

2009 Employee Job Satisfaction

Understanding the Factors That Make Work Gratifying

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Table 1 Comparison of Very Important Aspects of Employee Job Satisfaction: 2002, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009 (Employees)

	2002 (n = 604)	2004 (n = 604)	2005 (n = 601)	2006 (n = 605)	2007 (n = 604)	2008 (n = 601)	2009 (n = 601)
Job security	65% (1)	60% (4)	59% (4)	59% (3)	53% (2)	59% (1)	63% (1)
Benefits	64% (2)	68% (1)	63% (1)	65% (2)	59% (1)	57% (2)	60% (2)
Compensation/pay	59% (4)	63% (2)	61% (2)	67% (1)	59% (1)	53% (3)	57% (3)
Opportunities to use skills/abilities	–	47%	44%	51% (5)	44%	50% (4)	55% (4)
Feeling safe in the work environment	36%	62% (3)	55% (5)	54% (4)	50% (5)	53% (3)	54% (5)
Relationship with immediate supervisor	49%	49%	46%	47%	48%	47% (5)	52%
Management recognition of employee job performance	49%	47%	45%	47%	49%	44%	52%
Communication between employees and senior management*	62% (3)	54%	50%	48%	51% (4)	50% (4)	51%
The work itself	50%	46%	35%	46%	41%	47% (5)	50%
Autonomy and independence	46%	42%	41%	44%	44%	41%	47%
Flexibility to balance life and work issues	62% (3)	57% (5)	60% (3)	59% (3)	52% (3)	44%	46%
Meaningfulness of job	29%	38%	37%	42%	37%	45%	45%
Overall corporate culture	40%	43%	39%	40%	36%	40%	45%
Relationships with co-workers	23%	33%	34%	35%	34%	39%	42%
Contribution of work to organization's business goals	–	35%	33%	37%	32%	34%	39%
Job-specific training	34%	34%	28%	36%	27%	27%	35%
Variety of work	–	37%	45%	40%	34%	35%	34%
Career advancement opportunities	52% (5)	37%	28%	36%	28%	29%	32%
Organization's commitment to corporate social responsibility	–	–	–	–	–	33%	31%
Organization's commitment to professional development	–	34%	31%	35%	31%	33%	30%
Paid training and tuition reimbursement programs	–	–	–	–	31%	32%	29%
Career development opportunities	51%	40%	34%	42%	35%	30%	29%
Networking**	–	17%	19%	21%	18%	21%	22%
Organization's commitment to a 'green' workplace	–	–	–	–	–	23%	17%

* Starting in 2004, "communication between employees and management" was changed to "communication between employees and senior management."

**Starting in 2008, "networking with others who have similar backgrounds and interests" was changed to "opportunities to network with others (within or outside the organization) to help in advancing your career."

Note: Table represents those who answered "very important." 2009 percentages are based on a scale where 1 = "very unimportant" and 4 = "very important." Sample sizes are based on the actual number of respondents by year; however, the percentages shown are based on the actual number of respondents by year who answered the question using the provided response options. A dash (–) indicates that this question was not asked. Numbers in parentheses indicate position of aspect in respective column year.

Source: 2009 Employee Job Satisfaction: A survey report by SHRM

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Table 2 Comparison of Very Important Aspects of Employee Job Satisfaction: 2002, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009 (HR Professionals)

	2002 (n = 461)	2004 (n = 429)	2005 (n = 505)	2006 (n = 548)	2007 (n = 713)	2008 (n = 685)	2009 (n = 547)
Job security	59% (4)	50%	49%	50%	48%	53%	72% (1)
Relationship with immediate supervisor	61% (3)	70% (1)	71% (1)	72% (1)	70% (1)	68% (1)	72% (1)
Benefits	53%	60% (3)	61% (4)	62% (3)	62% (4)	62% (3)	69% (2)
Communication between employees and senior management*	77% (1)	59% (4)	60% (5)	61% (4)	60% (5)	61% (4)	66% (3)
Opportunities to use skills/abilities	–	57%	52%	53%	49%	61% (4)	62% (4)
Management recognition of employee job performance	62% (2)	68% (2)	69% (2)	71% (2)	65% (3)	63% (2)	61% (5)
Job-specific training	34%	47%	43%	45%	43%	49%	52%
Feeling safe in the work environment	30%	40%	39%	45%	38%	48%	52%
Compensation/pay	54% (5)	58% (5)	62% (3)	60% (5)	67% (2)	54% (5)	51%
Overall corporate culture	33%	32%	32%	37%	37%	41%	49%
Organization's commitment to professional development	–	48%	43%	50%	42%	45%	48%
Career advancement opportunities	43%	43%	47%	49%	46%	43%	48%
Career development opportunities	48%	51%	50%	55%	49%	44%	47%
Relationships with co-workers	29%	34%	30%	30%	32%	38%	46%
Paid training and tuition reimbursement programs	–	–	–	–	38%	41%	43%
Flexibility to balance life and work issues	46%	53%	53%	50%	48%	43%	41%
The work itself	33%	34%	30%	29%	29%	39%	39%
Autonomy and independence	24%	32%	29%	33%	34%	33%	37%
Meaningfulness of job	18%	20%	23%	24%	26%	27%	34%
Contribution of work to organization's business goals	–	22%	21%	24%	24%	25%	33%
Variety of work	–	14%	13%	16%	16%	20%	25%
Organization's commitment to corporate social responsibility	–	–	–	–	–	17%	23%
Networking**	–	14%	15%	17%	14%	16%	20%
Organization's commitment to a 'green' workplace	–	–	–	–	–	8%	13%

* Starting in 2004, "communication between employees and management" was changed to "communication between employees and senior management."

**Starting in 2008, "networking with others who have similar backgrounds and interests" was changed to "opportunities to network with others (within or outside the organization) to help in advancing your career."

Note: Table represents those who answered "very important." 2009 percentages are based on a scale where 1 = "very unimportant" and 4 = "very important." Sample sizes are based on the actual number of respondents by year; however, the percentages shown are based on the actual number of respondents by year who answered the question using the provided response options. A dash (–) indicates that this question was not asked. Numbers in parentheses indicate position of aspect in respective column year.

Source: 2009 Employee Job Satisfaction: A survey report by SHRM

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Table 3 Comparison of Selected Very Important Aspects of Employee Job Satisfaction (Employees)				
	Overall	Differences Based on Gender	Differences Based on Organization Staff Size	Differences Based on Tenure
Job security	63%	Male > female	Medium and large > small	-
Benefits	60%	-	Medium and large > small	6 to 10 years > 3 to 5 years
Feeling safe in the work environment	54%	Female > male	-	-

Note: A dash (-) indicates that there were no significant differences in this category.
 Source: 2009 Employee Job Satisfaction: A survey report by SHRM

Table 4 Comparison of Selected Very Important Compensation and Benefits Aspects of Employee Job Satisfaction (Employees)

	Overall	Differences Based on Gender	Differences Based on Organization Staff Size	Differences Based on Tenure	Differences Based on Age
Health care/medical benefits	63%	–	Medium and large > small	–	–
Paid time off	58%	Female > male	–	–	–
Defined contribution plans (e.g., 401(k))	41%	–	Medium and large > small	11 to 15 years > 2 years or less	–
Defined benefit pension plan	39%	–	Medium and large > small	6 to 10 years and 16 or more years > 2 years or less	–
Family-friendly benefits	29%	–	Large > small	–	35 and younger > 56 and older

Note: A dash (–) indicates that there were no significant differences in this category.

Source: 2009 Employee Job Satisfaction: A survey report by SHRM



Table 5 Comparison of Selected Very Important Aspects of Employee Job Satisfaction (Employees)

	Overall	Differences Based on Gender	Differences Based on Organization Staff Size	Differences Based on Tenure	Differences Based on Age
Career advancement opportunities	32%	–	Medium and large > small	2 years or less > 16 or more years	35 years and younger > 56 and older
Career development opportunities	29%	–	Large > small	2 years or less > 16 or more years	35 years and younger > 56 and older
Job-specific training	35%	–	Medium and large > small	–	35 years and younger > 56 and older
Networking	22%	–	–	2 years or less > 16 or more years	–
Paid training and tuition reimbursement programs	28%	–	Large > small	–	–
Relationship with immediate supervisor	52%	Female > male	–	2 years or less > 10 or more years	–
Relationship with co-workers	42%	Female > male	–	–	–
Meaningfulness of job	39%	–	–	–	56 and older > 35 years and younger
Overall corporate culture	45%	–	–	–	36–55 years > 35 years and younger
Corporate social responsibility	31%	–	Medium > small	–	–
Flexibility to balance life and work issues	46%	Female > male	–	2 years or less > 16 or more years	–

Note: A dash (–) indicates that there were no significant differences in this category.
 Source: 2009 Employee Job Satisfaction: A survey report by SHRM

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Table 6 Comparison of Importance of Selected Aspects of Job Satisfaction (by Sample)

	Employees (n = 601)	HR Professionals (n = 547)	Differences Based on Sample
Organization's commitment to professional development	30%	48%	HR professionals > employees
Career advancement opportunities	32%	48%	HR professionals > employees
Career development opportunities	29%	47%	HR professionals > employees
Job-specific training	35%	52%	HR professionals > employees
Networking	22%	20%	–
Opportunities to use skills/abilities	55%	62%	HR professionals > employees
Paid training and tuition reimbursement programs	29%	43%	HR professionals > employees
Communication between employees and senior management	51%	66%	HR professionals > employees
Autonomy and independence	47%	37%	Employees > HR professionals
Management recognition of employee job performance	52%	61%	HR professionals > employees
Relationship with immediate supervisor	52%	72%	HR professionals > employees
Compensation/pay	57%	51%	Employees > HR professionals
Benefits	60%	69%	HR professionals > employees
Flexibility to balance life and work issues	46%	41%	–
Feeling safe in the work environment	54%	52%	–
Job security	63%	72%	HR professionals > employees
Meaningfulness of job	45%	34%	–
Organization's commitment to corporate social responsibility	31%	23%	Employees > HR professionals
Organization's commitment to a 'green' workplace	17%	13%	–
Overall corporate culture	45%	49%	–
Relationships with co-workers	42%	46%	–
Contribution of work to organization's business goals	39%	33%	–
The work itself	50%	39%	Employees > HR professionals
Variety of work	34%	25%	Employees > HR professionals

Note: Sample sizes are based on the actual number of survey respondents; however, the percentages shown are based on the actual number of respondents who answered the questions using the provided response options. A dash (–) indicates that no statistically significant differences were found.

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Table 7 Comparison of Importance of Selected Aspects of Job Satisfaction in 2008 and 2009 (Employees)			
	2008 (n = 601)	2009 (n = 601)	Differences Between 2008 and 2009
Career development opportunities	38%	29%	Decrease
Networking opportunities	29%	22%	Decrease
Organization's commitment to professional development	41%	29%	Decrease
Paid training and tuition reimbursement programs	44%	30%	Decrease
Flexibility to balance life and work issues	52%	39%	Decrease
Meaningfulness of job	54%	39%	Decrease
Organization's commitment to corporate social responsibility	44%	31%	Decrease
Organization's commitment to a 'green' workplace	33%	17%	Decrease

Note: 2008 numbers were recalculated based on a four-point scale. Only response options with statistically significant comparisons are included.
 Source: 2009 Employee Job Satisfaction: A survey report by SHRM

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Table 8 Comparison of Importance and Satisfaction With Job Aspects (Employees)

	Importance		Satisfaction	
	Very Important		Somewhat Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Relationships with co-workers	42%		33%	59%
Meaningfulness of job	39%		36%	59%
Relationship with immediate supervisor	52%		29%	58%
The work itself	50%		35%	55%
Feeling safe in the work environment	54%		34%	55%
The variety of work	34%		38%	52%
Opportunities to use skills and abilities	55%		37%	52%
Flexibility to balance life and work issues	46%		32%	51%
Contribution of work to organization's business goals	39%		42%	50%
Autonomy and independence to make decisions	47%		32%	48%
Overall corporate culture	45%		37%	45%
Organization's commitment to corporate social responsibility	31%		38%	39%
Organization's commitment to a 'green' workplace	17%		41%	39%
Job security	63%		46%	38%
Networking	22%		33%	38%
Benefits	60%		39%	38%
The organization's commitment to professional development	30%		39%	38%
Job-specific training	35%		39%	36%
Management recognition of employee job performance	52%		33%	34%
Organization's financial stability	53%		48%	34%
Paid training and tuition reimbursement	29%		36%	33%
Career development opportunities for learning and professional growth	29%		44%	32%
Communication between employees and senior management	51%		35%	32%
Career advancement opportunities within the organization	32%		46%	30%
Compensation/pay	57%		43%	29%

Note: Only respondents who indicated that the job aspect was "very important" were asked this question. Data are sorted by the "very satisfied" column. Importance percentages are based on a scale where 1 = "very unimportant" and 4 = "very important." Satisfaction percentages are based on a scale where 1 = "very dissatisfied" and 4 = "very satisfied" and exclude "not applicable."

Source: 2009 Employee Job Satisfaction: A survey report by SHRM

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Table 9	Comparison of Importance and Satisfaction With Compensation and Benefits Aspects (Employees)		
	Importance	Satisfaction	
	Very Important	Somewhat Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Paid time off	58%	36%	49%
Defined contribution plans (e.g., 401(k))	41%	44%	40%
Defined benefit pension plan	39%	39%	39%
Health care/medical benefits	63%	37%	39%
Stock options	12%	40%	38%
Family-friendly benefits	29%	39%	35%
Being paid competitively with the local market	55%	37%	30%
Base rate of pay	52%	41%	27%
Opportunities for variable pay	37%	32%	26%

Note: Only respondents who indicated that the job aspect was "very important" were asked this question. Data are sorted by the "very satisfied" column. Importance percentages are based on a scale where 1 = "very unimportant" and 4 = "very important." Satisfaction percentages are based on a scale where 1 = "very dissatisfied" 4 = "very satisfied" and exclude "not applicable."

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Table 10 Top Five Very Important Aspects of Job Satisfaction by Employee Job Tenure					
Job Tenure	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth
2 years or less	Relationship with immediate supervisor	Compensation/pay	Benefits, job security	Opportunities to use skills/abilities	Feeling safe in the work environment
	66%	60%	59%	58%	55%
3 to 5 years	Job security	The work itself	Relationship with immediate supervisor	Opportunities to use skills/abilities	Management recognition of employee job performance, feeling safe in the work environment
	63%	56%	55%	54%	53%
6 to 10 years	Job security	Benefits	Compensation/pay	Feeling safe in the work environment, communication between employees and senior management	Relationship with immediate supervisor, opportunities to use skills/abilities
	71%	68%	63%	61%	58%
11 to 15 years	Job security	Benefits	Compensation/pay	Opportunities to use skills/abilities	Feeling safe in the work environment
	65%	63%	61%	56%	54%
16 years or more	Benefits	Job security	Compensation/pay	Opportunities to use skills/abilities	Feeling safe in the work environment
	58%	57%	53%	49%	47%

Note: Table represents those who answered "very important." Percentages are based on a scale where 1 = "very unimportant" and 4 = "very important."
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Table 11 Top Five Very Important Aspects of Job Satisfaction by Employee Age

Age	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth
35 and younger	Compensation/pay	Benefits	Job security, relationship with immediate supervisor	Opportunities to use skills/abilities	Communication between employees and senior management
	61%	60%	58%	55%	54%
36 to 55	Job security	Benefits	Compensation/pay	Opportunities to use skills/abilities, feeling safe in the work environment	Management recognition of employee job performance
	67%	62%	59%	54%	53%
56 and older	Job security, feeling safe in the work environment	Opportunities to use skills/abilities	Benefits, the work itself	Communication between employees and senior management	Compensation, management recognition of employee job performance
	60%	56%	53%	50%	49%

Note: Table represents those who answered "very important." Percentages are based on a scale where 1 = "very unimportant" and 4 = "very important."

Source: 2009 Employee Job Satisfaction: A survey report by SHRM



Table 12 Top Five Very Important Aspects of Job Satisfaction by Employee Gender					
Gender	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth
Male	Job security	Benefits	Compensation/pay	Opportunities to use skills/abilities	Recognition by management
	59%	57%	56%	53%	50%
Female	Job security	Benefits	Feeling safe in the work environment	Compensation/pay	Opportunities to use skills/abilities, relationship with immediate supervisor
	66%	62%	61%	58%	57%

Note: Table represents those who answered "very important." Percentages are based on a scale where 1 = "very unimportant" and 4 = "very important."
 Source: 2009 Employee Job Satisfaction: A survey report by SHRM

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Table 13 Top Five Very Important Aspects of Job Satisfaction by Organization Staff Size (Employees and HR Professionals)

Staff Size of Organization	Respondents	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth
Small (1-99 employees)	Employees	Compensation/pay	Job security	Management recognition of employee job performance	Opportunities to use skills/abilities, the work itself	Feeling safe in the work environment
	%	53%	52%	49%	48%	47%
	HR Professionals	Communication between employees and senior management	Benefits	Relationship with immediate supervisor	Opportunities to use skills/abilities	Management recognition of employee job performance
	%	76%	69%	66%	64%	60%
Medium (100-499 employees)	Employees	Job security	Benefits	Opportunities to use skills/abilities	Feeling safe in the work environment, compensation/pay	Communication between employees and senior management, relationship with immediate supervisor
	%	74%	72%	61%	60%	57%
	HR Professionals	Job security	Benefits Communication between employees and senior management	Relationship with immediate supervisor	Communication between employees and senior management	Management recognition of employee job performance
	%	73%	69%	68%	66%	58%
Large (500 and more employees)	Employees	Job security	Benefits	Compensation/pay	Feeling safe in the work environment	Opportunities to use skills/abilities
	%	67%	65%	60%	58%	57%
	HR Professionals	Relationship with immediate supervisor	Job security	Benefits	Opportunities to use skills/abilities	Management recognition of employee job performance,
	%	77%	75%	68%	65%	63%

Note: Table represents those who answered "very important." Percentages are based on a scale where 1 = "very unimportant" and 4 = "very important."
 Source: 2009 Employee Job Satisfaction: A survey report by SHRM

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