

HeadlineJobs Quality Workplace Index – Second Half Year 2009 Reports

Intention to change jobs increased during improving economy

Front-line and lower level staff lacked recognition and compliments from their supervisors

As the local economy continues to show signs of improvement, the intention to change jobs among employees increased substantially while job satisfaction dropped slightly according to the “**HeadlineJobs Quality Workplace Index – Second Half Year 2009**”, a survey conducted by a local recruitment media outlet – **HeadlineJobs.hk** in association with the **Public Opinion Programme** at **The University of Hong Kong**.

The survey also indicated that the satisfaction level towards ‘career advancement opportunity’ was the lowest among 16 job satisfaction indices while employees’ satisfaction level towards ‘salary’ recorded a drop of 4 percentage points, which is the largest absolute decrease of all the indices. While recognition is a critical factor affecting job satisfaction, many front-line and lower level staff were not receiving compliments on their performance from superiors. This contributes to higher turnover which will eventually adversely affect business development.

The “HeadlineJobs Quality Workplace Index” successfully interviewed 1,000 working members in the second half of 2009 to study and analyse their work situations in five categories. These included: career development, job nature, human relationships, work recognition, remuneration and benefits. It also measured employees’ degree of job satisfaction as well as the key factors that influence job satisfaction and evaluated current trends from employers’ perspectives. In addition, the study examined the relationship between job satisfaction and staff retention.

The upward trend of job satisfaction reversed and the intention to change jobs increased significantly

The upward trend of employees’ job satisfaction over the year reversed course, according to this survey. While recording a 2-percentage-point decrease compared to the first half of the year, 56% of employees interviewed said they

were satisfied with their current jobs. By contrast, employees' job satisfaction as viewed from employers' perspectives registered an increase from 63% to 68%, reflecting a rise from the downward trend that lasted for a year. This again highlights a wider gap in divergent perceptions between employers and employees. In fact, the intention to change jobs as a whole increased from 18% to 22% and as high as 61% of employees, who said they were not satisfied with their current jobs, considered job changes in the next three months.

Employees value having their suggestions respected by companies

There were four areas of focus in the survey that examined the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover:

Respect from their superiors: Companies respect the opinions of staff and accept their suggestions in an appropriate manner.

Work recognition: Performance excellence is complimented and recognised by supervisors.

Staff morale: Team spirit comprises the building blocks to achieve common goals

Company mission: Companies have a clear mission and share with employees its significance and importance

The survey found that employees highly valued that their opinion counted. The data also showed that only 36% of employees found that their opinions would definitely or often be appreciated by their supervisors. 42% of those employees, whose ideas were rarely or never accepted, considered changing jobs in the next three months, whereas only 15% of employees whose opinions were accepted, thought so.

“It isn't a surprise to see employees considering job changes during an improving economy. So enterprises should open more communications channels with their staff to listen to opinions, which can become important reference points for corporate enhancement,” says **Ms. Fanny Chan, CEO of *HeadlineJobs.hk***. “After experiencing the financial tsunami, enterprises should revisit their business operation modes and human resources management strategies. Management should have an open mind to embrace innovative thinking and encourage staff to bring in their creative suggestions. All these initiatives will certainly be substantially beneficial to company development.”

Low-level and front-line staff being recognized less frequently

Management's recognition is always an important factor in job satisfaction to employees. However, only 42% of employees interviewed in the survey said they were recognised or praised by their supervisors in the previous month before the survey period. While 50-54% of management and professional staff received recognition, only 36% of technician and servicing staff, and 38% of supervisor, executive and clerk said that their ideas and performance were recognised. At the same time, the top three job positions contributing to a higher intention to change jobs included those servicing staff, supervisor and executive while the intention to change jobs among management staff was the lowest. This reflects a lack of recognition that directly affects staff turnover and retention.

Dr. Robert Ting-Yiu Chung, Director of Public Opinion Programme at The University of Hong Kong, says – “Quality Workplace Index surveys conducted several times before clearly show that job satisfaction and staff retention are closely related. During the sixth survey period, the local economy appeared to recovering. However, our study discovered a rebound in job dissatisfaction and a surge in job seeking intention. Among 16 job satisfaction factors, the satisfaction level for ‘salary’ recorded the largest fall while the satisfaction level towards ‘career advancement opportunity’ remained to be the lowest. These are the issues to which employers should pay extra attention. ”

Please read the full report of the **HeadlineJobs Quality Workplace Index – Second Half Year 2009** by visiting the HeadlineJobs website: www.headlinejobs.hk/special/salary_index.