

Global survey shows US employees give highest marks to their managers

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

Friendly Relationships And Strong Skills Lead To Positive Opinions Of Supervisors In America

CHICAGO -- A new global survey shows U.S. employees have among the most positive opinions and friendliest relationships with their managers, leading them to be the least likely to disobey their supervisors' direction than other international workers.

U.S. employees also have the highest perceptions of their managers as competent, talented and open to feedback, according to 5,500 workers surveyed in 10 countries by BPI, a leading European management and HR consulting firm that owns a majority interest in Chicago-based SSP-BPI Group.

The international "Employees Assess Their Manager" survey asked employees to rate their relationship with their supervisors to gain insights about differences in workplaces and managerial styles. Along with the U.S., the survey included eight European countries and Morocco. The survey's key findings and U.S. responses indicated the following:

-- 86 percent of U.S. employees reported a good opinion of their immediate supervisor, as well as their company's other managers. Overall, about two-thirds of global employees generally had a good opinion of their managers. -- 62 percent of U.S. employees described their relationship with their immediate supervisor as "friendly" while 33 percent described it as "purely professional." The United Kingdom, Germany and Switzerland showed similar results. In contrast, other European countries -- most notably France -- reported more distant relationships with their managers. The study distinguished these two different managerial cultures among the surveyed countries. -- U.S. employees gave the highest ratings of any other country when asked if their immediate supervisor was competent (90 percent), friendly (90 percent, tied with Switzerland), talented (87 percent), honest (87 percent) and open to feedback (83 percent). This demonstrates that professional skills and personal friendliness go hand-in-hand in U.S. manager-employee relationships. -- U.S. employees were most positive overall about their immediate supervisor giving them the information and support they need to do their jobs. Specifically, they offered the highest ratings of any other country when asked if their immediate supervisor informs them of company changes or strategies (81 percent), gives them honest feedback about their work (85 percent), helps them advance at work (76 percent), and supports them in asking for a salary increase (62 percent). -- The positive U.S. manager-employee relationship may contribute to the finding that only 32 percent of American employees -- the lowest of all countries surveyed -- say they either regularly or from time to time don't follow directions from their immediate supervisor. -- U.S. employees prioritize their top expectations from supervisors as recognition (40 percent), better organization of the team's work (36 percent) and better support in difficult situations (36 percent). This aligns with the overall finding that most employees place the highest priority on being recognized by their managers. "As U.S. companies are becoming more global, it's important for leaders to understand how employees around the world view their managers and what they expect from them," said Juan Luis Goujon, SSP-BPI Group CEO. "According to the survey, the U.S. has a competitive advantage when it comes to employees feeling positive about their supervisors. This is particularly important because companies today require employees to be more engaged in order to achieve business results. Most U.S. supervisors appear to be providing a good work environment and direction, but employees still want greater recognition and support."

Researchers conducting the survey also noted that U.S employees' positive opinions of their supervisors may be attributed to greater job mobility in the U.S. market. Employees may be more likely to leave a job or seek another opportunity if they don't get along with their managers versus remaining in a position that doesn't offer their desired work environment. Thus, employees who feel less "trapped" in a position tend to have a more positive outlook. Researchers' other observations include:

-- France is the country with the highest direct report-supervisor dissatisfaction and most "purely professional" relationships. -- At the other end of the spectrum, the U.S. manager appears to develop a relationship based on friendliness, transparency and thoroughness, where trust is given and leadership is key. -- Italy is closer to France with an even greater level of distrust, while Germany, the U.K. and Switzerland are midway between France and the U.S.

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