Global Talent Barometer: Workers More Confident Than Ever, But Job Satisfaction Lags as Companies Struggle to Match Employee Ambitions

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Workers believe in themselves, but not their employers: Confidence hits 76% while job security drops to 65%

MILWAUKEE, June 24, 2025 /PRNewswire/ -- Workers around the world are more skilled and confident than ever — but that confidence isn't translating into job satisfaction or loyalty. According to *ManpowerGroup's Global Talent Barometer 2025, Volume 1*, 89% of workers are confident in their skills and experience to perform their job, yet only 62% are satisfied in their roles. Even more telling: one-third say they don't have enough opportunities to achieve their career goals at their current employer.

This widening gap reflects workers who are rapidly developing new skills, including in emerging areas like artificial intelligence (AI), while many employers are struggling to keep pace. New research from ManpowerGroup on AI in the workplace shows 81% of tech leaders say their companies are still in the testing or pilot phases of AI adoption, with only 10% fully integrating AI across operations. That disconnect is leaving many workers feeling underutilized, undervalued, and under-supported.

"The advance of AI means every company is transforming to survive and thrive. But digital transformation is as much about people as it is about technology," says Becky Frankiewicz, president and chief strategy officer at ManpowerGroup. "The future of work isn't about control, it's about partnership. When companies invest in people, people invest back. And right now, people want more; more balance, more flexibility, more humanity, and importantly – more development."

Workforce Snapshot: Confidence Up, But So Is Stress
Now at 68% overall, up 1 point from 67% last year, the Barometer reflects responses from more than 13,700 workers across 19 countries. The findings reveal a global workforce in flux:

- 82% say their work is meaningful (up 2% from 2024)
- Overall confidence rose to 76% (up 2 points)
- Job satisfaction dropped to 62% (down 1 point), highlighting the growing divide between workers' skills and their workplace experience
- Only 65% feel secure in their jobs over the next six months (down 6 percentage points from 71%)
- 49% report moderate to high daily stress, with middle managers reporting the highest levels (82%) followed by Gen Z (56%)

Three Critical Challenges Employers Can't Ignore
1. The Stress-Retention Connection
Despite 82% of workers finding meaning, 49% report daily stress — a number that continues to rise. Gen Z continues to experience the highest daily stress levels (56%), despite feeling increased support, while middle managers remain the most stressed group at 82%. Essential workers, meanwhile, report the lowest values alignment, adding pressure across frontline roles.

This disconnect helps explain why confident workers are leaving. Meaningful work can't offset burnout — especially when growth is limited, and support is lacking.

2. Stuck in the Middle
Middle managers face pressure from all sides. While 34% fear job loss within the next six months due to restructuring or AI disruption, nearly eight in 10 (77%) cite economic instability, restructuring, and AI as their top career concerns. At the same time, more workers now trust leadership (+4% from 2024), creating tension for those tasked with developing others while navigating their own uncertainty.

Millennials saw the steepest drop in satisfaction (down 11% year-over-year), with women in this group reporting the lowest levels overall. Meanwhile, people required to be fully onsite with no flexibility are less likely to leave their jobs (63%) than their remote counterparts (43%)—even though onsite employees report lower well-being (63% Well-Being Index vs. 72% hybrid) and higher stress. This suggests employees in inflexible arrangements feel trapped in roles they find unfulfilling, while remote workers, despite greater satisfaction, leverage their flexibility to exit.

3. Development as Trust Currency
The data shows a clear correlation between development investment and retention. Workers who report having career development opportunities show 77% confidence (up 4 percentage points from 2024), while those with clear advancement paths report 62% satisfaction (up 5 percentage points). Hybrid workers lead across all confidence benchmarks.

Still, the quality of development matters. While roughly one-third of employers recognize that AI can't replace human-centric skills like ethical judgment (33%), customer service (31%), and team management (30%), many struggle to provide the AI literacy training workers now expect.

The Bottom Line: Invest in People or Pay the Price
With turnover now costing an average of $18,591 per employee and only 55% both satisfied and unlikely to leave voluntarily, the confidence-satisfaction divide is more than a morale issue — it's a business imperative. Companies that fail to invest in their people risk losing them to competitors who do.

To explore the complete findings of the *Global Talent Barometer 2025, Volume 1*, including regional and country-specific insights and industry-level

breakdowns, visit manpowergroup.com/en/insights/talent-barometer

ABOUT THE GLOBAL TALENT BAROMETER
The ManpowerGroup Global Talent Barometer measures worker well-being, job satisfaction, and confidence around the world. This comprehensive tool leverages independent survey best-practices and statistically significant samples to create a powerful tool to better understand what workers want globally. The research aims to improve the future of work through deeper understanding the key drivers of workforce sentiment today.

METHODOLOGY
Survey responses were collected from 13,771 workers across 19 countries from March 14 to April 11, 2025. All the data is weighted to match the worker population in each country by gender, age and region, and all countries are weighted to be equal.

COUNTRIES SURVEYED
Australia, Canada, France, Germany, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom (U.K.), and the United States (U.S.).

ABOUT MANPOWERGROUP
ManpowerGroup® (NYSE: MAN), the leading global workforce solutions company, helps organizations transform in a fast-changing world of work by sourcing, assessing, developing, and managing the talent that enables them to win. We develop innovative solutions for hundreds of thousands of organizations every year, providing them with skilled talent while finding meaningful, sustainable employment for millions of people across a wide range of industries and skills. Our expert family of brands – Manpower, Experis, and Talent Solutions – creates substantially more value for candidates and clients across more than 70 countries and territories and has done so for more than 75 years. We are recognized consistently for our diversity – as a best place to work for Women, Inclusion, Equality, and Disability, and in 2025 ManpowerGroup was named one of the World's Most Ethical Companies for the 16th time – all confirming our position as the brand of choice for in-demand talent.

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FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS
This report contains forward-looking statements, including statements regarding labor demand in certain regions, countries and industries, economic uncertainty, and the use and impact of AI. Actual events or results may differ materially from those contained in the forward-looking statements, due to risk, uncertainties and assumptions. These factors include those found in the Company's reports filed with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), including the information under the heading "Risk Factors" in its Annual Report on Form10-K for the year ended December 31, 2024, whose information is incorporated herein by reference. ManpowerGroup disclaims any obligation to update any forward-looking or other statements in this release, except as required by law.

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