

Executive Briefing #8 – The Mind of The Shift Worker



Building the Bridge Between Operational Best Practices and Employee Morale

Drive Performance: Start With Your Employees

Knowledge is power. Knowing what makes your employees happy and what makes your employees unhappy is the key to developing a successful, mutually beneficial employee-employer relationship. Far too often managers make major workforce decisions based on “gut feelings” and what they *perceive* drives employee morale. With little to no quantifiable, verifiable, and reliable data regarding employee preferences, even the most well intentioned managers can make workforce decisions that unintentionally demotivate employees. Managers who take the extra time to learn and understand employee preferences can confidently make workforce decisions that improve employee motivation and morale while capturing cost savings.

Core Practice LLC has surveyed over 100,000 shift work employees across North America. The following sections are a high level overview of the major themes and trends that persist across the different companies, industries, and geographic locations.

Management-employee relationship

Only 38.0% of respondents believe that the management team really cares about employees.

Current schedule satisfaction

Many respondents are dissatisfied with their current schedules. Based on the surveys, 32.3% of respondents are at least slightly dissatisfied with their current schedules.

Current work satisfaction

While many respondents are dissatisfied with their current schedules, the overwhelming majority are happy with their current jobs (the work itself). 83.2% of respondents are at least slightly satisfied with their current jobs (the work itself).

Core Practice is a leading provider of operational and labor strategy consulting services with over 20 years of experience designing, developing, and implementing innovative labor solutions. Core Practice’s labor strategies combine the best people with the right equipment at the right time and provide clients with a competitive advantage. Core Practice works extensively with companies with significant amounts of shift work operations. To learn more about Core Practice and what we do, please contact:

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Time off: Did respondents say they got enough time off, was it quality, did it fit in with family/social life, was it flexible, and was it predictable?

Percent of respondents who said "yes": Enough – 56.3%, Quality – 50.0%, Fits in with Family/Social Life – 48.8%, Flexible – 50.3%, Predictable – 62.6%

Do respondents feel they are working more or less overtime than they would like?

More overtime than they would like – 19.5%, less overtime than they would like – 21.9%, working just the right amount of overtime – 58.5%. Many managers underestimate employee appetite for overtime and are missing opportunities to help make employees happier and opportunities to quickly flex capacity. Employee overtime preferences vary widely based on how overtime is offered: come in early, stay late, work on a day off, work on weekends, or work overtime Monday-Friday.

In the past 12 months, have you considered getting out of your current schedule?

41.1% of respondents have considered getting out of their current schedule. With 28.0% of respondents, “to get a better work schedule” is the primary reason for employees to actively pursue getting out of their current schedules. Contrary to popular belief, money is not a primary factor in employees’ decisions to get out of their current schedule – only 6.7% of respondents replied “to get better pay”.

Most important schedule change result

“A better day off schedule” is the most important schedule change result for 49.0% of respondents, followed by better health and alertness – 23.4%, more predictable work schedule – 16.4%, and increased overtime opportunity – 11.0%. Fortunately for managers who want to actively engage their workforce and improve employee recruiting and retention, “a better day off schedule” can be easily obtained by incorporating alternative schedules that better match employee preferences and business needs, and often are more cost effective than current schedule systems.

While these employee preferences are based on over 100,000 employee surveys conducted in North America, they are only averages. Employee preferences vary widely based on countless variables – company, industry, geographic location, shift assignment, and seasonality. To maximize employee engagement and satisfaction, managers need to have a clear and quantitative understanding of what employees like and what they do not like. To find out how to actively engage your workforce and develop an actionable strategy that drives employee morale and business results, contact Core Practice at 212-534-0539.

Notes: