New Global Research Finds Leaders Overestimate Engagement, Underestimate What Makes People Stay -- Putting Retention, Productivity, and Culture at Risk

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MILWAUKEE, Sept. 16, 2025 /PRNewswire/ -- Right Management, a global leader in talent and career management solutions and part of the ManpowerGroup (NYSE: MAN) family of brands, has released an all-new installment in its 2025 *The State of Careers* series. Building on its groundbreaking 2024 North American research, the new global report — "The Career Equation: What Attracts Talent Isn't What Keeps Them" — uncovers powerful insights and data-driven strategies for organizations navigating today's complex talent landscape.



Based on proprietary research and surveys of 1,029 leaders and 2,402 employees across North America, Latin America, Europe, and Asia-Pacific, the report exposes a striking disconnect between perception and reality — and a surprising contradiction in what drives talent decisions:

- **The Engagement Illusion**: Leaders believe their teams are thriving. The data tells a different story.
- **The Talent Paradox**: What attracts talent — like pay, perks, and prestige — isn't what makes them stay

Key Findings Include:

- **Leaders grossly overestimate engagement**: More than half (53%) of leaders globally believe their employees are fully engaged, with only 29% acknowledging any disengagement. By contrast, just 37% of employees report full engagement — and 41% are actively disengaged.
- **Latin America shows the sharpest disconnect**: 63% of leaders believe their teams are fully engaged while only 41% of employees are fully engaged — a profound disconnect that threatens retention and loyalty.
- **Europe and Asia-Pacific report critically low engagement**: Only 32% of European employees and 33% in Asia-Pacific are fully engaged.
- **Leaders and employees are misaligned on what drives engagement**: Employees consistently rank *fit* and *career* as top engagement drivers. Yet only 24% of leaders recognize cultural fit as important, and less than two out of 10 (19%) cite career development — revealing a significant chasm.
- **Attraction ≠ Retention**: While pay and perks may attract talent, they don't sustain engagement. Long-term retention is driven by deeper, intrinsic factors like purpose, growth, and cultural alignment.

"This research is a wake-up call for business leaders," said Caroline Pfeiffer Marinho, Global Business Leader at Talent Solutions Right Management. "Too many organizations are investing in attraction strategies while overlooking what truly drives people to stay. If leaders don't prioritize cultural fit, career development and purpose, they risk losing their top talent — and with it, their competitive edge."

Barbera de Graaf, Senior Vice President of Right Management for Europe, added: "Europe is facing a human capital crisis. With the lowest engagement levels globally, the message is clear: leaders must act now. Investing in people's skills, careers and well-being isn't just good for morale — it's essential for productivity, profitability and long-term resilience."

This report marks the beginning of a broader conversation. A second installment in *The State of Careers* series will be released later this year, offering deeper insights and practical strategies for organizations seeking to future-proof their workforce.

To explore the full report, including strategies to bridge the engagement gap, visit: **www.right.com/state-of-careers.**

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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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Talent Solutions combines our leading global offerings—RPO, TAPFIN-MSP and Right Management —to help organizations address their complex workforce needs. Talent Solutions leverages our deep industry expertise and understanding of what talent wants to provide end-to-end, data-driven capabilities across the talent lifecycle. From talent attraction and acquisition to upskilling, development and retention, we provide seamless delivery, leveraging best-in-class technology and extensive workforce insights across multiple countries at scale. Right Management, part of the ManpowerGroup® family of companies—including Manpower and Experis —is our global talent management offering for outplacement, career management and leader development solutions.

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