Workplace Attitudes

Positive Managers, Positive Organizations

By: Jennifer Deal, Ph.D., Sarah Stawiski, Ph.D., Marian Ruderman, Ph.D., William Gentry, Ph.D. and Simon Rweyangoza

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Introduction

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

This report looks at both the attitudes reflecting how African 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 African 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 challenges, this is good news. The voices of 374 respondents tell us that African managers and professionals see the workplace positively. This is not to say that employees or managers have an unrealistically positive 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 the African 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.
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 (April 2008 through November 2010), shows that the respondents from Africa 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 (April 2008 through November 2010), people at work have been fairly positive about the workplace.

- About three quarters of respondents expressed satisfaction with their job.

- Respondents report feeling committed to their organization.

- Respondents may be happy, but it doesn't mean they don't feel as if they are overloaded at work, and about half of respondents report problems with work-life balance and role overload (both women and men).

- Respondents report higher levels of types 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.

- The vast majority 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.

- Respondents report feeling generally supported by their organization and supervisor. 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 report high levels of political behavior in organizations. People at higher levels in the organization report less political behavior than do people at lower levels of the organization.

- Respondents today are fairly positive about their organization's economic stability, and fewer than half currently intend to leave their position.
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 email account at WorldLeadershipSurvey@ccl.org. The sample for this report was collected from January 2009 through June 2010. This sample includes:

1. 374 respondents who were natives of 26 different African countries (75% from South Africa).
2. 10% of respondents had enrolled in a CCL program.
3. Both public and private organizations from more than 40 industries.
4. Respondents’ companies ranged from very small (1 to 9 employees) to very large (10,000 or more employees) with the vast majority (59%) coming from companies with at least 100 employees.

1 See Appendix 1 for a more complete description of demographics.
• 61% male, 39% female.

• 96% between the ages of 28 and 63 (Gen X and Baby Boomers\(^2\)).

• Most are managers or professionals: 12% of the sample indicate that they are at the top (C-level), 11% describe themselves as an executive, 29% upper-middle management, and 32% as professional or middle management.

It is important to note that this is not a random sample of African managers or employees, and therefore it is likely not fully representative of the 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.** Two-thirds (66%) of respondents discuss their organizations with others, and 72% say that the organization has a great deal of personal meaning to them (see Figure 1). Half (50%) indicate they would be happy to spend the rest of their careers with their

![Figure 1](image-url)

\(^2\) Millennials (born 1982-2000); Gen X’ers (born 1964-1981); Late Boomers (born 1955-1963); Early Boomers (1946-1954); and Silents (born 1930-1945).
current organization. People at higher levels in the organization continue to express significantly greater commitment to their organization than do people at lower levels. Women and men express equal amounts of organizational commitment, and Gen Xers express less commitment to their organizations than do Boomers (either Early or Late), at all levels within the organization.

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 motivation 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 get more joy from their work 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), but that result is entirely explained by level in the organization. People who are older are on average at higher levels in the organization, and people at higher levels in the organization find more joy in their work than do people lower in the organization. There are no differences among generations once level in the organization is controlled for. What this means is that the generations do not have different levels of intrinsic motivation, so you don’t have to worry about a deficit of intrinsic motivation in one generation or another.

Figure 2

![Graph showing motivation types](image)

**Motivation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introjected</td>
<td>3.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extrinsic</td>
<td>2.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identified</td>
<td>3.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrinsic</td>
<td>3.77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6 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 F = 7.42, p < .001, LSD posthoc tests reveal that Top and Executive are not statistically significantly different, Top is higher than Upper Middle and Middle/Professional, Executive higher than Upper Middle and Middle/Professional. Upper middle is not statistically significantly different from Middle/Professional.

4 Non-significant t-test, t = 1.44, p = .150. Men mean = 3.63, and Women mean = 3.51.

5 Millennials (13) and Silents (2) were not included in the analyses because there were too few of the, (13 Millennials and 2 Silents). For the analysis that included Gen Xers, Early Boomers, and Late Boomers, F = 9.17, p < .001. Post-hoc tests reveal Gen X cohort is lowest (Mean = 3.46), The Late Boomer cohort is next (Mean = 3.71), then the Early Boomer cohort (Mean = 4.02). Gen X is different from both Early and Late Boomers, Early and Late Boomers are not statistically significantly different.

7 F = 6.31, p < .001. Top (Mean = 4.29), Executive (Mean = 3.91), Upper Middle (Mean = 3.99) Middle/Professional Mean = 3.70 (SD = 1.06). Post-hoc tests indicate that Top and Executive are not statistically significantly different, Top is higher than Upper Middle and Middle/Professional, and that Executive, Upper Middle, and Middle are not statistically significantly different.

8 F = 5.67, p = .004. Early Boomers (Mean = 4.24), Late Boomers (Mean = 3.85), Gen X (Mean = 3.66).
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 organizations (middle managers and professionals)\(^9\), women and men expressed about the same amount of identified motivation\(^{10}\).

**Hours Worked and Job Satisfaction**

**Respondents' expressed commitment and motivation is clearly matched by their work hours;** top executives report working 10.4 hours in a day, executives and upper middle managers report working 9.9 hours in a day, and professionals report working 9.4. The vast majority of the sample work more than 40 hours a week. This is true of 86% of those at Top levels, 95% of executives, 91% of those in upper middle management positions, and 82% of those in professional or middle management roles. The chart below also demonstrates that those in management roles are more likely to work more than 50 hours per week than are those in professional roles (see Figure 3). There were no significant differences between female and male respondents, or by generation (once level in the organization is controlled for).

\(^9\) F = 4.69, p = .003. Top (Mean = 4.19), Executive (Mean = 4.00), Upper Middle (Mean = 3.64), Middle/Professional (Mean = 3.78). Top and Executive are not statistically significantly different, both are higher than Upper Middle and Middle/Professional.

\(^{10}\) Non-significant T-test = 1.24, p = .229. Men: Mean = 3.87. Women: Mean = 3.75.
In addition to being committed to their organization and motivated to work hard, respondents also actually like their jobs: 73% report satisfaction with their jobs and 79% 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. With regard to satisfaction with pay as part of job satisfaction, respondents were neutral about their pay (2.9 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, gender, or generation. In fact, men and women and people at all levels of the organization were equally satisfied – or dissatisfied – with their pay.

Figure 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Satisfaction</th>
<th>Percent agree or strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In general, I don’t like my job.</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In general, I like working in this organization.</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All in all, I am satisfied with my job.</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ F = 3.68, p = .012. \text{ Top (Mean = 4.38) not statistically significantly different than the Executive (Mean = 4.11). Top is higher than Upper Middle (Mean = 3.92) and Middle/Professional (Mean = 3.91). No other differences among levels.} \]
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 (see Figure 5A) and supervisor (See Figure 5B), with almost three quarters (72%) reporting their organizations value their contributions, 61% agreeing that their organization cares about their satisfaction at work, 65% believing that their supervisors take pride in their accomplishments, and 58% believing that their supervisors care about their wellbeing. Very few respondents feel they are ignored by their organization (12%), or that their efforts are not noticed (14%) (Figure 5A). Furthermore, few respondents believe their managers aren’t concerned about them (17%), or their manager doesn’t appreciate their extra effort (22%) (see Figure 5B). 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\(^\text{12}\). 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.

\(^{12}\) F = 10.72, \(p < .001\). Top level (Mean = 4.28) is not statistically significantly different than the Executive (Mean = 4.11). Both are higher than Upper Middle (Mean= 3.67) and Middle/Professional (Mean = 3.59).
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. About half of respondents (49% of women and 47% of men) report feeling overloaded.

People of all levels, generations, 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, more than half of the respondents answered agree or strongly agree 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 organizations 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.
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. For example, **while 40% of respondents believe it is sometimes easier to remain quiet than fight the system, 54% 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 and Executive levels of the organization tend to perceive less political behavior than those at Upper Middle, Middle, and Professional levels13.

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13 $F = 13.76, p < .001$. Top (Mean = 1.99) and Executive (Mean = 2.30). These are not statistically significantly different than each other, but, each is higher than Upper Middle (Mean = 2.75) and Middle/Professional (Mean = 2.97).
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. About three-quarters (73%) 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.

Given the state of organizational commitment, motivation, job satisfaction, and issues with the organization, what does that mean for turnover? More than half of respondents say they are not thinking about quitting their jobs (58%) or intending to quit their jobs (57%; see Figure 9). Further, only 18% are actively looking for another job. When asked about whether they will be working for their organization for a cer-
tain time period, the percentage of respondents who agree or strongly agree they will be working with the organization for six months, one year, and five years, declines from 78% (6 months) to 67% (1 year) to 45% (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. While men were no more likely than men to say they were likely to leave, people at the top of organizations are more likely to say they plan to remain with their organization. Regarding the generations, Gen Xers are slightly more likely to have higher turnover intentions.

Figure 8

Corporate Economic Status

- My organization has suffered considerable downsizing: 19%
- My organization is in economic difficulty: 23%
- My organization has a bright future: 73%
- My organization offers excellent job security: 51%
- My organization is considered to be at the top of its industry: 64%

Figure 9

Turnover Intentions

- At the present time I am actively searching for another job in a different organization: 18%
- I will probably look for a new job in the near future: 31%
- I am not thinking about quitting my job at the present time: 58%
- I do not intend to quit my job: 57%

14 T = 1.36, p = .175.
15 F = 6.22, p < .001. Top level (Mean = 1.98) is lowest and is significantly different than the Executive (Mean = 2.20), Upper Middle (Mean = 2.70) and Middle/Professional (Mean = 2.63). Executive is different from Upper Middle and Middle/Professional. Upper middle and middle/professional are not statistically significantly different than each other.
16 F = 8.19, p < .001. Each generation is different from each other. Gen X expresses the greatest likelihood to turnover (Mean = 2.63), followed by Late Boomers (Mean = 2.36), followed by Early Boomers (Mean = 1.86).
The economic momentum in Africa creates many new business opportunities – this belief is clearly echoed by our respondents who also see bright future for their organizations. Our data show that African managers and professionals 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 within the organization 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, 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 level, 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 – many organizations have gotten used to asking too much of their people. 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. It is clear that managers and professionals in Africa want to help drive performance within their organizations, and this is a great competitive advantage for organizations who can engage the talent in a sustainable way. 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

Between April 2008 and November 2010, 374 people whose native country is in Africa responded to the World Leadership Survey. Of those, the vast majority (76%) reported South Africa as their native country. Figure 11 displays how many people per country were part of this study.

Gender

For this sample, there were more men (61%) than women (39%).
Respondent Survey Access

Some of the respondents (10%) 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 majority of respondents (90%) were not enrolled in CCL programs and would have found the link to the survey upon visiting the CCL website, have received it as part of a CCL initiative to gather data in Africa, or may have received the link from a friend or colleague.

Generations

The average age of respondents was 43. More than half (61%) of respondents are Gen X’ers (born 1964-1981), and the second most common age group in this sample is Late Boomers (26%, born 1955-1963). This means that 87% of the sample is between the ages of 28 and 54. Only 9% of the sample respondents are Early Boomers (1946-1954), and even fewer are Millennials (3%, born 1982-2000) or Silents (1%, born 1930-1945).

Organizational Level

Looking at organizational level, more than half of all respondents (61%) held positions in the Middle/Professional or Upper Middle levels of the organization, 11% of respondents were in Executive Positions (e.g., VP), and 12% held the Top positions in their organizations (e.g., CEO, CFO). A very small percentage (2%) identified themselves as hourly employees, or in the first level of their organization. Some (14%) said the question was not relevant to them or left the item blank.
Size of Company

Respondents reported working for companies of all sizes ranging from 1 to 10,000+ employees. Under half (40%) of the respondents were employed by medium-large companies ranging from 100-4,999 employees. Some (13%) of employees came from very large (10,000+) companies and very small (10-99) companies (17%).

About the Authors

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Jennifer Deal is a Senior Research Scientist at the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL) in San Diego, California. Her work focuses on global leadership and generational differences. She is the manager of CCL’s World Leadership Survey and the Emerging Leaders research project. In 2002 Jennifer co-authored Success for the New Global Manager, and has published articles on generational issues, executive selection, cultural adaptability, global management, and women in management. Her second book, Retiring the Generation Gap, was published in 2007. An internationally recognized expert on generational differences, she has spoken on the topic on six continents (North and South America, Europe, Asia, Africa, and Australia), and she looks forward to speaking to Antarctic penguins about their generational issues in the near future. She holds a B.A. from Haverford College, and a Ph.D. in Industrial/Organizational psychology from The Ohio State University.

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Simon Rweyongoza
Simon Rweyongoza is the Center for Creative Leadership’s regional director for Sub-Saharan Africa. His key responsibilities include providing regional management for CCL’s work in the region, strategic client-relationship management to clients across a range of industries and sectors and assisting with developing the Center’s presence in Africa. At CCL, Simon has worked in Assessments Operations, Client Solutions, Operations and with the Leadership Beyond Boundaries initiative. He has held positions as a client solutions operations associate, client-solutions project manager and key account manager in CCL’s EMEA Region, providing creative approaches and support for the delivery of successful high-quality interventions for global companies in a variety of business sectors. Born in Tanzania and holding dual Tanzanian and Belgian citizenship, Simon has worked across Europe and Africa. His areas of expertise and interest include leadership development, innovation, diversity, international development and facilitating youth leadership workshops.

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., Todd Weber, Ph.D., and Simon Rweyongoza

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About CCL

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