market in the past year has been tough, and employees are well aware of this. They may be more willing to remain in their current position for now because they feel their options are limited, even if they are less than satisfied. As the economy and employment rates start to improve in the months and years

Figure 9



to come, we may see the number of people seeking new jobs increase. We see an indication of that trend in the percentage of respondents who agree or strongly agree they will be working with the organization for six months, one year, and five years, with the percentage saying they are likely to stay declining from 91% (6 months) to 84% (1 year) to 56% (5 years). This suggests that while **employees may be willing to tolerate dissatisfaction with their job in the short-term, they may not be so willing to do so in the long-term.**



People at the top of organizations are more likely to say they plan to remain with their organization, while professionals, women, and Gen Xers are slightly more likely than other groups to say they are looking for other opportunities.

Summary

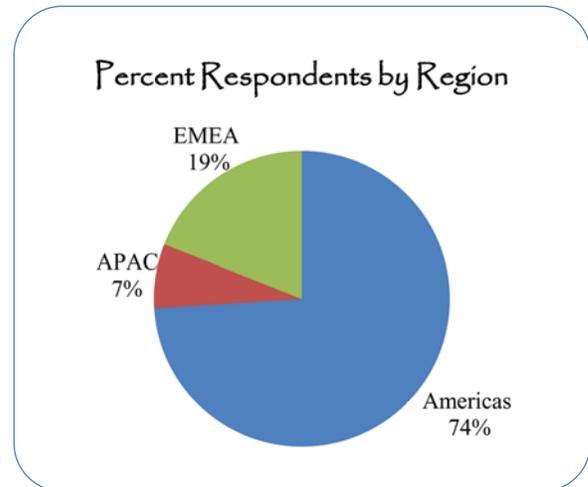
Our data show that our U.S. and Canadian respondents are mostly happy and intrinsically motivated workers. They are **generally satisfied, believe that their organizations are economically stable, are committed to their organizations, and plan to stay put in their current jobs.** At every level, they feel supported by their organization and by their direct supervisor. They continue to see a great deal of political behavior within their organization, though people at higher levels say they see less of it than do people at lower levels. Though there are minor differences in employees' attitudes depending on gender and age, however, the biggest differentiator in how people perceive their organization appears to be their level within that organization. This makes sense given the amount of organizational responsibility and power increase with organizational levels, and those differences are likely to affect the respondent's experience of the organization. People in management, particularly in senior management positions, are likely to be more personally invested in the success of their organization than are individuals lower in the organization, and thus are likely to have different perceptions of how the organization is doing. Our findings are consistent with this premise.

At the same time, there are issues respondents clearly see as problems. To put it bluntly – **during the recession organizations have gotten used to asking too much of their people.** As we all know, it is easier to maintain a top speed in a sprint than in a marathon. While the recession was a sprint, organizations are now asking employees to keep up that speed during the marathon. This is shortsighted on the part of organizations because it results in employees – at every level – being less effective, less committed, and more likely to leave when they get the chance. **Organizations who want the competitive advantage retaining the best talent brings will understand this and will move quickly to reduce the overload their people are feeling, and to provide a workplace where employees can have lives as well as jobs.**

Appendix: Study Sample

Figure 10

Between January 2009 and June 2010, 2,198 people responded to the World Leadership Survey. Of those, the vast majority (74%) were from the Americas. Of the 74% of respondents from the Americas, nearly all (95%) were from the United States and Canada whereas very few (5%) were from Central and South American countries. Since the number of respondents from APAC and EMEA was so low, and the respondents within the Americas were predominantly from the U.S. and Canada, **this report focuses on the U.S. and Canada only.**



Gender

The distribution of men and women was split almost identically, with just over half (51%) of the respondents being women.

Figure 11

Where Respondents Came From

Approximately three quarters of the respondents who completed the WLS were enrolled in a CCL program. As part of the pre-work for their upcoming course, a link was provided to them to inform them of a voluntary opportunity



to complete the survey. The remaining 26% of respondents were not enrolled in CCL programs. They may have found the link to the survey upon visiting the CCL Web site, or it may have been forwarded from a friend or colleague.

There were no differences between these two sub-groups of our sample in terms of gender, or race. One difference between the two sub-samples is that those who did not attend a CCL program tended to be at lower levels (Middle/Professional) than those who did attend a CCL program. Interestingly, those who attended a CCL program tended to be younger (specifically more Gen Xers) than those who did not attend a program.

Figure 12

There were a few small, but statistically significant, differences between those who attended a CCL program and those who did not. Those who did not attend a CCL program were higher in identified motivation and more likely to turnover than those who did not attend a CCL program. Further, those who attended a CCL program reported working more hours on average per week, had higher role overload, and expressed greater work-life conflict. These differences existed even after controlling for demographics such as gender, race, organizational level, and generation.

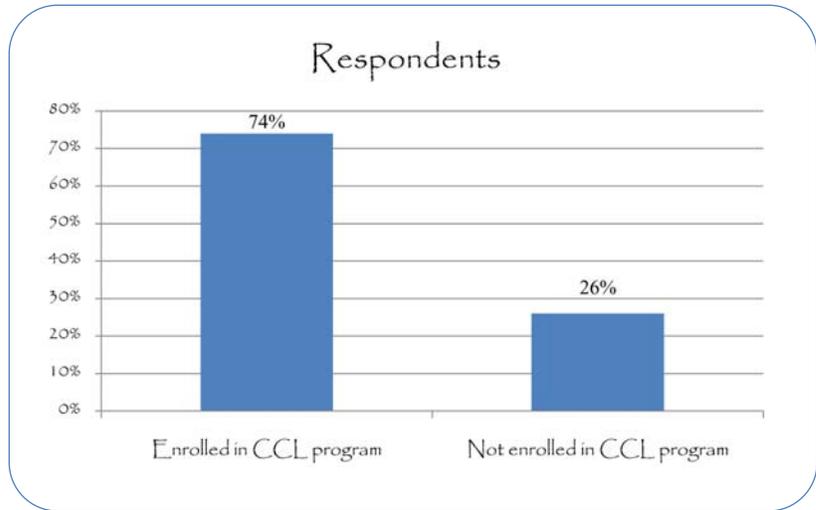


Figure 13

Race

The vast majority (82%) of respondents in this sample were white. Non-white races included Black, Asian, Hispanic, Multiracial and "Other."

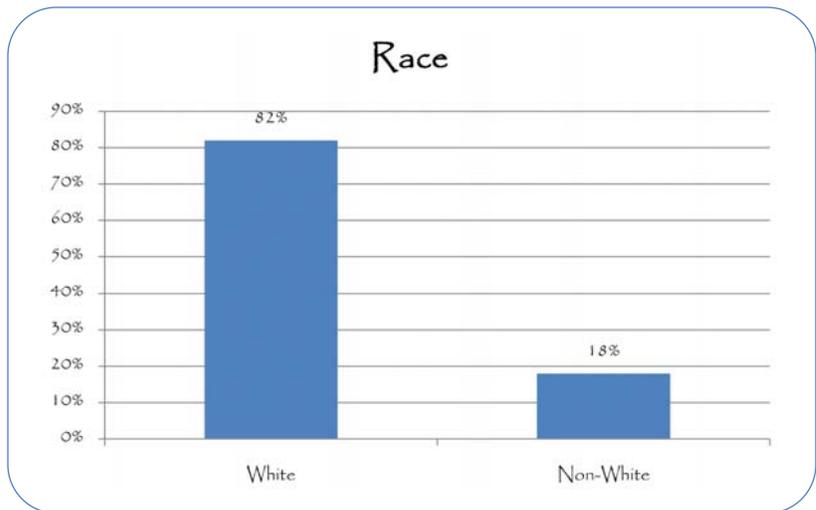
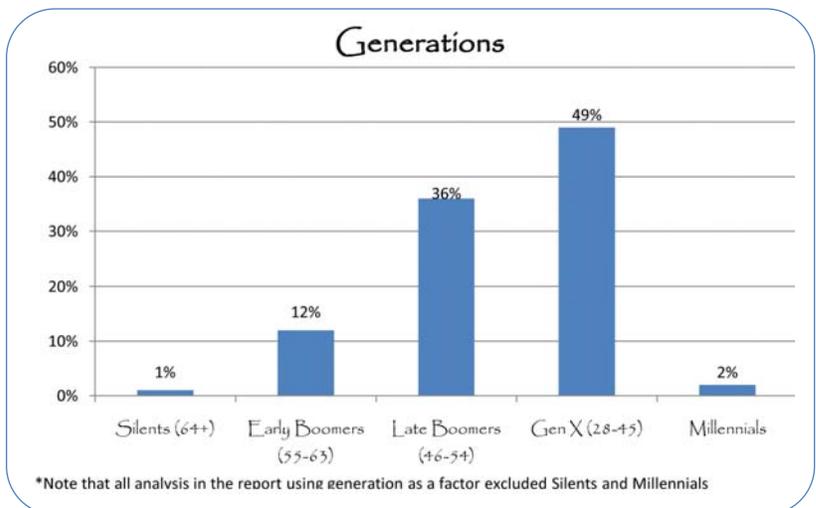


Figure 14

Generations

The average age of respondents was 45. Nearly half (49%) of respondents are Gen Xers (born 1964-1981), and the second most common age group in this sample is Late Boomers (36%, born 1955-1963). This means that 85% of the sample is between the ages of 28 and 54. Only 12% of the sample respondents are Early Boomers (1946-1954), and even fewer are Millennials (2%, born 1982-2000) or Silents (1%, born 1930-1945).



Organizational Level

Figure 15

Looking at organizational level, over half of all respondents (59%) held positions in the Middle/Professional or Upper Middle levels of the organization. Another quarter (27%) of respondents were in Executive Positions (e.g., VP) while only 6% held the top positions in their organizations (e.g., CEO, CFO). A small percentage (5%) identified themselves as hourly employees, or in the first level of their organization. A small percentage (3%) said the question was not relevant to them.

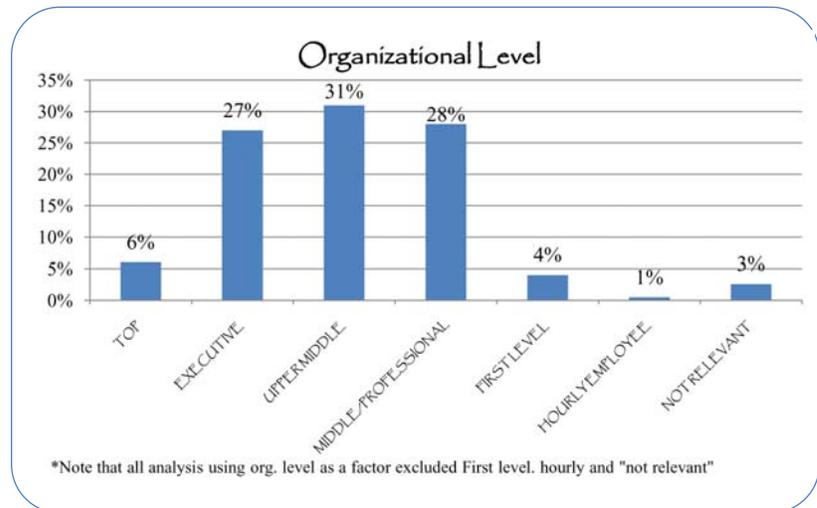
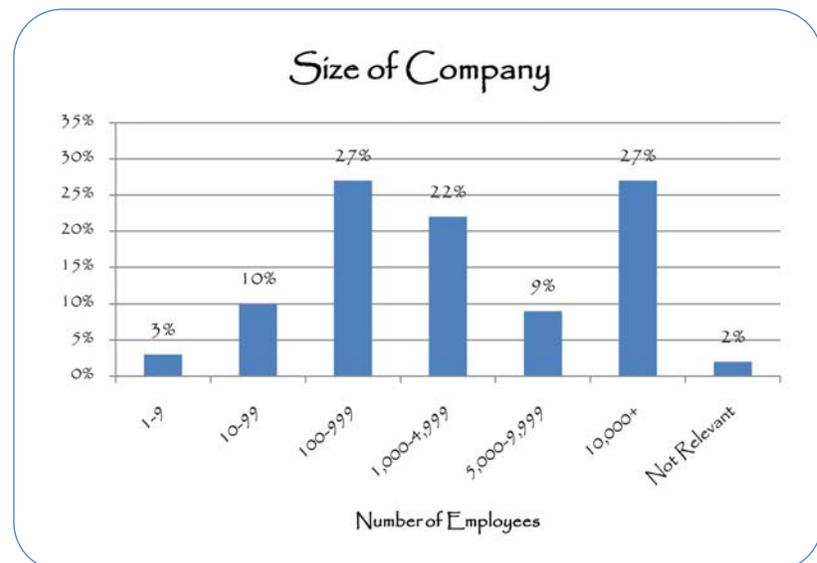


Figure 16

Size of Company

Respondents reported working for companies of all sizes ranging from 1 to 10,000+ employees. Nearly half (49%) of the respondents were employed by medium-large companies ranging from 100-4,999 employees. A sizeable number (27%) of employees came from very large (10,000+) companies.



This report is a result of the combined efforts of the World Leadership Survey Team members: Jennifer J. Deal, Ph.D., Marian Ruderman, Ph.D., Sarah Stawiski, Ph.D., William A. Gentry, Ph.D., Laura Graves, Ph.D., and Todd Weber, Ph.D.

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About CCL

The Center for Creative Leadership (CCL®) is a top-ranked, global provider of executive education that unlocks individual and organizational potential through its exclusive focus on leadership development and research. Founded in 1970 as a nonprofit, educational institution, CCL helps clients worldwide cultivate creative leadership – the capacity to achieve more than imagined by thinking and acting beyond boundaries – through an array of programs, products and other services. Ranked among the world’s top providers of executive education by *BusinessWeek* and the *Financial Times*, CCL is headquartered in Greensboro, NC, with locations in Colorado Springs, CO; San Diego, CA; Brussels, Belgium; Moscow, Russia; Singapore; Pune, India; and Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Its work is supported by more than 450 faculty members and staff.

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